



Rewire Your Brain for Radical Self-Acceptance

Despite X and Y, I Choose Z

Despite feeling X and thinking Y, I choose Z.

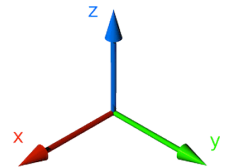
Despite what I'm feeling and thinking, I choose to love, honor, and accept myself.

Try it:

Think back to the most difficult emotion you had in the last 24 hours. Write it down. Say it out loud.

Despite feeling....	...I choose to love, honor, and accept myself.
Despite thinking....	...I choose to love, honor, and accept myself.
	...I choose to be willing to practice accepting myself.
	...

What do you notice when you write this down and then say it out loud?



If this feels like riding a bicycle backwards, that's ok. This simply points to the possibility for transformation. With support and practice, radical self-acceptance IS possible. There may be deep grooves in patterns of disempowered thinking reinforced over a lifetime. However the science of neuroplasticity shows that the human brain is capable of reorganizing itself by forming new neural connections throughout the life span in response to injury, disease, new environments, and new learning. Our brains tend to learn by pairing things together (e.g. dinner bell + food > salivating).

Unfortunately we sometimes get stuck in patterns in which we pair difficult feelings with disempowering thoughts, as a result of being in environments where it is not safe to express emotions. This can be conscious or unconscious (e.g. crying + harsh external reaction > "I shouldn't be feeling this way").



Fortunately, thanks to neuroplasticity, it is possible to create new neural pathways with intentional, consistent, regular practice, the way we learn to ride a bike; or in this case, how we might learn to ride a bike backwards:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=MFzDaBzBIL0&t=2s

This simple written and oral exercise is designed to apply basic learning processes toward positive therapeutic change by pairing difficult feelings and associated thoughts with conscious self-acceptance. This can be practiced at any moment in the day, as many times as you wish to practice.

Simply take a deep breath, acknowledge how you're feeling, notice what you're thinking, and pair it with an empowering statement. Rinse and repeat. Write it down. Say it out loud. Post it on your wall. Share it with a supportive friend. Talk to your therapist about pairing this cognitive exercise with Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) to reinforce neuroplasticity at the mental, emotional, and physical level.

