

T H E

*Favorite
Self*

G U I D E



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WHO IS MY “FAVORITE SELF™”?

I didn't like myself. It seemed like every day there was a new reason to think I was too much this or not enough of that. I was stuck in a cycle of self-criticism and frustration. I was constantly trying to change myself, thinking that if I could just fix what I didn't like, I'd finally feel happy and confident. But no matter how hard I tried, I always felt like I was falling short. It wasn't until I realized that I was approaching growth from a place of self-criticism rather than self-love that things began to shift. The journey I went on combined with my professional training helped me develop the Love-Based Growth Model™ and to define my Favorite Self™ —not the version of me that I thought would be perfect in everyone else's eyes, but the version of me that felt most true, free, joyful and alive.

Creating a clear picture of my Favorite Self was a turning point in my healing journey. Instead of focusing on what I needed to change, I started focusing on what I wanted to embody. I envisioned a version of myself who lived beyond survival tactics and coping mechanisms. As I connected more deeply with this vision and actively focused on giving myself healing love, I found that the changes I desired started happening naturally. I wasn't forcing myself to be different; I was evolving because I loved myself enough to grow.

Healing is not about fixing what's wrong, but about learning to nurture and nourish yourself day-by-day. By defining, envisioning, and connecting with your Favorite Self in the ways outlined here, you will notice your mind, body and spirit opening to welcome your evolution. My hope is that, your healing is deepened and that you find new boldness to live as the person you were always meant to be.



YOU'RE ALREADY GOOD ENOUGH

Trying to change yourself because you don't like yourself is counterintuitive and won't lead to the deep confidence and self-love that your Favorite Self™ undoubtedly possesses. You're not changing because you're not good enough. You're changing because you love yourself.

Take a look at nature. Anything in nature that is not changing is not growing, and anything in nature that is not growing is not alive—it's dead. You're not changing because there is something wrong with you; you're evolving because, as a living being, you know deep down that you're supposed to grow. You're here because you want to grow in a particular direction.

In case you're having a hard time feeling like the amazing person you already are, let me remind you that you are exactly where you need to be:

- ▶ Who you are today is the version of you who loves you enough to try.
- ▶ Today, you are someone who feels the discomfort that signals to your mind, body, and soul that you're ready to evolve.
- ▶ Today, you have the courage to be vulnerable enough to learn how to grow.
- ▶ Today, you are someone who is making the necessary choices to make your Favorite Self™ possible.

One major pitfall to avoid on this journey is believing that who you are today is not enough.

Who you are is absolutely beautiful, complex, and worthy of your love and devotion. You are already equally as worthy as your Favorite Self, and growing may help you **see** your worth, but nothing that you or anyone else could ever do will increase or decrease your value.

It can take time and intentional effort, but with the right tools to reprogram our minds, we can believe in our worthiness and sincerely love ourselves at all stages.



The Personality of Trauma

Trauma doesn't just leave scars on the mind and body; it distorts the way we see ourselves. When we experience trauma, especially in childhood, it can deeply impact our self-perception, planting seeds of self-doubt, insecurity, and shame. These seeds grow over time, influencing our beliefs about who we are, what we deserve, and what we're capable of achieving. Trauma convinces us that our worth is conditional—that we must earn love, security, and acceptance by altering or diminishing ourselves to fit others' expectations.

The impact of trauma on self-perception often begins with a fractured sense of identity. When we experience emotional, physical, or psychological harm, our brains attempt to protect us by developing coping mechanisms. These mechanisms might include detachment from our emotions, people-pleasing, perfectionism, or self-sabotage. Over time, these survival strategies become ingrained patterns, shaping the way we view ourselves and interact with the world.

For example, someone who grew up in an environment where love was withheld or conditional might develop a belief that they are inherently unlovable or unworthy. This belief can manifest as an internalized narrative that whispers, "You're not good enough," "You're too much," or "You don't deserve happiness." These thoughts can be so deeply embedded that they become part of our self-concept, influencing our decisions, relationships, and the way we show up in life.

Trauma can also lead to a distorted body image and a disconnection from our physical selves. Those who have experienced physical or sexual abuse might carry a sense of shame or disgust toward their bodies, viewing them as flawed or damaged. This disconnection can make it difficult to feel grounded or safe within oneself, leading to a tendency to dissociate from one's physical and emotional experiences.

