

LOVE YOURSELF

F i r s t & M o s t

Transform your life with
self-love today!



SHININGSELF.COM

Hi! I'm Tish, a **FAT 40+ gal taking up space boldly**, confidently, and most of all unapologetically.

I'm on a mission, through my blog [ShiningSelf.com](https://www.shiningself.com), [Podcast](#) and the [Get Past Your Sh*t book](#), to **encourage and inspire women of a few things**:

1. To catch a glimpse of their true shining self because when they do, they won't be satisfied with less again.
2. That regardless of what size they are, to take up space just as they are because if they're not taking up the space reserved for them, no one else can and that would be a DAMN shame!



Shining Self came about several years ago when I caught a glimpse of my true shining self (the real authentic me) and I haven't been satisfied with less since!

If you would like to learn more about me, please check out my [About Page](#). Want to know some fun things? I invite you to head on over and read [Fun & Quirky Things About Me](#) too!

And don't forget to ~~stalk~~, err I mean connect with me on social media:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [Pinterest](#)
- [TikTok](#)

Shine bright, beautiful! 💖🌟

Tish 😊

Love Yourself First & Most

Shelly grew up with a bunch of dysfunction around here – divorced parents, a dad that beat women, both parents drank a lot, her mom hopped from one man to the next, she was always told she should be seen and not heard, and nothing she did was ever right. She never felt loved or seen and especially not heard. Despite the dysfunction she grew up in, she managed to graduate from college. She got a job she enjoyed and married a man she cared deeply about.

But still, she felt empty inside. She couldn't shake the feelings of worthlessness or the fear that if she made a mistake, her husband would no longer want her. As a result, she pushed herself to be perfect in every area and was always working to earn her place.

Finally, she sought out a therapist. She wanted to feel good, but she didn't know how to go about it. Shelly's therapist suggested that the problem was that she didn't know how to love herself.

The concept seemed strange to Shelly. Could she really feel better just by choosing to love herself?

Shelly isn't alone! I lived that way for most of my life, up until several years ago. So, while you may have had a stable childhood or even a good one and you might have amazing friends or family, you can still struggle to love yourself. The good news is that you can learn to fall in love with the person you see in the mirror – YOU!

Why Your Relationship with Yourself Matters

You are the only one who will be with you your entire life. You won't always be able to lean on others due to illness, loss, or other life events. You will go through times when you're all you have and that's why it's essential that you learn to be your own best friend.

A Good Relationship with Self = Good Relationship with Others

Many women have entered into unhealthy relationships because they did not love or value themselves. Instead they've depended on others to do that and subsequently met someone who sensed this need and preyed on it.

I was one of those women! I had so many unhealthy relationships I wasn't even sure what a healthy relationship was (thankfully I have one now with a man that treats me like a Queen). These relationships took on different levels of unhealthy – verbal abuse, physical abuse, control, and more.

But there were also the relationships where I chose to stay with men who used me for sex because I believed as a fat woman, any attention from a man was better than none... even if those "relationships" left me feeling worse about myself and even emptier on the inside.

An unhealthy relationship with others can take many forms! Unhealthy relationships could also be ones where you let others take advantage of you because you're afraid to stand up for yourself. (Been there done that, got the t-shirt). Maybe you accept poor behavior from friends because you don't think anyone will like you if you demand to be treated well.

Make no mistake—learning to love yourself will cause you to re-evaluate the relationships with those around you. You'll be able to see clearly who truly cares for you and who's just using you.

A Good Relationship with Self = Empowered Decisions

When you have a strong, healthy relationship with yourself, you find it easier to make decisions that empower you. You aren't left waiting while you check-in with everyone else and you don't let others run your life. Instead you step up confidently and ask for what you want and need.

You feel empowered to seek your own path. You don't need to do something just because those around you are and you feel free of the expectations of others. That's because you already know that you're deeply and truly loved...by you!

Once I began to love myself so many things changed! Suddenly, I started listening to my heart, following my dreams/desires/passions, etc. And one of the biggest decisions I made, from a place of self-love, was leaving my recovery friends (like family), my son, and my family behind as I moved cross country from small town Northern Michigan to Vancouver Washington.

Most people were supportive. Some weren't. But it didn't matter because for once I knew without a doubt I was making a decision based from knowing and loving myself. And that move has been the most amazing thing ever – seriously, it's like I became a whole new person (in a great way) since getting out here in September 2018.

