



Releasing the reins of external validation

External validation in the form of compliments or social media interactions from others feels good. But it's important not to rely solely on this type of praise. The opinions of others, while helpful, should not direct your decisions or stop you from working toward your goals and dreams. Recognize when you are reaching out to others to feel validated and, instead, learn to offer yourself validation and kindness for your feelings and choices. Trust your gut and aim toward making intrinsic choices that align with your core values.

Here are a few tips for developing internal validation and self-worth:

- **Be self-accepting:** Validation should come from within. Listen to your inner voice and do what makes you happy. Focus on yourself rather than relying on what other people think about your experiences or choices. Recognize the things you have done well and where you can do better next time.
- **Have confidence in your decisions:** You should feel good about your decisions regardless of what others may think. Celebrate your strengths and accomplishments. Reframe negative thoughts and don't be afraid to learn from your mistakes.
- **Know your purpose:** Find something you really enjoy and pour your heart and soul into it. Those who have found their purpose tend to be more self-confident, more fulfilled and have more self-esteem.
- **Monitor your social media habits:** Seeking validation can become a problem when constant checking for likes or the need to compare yourself with others dictates what you post. Consider taking a break from social media or silencing notifications to enjoy something that makes you feel good. Social media can be a useful tool when used properly; be authentic and share your opinions to be helpful, not for approval.

Examples of self-validation:

- It's normal to feel how I do.
- My feelings and emotions are completely valid.
- I'm more than my mistakes and bad decisions.
- I'm proud of myself for trying.
- I don't depend on others to make me happy.
- I have learned and grown from my mistakes.

Source: Positivepsychology.com, Minimalismmadesimple.com, verywellmind.com