Moreover, trauma can create a constant state of hyper-vigilance, where we are always on the lookout for potential threats. This heightened awareness can warp our self-perception, as we become consumed by fear and anxiety. We may see ourselves as weak or helpless, trapped in a cycle of survival rather than thriving. This survival mindset keeps us focused on simply getting by rather than pursuing our dreams or embracing our true potential.

The impact of trauma on self-perception is profound, but it's not irreversible. Healing allows us to reclaim our sense of self, to untangle the false narratives that trauma has woven into our identity. By understanding how trauma has shaped our self-view, we can begin to challenge and reframe these beliefs, replacing them with truths that align with our inherent worth and potential.

Healing is a journey of self-discovery, where we learn to see ourselves through a lens of compassion rather than criticism. It's about acknowledging the ways in which trauma has distorted our self-perception and choosing to rewrite our story with kindness, patience, and love.

Through this process, we can reconnect with our true selves—our Favorite Selves—and step into a life that reflects our deepest desires and highest aspirations.

When we heal, we open up new possibilities. The walls that trauma built around our self-perception start to crumble, revealing a world where we are not defined by our past but empowered by our growth. In this world, we see ourselves not as broken or flawed, but as resilient, capable, and worthy of every good thing life has to offer.

DESIGN YOUR FAVORITE SELF™

We're quick to list the traits of our ideal partner or dream job, but now it's time to focus on you. Defining your Favorite Self™ isn't just about aspiration—it's about opening new portals of possibility in your mind and spirit. When you stretch your imagination to embrace a version of you free from trauma-induced patterns, you create a powerful shift. This isn't about superficial change; it's about aligning with your deepest desires and showing up in the world as the most authentic, powerful version of you. Use the journal prompts below to expand your self-perception—the you that lives boldly, heals intentionally, and expands into untapped potential.

FAVORITE SELF™ JOURNAL PROMPTS

Start your day with journaling through the day's prompt and come back to it throughout the day as you think of more. As you go through your normal routines, think back to the day's prompt and begin discerning what you'd like to integrate into your design for yourself.

Day 1: The Lifestyle of my Favorite Self

- What is a weekday in the life of your FS?
- What is a weekend like in the life of your FS?
- What does your FS prioritize with their money? Their time? Their attention?
- What types of hobbies/activities does your FS do outside of obligations?
- What does self care look like for your FS?
- What does your FS do for fulfillment in life and why?
- How does your FS make money and how much do they make?
- What kinds of skills and interests does my FS excel at?

Day 2: How does my Favorite Self look?

- How does my FS dress? What is their personal style?
- What does my FS do with their hair, skincare routine, and nails?
- What mannerisms does my FS embody? What mannerisms do they avoid?

- How does my FS walk, sit, and stand? What does their body language convey?
- How does my FS invest in their appearance? What choices do they make to feel confident and authentic?

Day 3: My FS Relationships

- Who are the most meaningful people in my FS life?
- How does my FS nurture and maintain these relationships?
- How does my FS handle conflict or misunderstandings with loved ones?
- How does my FS express emotions like disappointment, fear, anger, sadness, happiness, excitement, love, and fulfillment?
- In what ways does my FS bring joy, connection, and support to their relationships?
- Describe the types of relationships my FS has with family, a romantic partner, children, friends, and colleagues. How do these connections enrich their life?

Day 4: How does my FS think and feel?

- What are my Favorite Self's core beliefs about themselves?
- How does my Favorite Self view their strengths and weaknesses?
- What thoughts and feelings does my Favorite Self have about their relationships?
- How does my Favorite Self feel within these relationships—secure, valued, understood?
- How does my Favorite Self feel about their work and the impact they make in the world?
- What types of things does my Favorite Self say to themselves daily?
- How often does my Favorite Self engage in activities that bring them joy, peace, and excitement? What are these activities?
- What brings my Favorite Self a sense of grounding, happiness, and purpose?