A Good Relationship with Self = Deep Self-Compassion

Perhaps the most beautiful aspect of developing a good relationship with yourself is that you're able to look at who you are differently. Instead of looking back and berating yourself for past mistakes, you'll find it easier to practice self-compassion. (I'd like to say you'll never berate yourself for mistakes again but that hasn't been the case for me – there are times I still really struggle with this but I have more self-compassion today than I ever had.)

Self-compassion is the ability to see yourself through the eyes of kindness. *You treat yourself with gentleness and recognize just how precious you are.*

And in case you need to be reminded.... YOU ARE PRECIOUS! 😊

Learning to love yourself is a journey like no other. It can stretch you in some incredible ways and show you areas of your heart that need healing. But don't look away, gorgeous. You are worth this journey! You are so freaking worth it!!!

If you had to evaluate your current relationship with yourself on a scale of 1-5, what rating would you give it? Are you happy with that number?

What do you like about yourself? It's OK if you can't think of anything right away. Meditate on this idea and begin looking for things you might like.

What are your strengths? You might struggle with this question. That's OK. It can take time to learn what your strengths are.

Introduce yourself to you as if you were talking to a stranger. What would you say?

Learn How to Self-Validate

An essential part of loving yourself is learning how to give yourself the validation you crave. Everyone needs validation. This is normal and not something to be ashamed of. You may long to know that you're valuable, worthy, beautiful, precious, and worth fighting for.

Unfortunately, those around us sometimes withhold validation. It could be that others don't know how to offer this, or they simply refuse to give it to you in the hopes that you will continue to seek it from them.

But the good news is that it doesn't matter who you're seeking validation from. You can learn to validate yourself. Here's how...

Focus on What Feels Good

Many years ago when I first went into AA and started seeing a therapist, she asked me to list what I was good at. I was so disconnected from this idea that I was good at anything!

I felt completely worthless. So even though my therapist meant this question to be something that inspired me to focus on good qualities, it was the opposite! I wasn't sure I was good at anything, let alone a good person.

If you're like I was and at a low point in your life where you can't see what you're good at and where your strengths lie, that's OK. (It took me a long time to be able to come up with a list of my strengths!).

Instead, focus on what feels good for you right now. Does baking feel good to you? Perhaps it's knitting or bicycling around your neighborhood. Maybe it's reading or watching TV for a few hours that makes you feel good.

Don't judge yourself for doing what makes you feel good. Instead, acknowledge that this is something that's feeding your soul and making you feel good. You don't have to explain it or share it with anyone.

Accept Your Feelings

An important part of validation is accepting your feelings. This can be difficult if you're in an environment where your feelings are regularly downplayed.

I know a gal who had a miscarriage several years ago and she was sharing with me that she had just started to feel better when a couple co-workers invited her on a walk so she went. But suddenly she burst into tears when she saw a woman playing with a toddler and those co-workers instead of supporting her through that difficult moment told her she was being dramatic!

I want to make something very clear – seriously, this is so important (and the reason I’m so adamant about making this clear is because it wasn’t something I understood because of experiences all through my life)...

You are entitled to your feelings.

Regardless of what you’re going through, you deserve to have those feelings acknowledged! Even if you’re the only one that does it. You might say to yourself, “I know you’re having a bad day. It’s OK to be (emotion like sad or angry) about (issue or problem). We’ll get through this but if you need (activity like a good cry, bubble bath, or glass of wine), then we’ll do that.”

Stand Up for Yourself

This can feel uncomfortable, especially if you’re not used to standing up for yourself. But it can be validating to do it. Look for moments when you feel trampled and respond. For example, if you have a friend that always downplays your accomplishments, you might say, “Well, I’m proud of myself. I did (awesome thing)!”

You might also say to a spouse that always badgers you to agree, “Well, that’s an interesting viewpoint but we’ll have to agree to disagree.”

You might anger those around you by standing up for yourself, but you deserve to be protected. You deserve to be validated and loved just as you are!

Consider	Share Your Thoughts
What feels good to you?	
What are you feeling right now?	
What do you need from yourself today? How will you meet this need?	
What’s one way you could stand up for yourself this week?	

Treat Yourself with Kindness & Respect

An important part of loving yourself is learning to treat yourself with kindness and respect. These two responses (kindness and respect) are the foundation of healthy relationships. Without them, relationships crumble.

But you might be wondering how you can treat yourself with kindness and respect. After all, it sounds like a couple of vague concepts. But there are practical steps you can take to show yourself love...

Challenge Negative Thoughts

Everyone has the occasional negative thought about themselves. Maybe you think you're not good enough. You're not worthy or beautiful or talented. But instead of letting these thoughts take over, challenge them.

