

Feeling “Good Enough”: 3 Ways to Overcome Negative Self-Image

Depression and anxiety led me down a path of poor physical health and even worse self-image. But three things helped me love myself again.

By Marcus Paiz

“**Y**ou are not good enough.” Those are the words hanging up on a wall in my basement. There’s a small room there where I exercise, and as negative thoughts come into my mind, I write them down and pin them up on a board. It’s a reminder of the struggles I have faced and the old self I am leaving behind.

For a long time I told myself I wasn’t good enough. I felt overwhelmed with depression and anxiety, which in turn led to poor physical health. I was drowning. I felt worthless. I felt hopeless. I believed I wasn’t worthy of God’s love or anyone else’s.

As young adults, many of us probably experience times when we feel like we’re not good enough, whether it has to do with our behavior, talents, or, in my case, self-image. Recently, I challenged myself to open up and dust off

the most hidden pages in my personal book of life.

During my exploration, I found a few things that had cultivated the negative personal image I held inside for so long. But I also discovered these three ways to overcome them.

1. Remove Comparisons

I once read a quote by Theodore Roosevelt that said, “Comparison is the thief of joy.” In a world where everyone’s life experiences are freely shared through social media, I felt constantly driven by unrealistic comparisons to friends, family, and prominent social figures. My deepest shortcomings were being matched with another’s greatest accomplishments, and I was often left feeling inadequate. In this time of negative self-reflection, I realized that I needed to change my mind-set.



I took a break from all forms of social media and started to work on personal positivity and seeing the best in others. In a short amount of time, my thoughts began to change. I quickly stopped comparing my negatives to others' positives like I had so often done before. In fact, I began to secretly celebrate the successes of others! This practice instantly melted away the wall of pride and jealousy I had built up over time. What followed was a clear mind and the ability to view things from an eternal perspective.

2. Align with God's Will

Our experience on earth is sometimes overshadowed by the burdensome realization that we are imperfect mortal beings. Eventually the negative way I viewed myself and my body consumed all parts of my life. When

I felt the weight of my imperfections growing, I would turn to destructive behaviors instead of to the Lord. These behaviors created a feeling of imperfection that was so heavy at times that I felt life wasn't worth living. Ultimately the only place I could turn to was to the Lord. Through humility and repentance, I made an effort to be more consistent in reading the words of prophets with a purpose and praying to understand my surroundings with heavenly eyes.

No trial is too great when we turn to the Lord and accept His will, no matter the outcome. Contrarily, trials tend to feel burdensome when we attempt to force our will over His. By accepting His will, I found a higher level of clarity, and I began to see value in the person I was instead of constantly living in a state of inadequacy.

3. Develop Perfect Love

In Moroni 8:16 we are told that "perfect love casteth out all fear." Perfect love is the most powerful tool we can wield as we face ourselves in the mirror and comprehend the eternal value of ourselves and everyone around us. It is seeing ourselves for who we are instead of putting our flaws under a microscope. It is not conditional on outward appearance. It is forgiving ourselves and others of past errors and moving forward with our eyes fixed on the light of eternal glory.

I found I cannot simply attempt to love; I must let it consume me and become a part of who I am. Within the walls of perfect love we find the true nature of God—and by extension our own divine nature—and the path that He has created for us.

My journey to better mental, physical, and spiritual health has strengthened my faith in God's timing and His eternal love for me. At times I was brought very low, but when I stopped comparing myself to others, aligned my will with God's, and learned to truly love myself, the image of my eternal destiny came into focus and I found peace. God's love is infinitely mighty. When we slow down and take the time to discover it, He will help us see that we are good enough, even in our weakest moments. ■



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