Day 5: Favorite Self™ Vision List

Based on your reflections in the previous journal prompts, compile a detailed list of the qualities, habits, and values that define your Favorite Self™. Consider aspects like:

- How they approach life's challenges
- The way they treat themselves and others
- The routines, activities, and experiences that fill their days
- The mindset and attitude they embody

Day 6: Favorite Self™ Vision Board

Now it's time to visualize your Favorite Self™. Create a vision board that represents the life you aspire to live as your Favorite Self™. You can use digital tools like Pinterest or Canva to curate images, quotes, and symbols that resonate with your vision. If you prefer a tactile approach, gather magazines, clippings, and art supplies to craft a physical board. Place this board somewhere you'll see it daily as a reminder of who you are becoming.

Day 7: Listen to the Voice Inside

Reflect on the differences between where you are now and your Favorite Self™. Avoid negative self-talk! Remember, your body believes everything you say, so frame your thoughts with kindness and acceptance. Use these questions as a guide:

- What internal or external limitations are holding me back from becoming my Favorite Self™?
- If I feel a sense of urgency to change, where is it coming from? How can I be patient with my journey?
- How can I practice self-love and acceptance today while still embracing my growth?

BECOMING YOUR FAVORITE SELF™

Without your decision to invest in yourself this way, you're making an agreement with your Favorite Self™ that you will become her/him.

Exercise #1

Morning Visualization

Each morning after journaling, take time to imagine that you are going through your day as your Favorite Self. When you visualize, smile and allow yourself to experience the feelings that come with living as your dream self. Do this for 5 min at the start of your day. You can also daydream yourself into the joyful emotions of your FS throughout the day.

Exercise #2

Favorite Self™ Affirmations

Your body believes every word you say - both out loud and in your mind. Whatever you repeat in your mind, words, and habits defines the way you move through life, your personality, and the life you create for yourself. For this exercise, you will reference your Favorite Self™ Vision List and Vision Board to create custom affirmations to transform the way you regard yourself. As you repeat, memorize, and use these affirmations, you will begin to embody more and more of the person you'd like to become.

Affirmation Writing Tip - Say "May I"

Sometimes "I am" can feel insincere. If that's the case for some of your affirmations, try using "May I" instead to gently usher in new ways of operating. Rather than saying, "I am emotionally regulated," which can feel like pressure to perform, you might say, "May I embody my most emotionally regulated self yet." May I could offer you more grace as you grow.

WHAT DO I DO NOW?

As you heal different wounds, you may find that parts of your design for yourself are no longer needed or desired - that's normal and it means you're growing! Your design for your favorite self can change as many times as you do. As a matter of fact, having flexibility on your journey is a great sign that you're not bound by the need for perfection and control.

Defining your Favorite Self gives you a reference for adjusting your mindset, lifestyle and behaviors. It can be a powerful starting point, turning point or supporting anchor for other parts of your growth process. Practicing the exercises outlined here and revisiting the journal prompts should give you better insight into where your key triggers are and what roadblocks are challenging for you. This information is perfect to bring into therapist, coach, or simply to inform yourself on what healing modalities would serve you best.

Defining your Favorite Self™ isn't just an exercise—it's a commitment to ongoing growth and healing. By investing in this process, you build a foundation for deeper self-awareness and intentional living. Remember, your Favorite Self is always evolving, just like you. Embrace this journey with compassion, curiosity, and an open heart, knowing that each step forward brings you closer to the life you truly desire. As you continue to grow, revisit these practices, refine your vision, and celebrate the progress you've made.

Thank you for investing time and effort into yourself. You are worthy of a life well-loved. By choosing to evolve, you uplift everyone you encounter, making the world better for all of us. You're on the right track and ready for what's next. If you're eager to learn more tools for healing and growth, explore the resources at welloved.co. You deserve the love, joy, and fulfillment that come from living as your Favorite Self™.

Raven Thissel is a Certified Integrative Trauma Coach with a distinctive approach to healing. Drawing from her expertise as a Certified PREPARE/ENRICH relationship coach and Integrative Nutrition Health Coach, Raven weaves together somatic healing practices, meditation, mindfulness, and a holistic understanding of the mind-body-spirit connection. Her online courses, live classes, and one-on-one coaching programs empower individuals and couples to release insecure attachment styles, break free from anxiety-based living, and shed wounded energy. Through her specialized methods, Raven helps clients unlearn trauma-induced habits, rewire neural pathways, and build a fresh identity that embraces a well-loved approach to life and love.