Challenge your negative thoughts by immediately countering with three positive thoughts about yourself. For example, you might tell yourself...

- I am worthy of healthy relationships.
- I am relentless when it comes to pursuing my goals.
- I am a kind person.
- I am worthy of happiness.
- I am fearless and brave.

Do Things to Feel Good about Yourself

Try to do one thing every day that makes you feel good about yourself and improves your self-image. These tasks could be little things like striking a power pose (not sure what a power pose is? [Watch this Ted Talk from Amy Cuddy](#)) each morning, trying a new shade of lip gloss, drinking your daily water, or starting an evening meditation.

Don't be afraid to experiment while you're doing this. You might find that you don't enjoy doing a power pose or that lip gloss isn't your thing. But you might discover that you love meditating in the morning and it helps you feel good.

Distance Yourself

Not every situation or person is a good fit for you. It's OK to distance yourself from a relationship that isn't working. It's OK to walk out of a situation that is negatively affecting your mental health.

Part of treating yourself with kindness and respect is recognizing when you deserve better. You don't have to accept the status quo or stay in a relationship out of guilt. Girlfriend... please make decisions that honor who you are!!!

Treat Yourself like a Friend

Whether you've had a good day or bad one, treat yourself like a friend. Don't be afraid to ask, "What would I do for my friend if she were in this situation?"

Once you know the answer, don't be afraid to do that task for yourself. For example, you might say that if a friend had just lost her job, you'd listen quietly and compassionately. You can do this for yourself by taking the time to journal or just rant out loud. Respond to yourself as if you were your friend.

Doing this exercise might feel silly at first but the more you begin to treat yourself like a friend, the more natural it will feel. Eventually, you won't even think twice!

Choosing kindness and self-respect can seem difficult at first. This is a completely normal reaction, and it doesn't mean anything is wrong with you.

Most people simply haven't been taught that it's OK to be kind to themselves. But with practice, you can learn to love yourself by expressing respect and kindness for the person you are.

What are some negative things you think about yourself?
What are some positive thoughts you could choose instead?

What's one thing you could do today to feel good about yourself?
Is there a situation or person you need to distance yourself from?
How could you treat yourself like a friend today?

Embrace Self-Soothing Techniques

An important part of self-love is knowing how to comfort yourself after a bad day, setback, or disappointment. For some people, they aren't familiar with positive ways to self-soothe so they attempt to do it in unhealthy ways such as binge eating, excessive drinking, or compulsive gambling. Unfortunately, these choices often create chaos in other areas of your life (ask me how I know! lol).

However, there is good news! Even if you've used self-soothing activities that are destructive and painful, you can choose ones that make you feel good about yourself and don't create negative consequences for you. Here are a few ideas you could try...

Start with a Warm Cup & A Good Book or Movie

There's something soothing about holding a warm beverage. Pair it with another activity that quiets your brain such as reading a good book or watching a movie.

Of course with this approach, you want to be careful about the content you're consuming. You don't want to choose to read or watch a thriller if you're feeling anxious as that may only increase your anxiety. If you're feeling depressed and hopeless, avoid content that reinforces those feelings.

If you're looking for some books to read, here are a few of my favorite:

- [Get Past Your Sh*t](#) (I mean considering I'm a co-author this is definitely at the top of my list 😊)
- [Untamed](#) by Glennon Doyle
- [Health at Every Size: The Surprising Truth About Your Weight](#) by Linda Bacon (this has been a *life changing book* for me and it is one *that really challenged my way of thinking* after believing some things all my life. I highly recommend this book!)

And for movies? Here are some of my faves:

- Dirty Dancing
- 50 First Dates
- Overboard (the original with Goldie Hawn & Kurt Russell)

Try a Weighted Blanket (or Toy)

No, toys aren't just for kids! A good way to self-soothe can be a weighted sensory toy like a plush animal. My favorite isn't a toy but a [weighted blanket](#)! I was apprehensive at first about using this – I thought it would make me feel like I'm suffocating or too confined or too warm but I was pleasantly surprised (and thankful) to find none of that happened. Instead, the weight of the blanket calms me (imagine that – that's kind of the idea behind them LOL).

I did some research on weighted blankets because I was so surprised how well it has worked for me and found that most people using them say it makes them feel like they're being held (it kind of does now that I think about it), which in turns releases oxytocin, making you feel better.

Practice a Self-Hug

If physical affection is what you're seeking and you don't have a partner or someone else to cuddle with, consider practicing a self-hug. Fold your arms around your body and squeeze tightly to mimic the feeling of a hug. You might also say something soothing to yourself such as, "You are doing a good job" or "Everything will be OK".

Play with Color

Sometimes, the act of doing something creative is enough to self-soothe. You might consider watercolor or oil painting. If that's too messy or you don't have the energy, look for adult coloring pages/books. I love to color and one of my favorite resources for fun, unique coloring pages is [Color Monthly](#). I like that these are digital pages so I can immediately download and print them (I use card stock paper to print them on) and color right away. My all time favorite package from Color Monthly is this [Flocking Flamingos package of 10 coloring pages](#) – probably because I'm obsessed with flamingos!

Use a Diffuser

Another way to comfort yourself is to use an essential oils diffuser. Certain aromas and scents have long been linked to a decrease in depression and anxiety. That means that if you're feeling low, you might want to consider turning on a diffuser and adding a few drops of your favorite oils! I have this [inexpensive diffuser from Amazon](#) and it works just fine!

Listen to Your Favorite Music

If you're having trouble soothing yourself, consider listening to some of your favorite music. Think about a song you associate with a good time in your life and turn it up loud. Bonus points if you turn it into an impromptu dance party.

Go Quiet

While listening to your favorite music can be effective. Some people find that when they're in need of self-soothing that changing their environment to be quieter is very effective. Of course, you may not always be able to create a quiet environment if you live with roommates or family members. In these cases, noise canceling headphones or earplugs can be beneficial in calming you.

Get into Nature

Being surrounded by nature has been shown to have a calming effect on many people. Depending on where you live, you might be able to take a walk and instantly find yourself immersed in a beautiful nature scene. But if not, then consider looking online for local botanical gardens that are open to the public.

Use an App

You can also practice self-soothing techniques by using an app to help you meditate and clear your brain. One of the most popular mobile apps for this is Calm. It allows you to listen to short meditations so you can calm your racing thoughts.

Cuddle with a Pet

Cuddling with a pet can be very soothing. If you don't own a pet, contact your local animal shelter. They might be in need of volunteers to play with or cuddle with their pets. This can be a great solution if you want the benefits of cuddling but you can't have a pet in your home for some reason.

Let It Out

You can also try to soothe yourself by simply letting your emotions take their course. If you're sad and need to cry, go ahead. If you're angry, break something. This should be something of your own that will not endanger you to break. If you need to scream or curse, do that. Stop trying to keep the emotions inside and express them. You might be surprised by how calm you feel afterwards.

Experiment with Different Techniques

It's important to understand that self-soothing techniques that work today might not be effective for you tomorrow. If that happens, experiment with a different one. Just like you need many tools in your toolbox, you need many self-care strategies when it comes to soothing yourself.

Consider	Share Your Thoughts
What types of books or TV shows do you enjoy?	
What types of artistic activities do you like? Could you do one the next time you need soothing?	
What's your favorite type of music? What songs would you include on a "bad day" playlist?	
Have you tried meditating to see if it	

soothes you? If so, what were your results?	
Which self-soothing techniques have you found effective in the past? Do they still work for you?	

How to Accept Yourself Right Now

One of the best ways to practice self-love is to accept yourself just as you are. But for most people that feels like an overwhelming task. It doesn't have to be this way. You can choose to accept yourself right now...

Don't Aim for Perfect

The biggest reason that people fail to accept themselves is they think they have to be perfect. But not every bird sings the same song at the same pitch. Yet all the combined sounds make an enchanting symphony. It's the same way with you. You might stand out for one reason or another, but your song is still just as beautiful.

Adjust Your Expectations

Sometimes, the reason you struggle with self-acceptance is you expect too much of yourself. Instead of berating yourself for the project you didn't get done, celebrate what you did manage to do.

Maybe you cleaned the house or did the grocery shopping. Perhaps you showed up to sit with a friend who is going through a difficult time. Remember to praise yourself for what you're doing right!

Be Patient with Yourself

An important key of self-acceptance is to be patient. You may not be the person you want to be today but with time and self-love, it can happen. Be patient as you're learning to love yourself. The journey is worth it!

What is something you don't feel good at right now? How can you practice accepting where you are?
What expectations do you have for yourself? How do you feel when you don't meet them?
What can you celebrate that you are doing right?
How are you showing yourself patience today?

You Are Worthy

You are worthy of self-love, compassion, and kindness. You deserve to be treated with respect and patience. You are exactly where you're called to be and you're exactly who you're meant to be. Embrace this truth and watch as you bloom in the coming weeks and months!

[illegible]