

# **The Potent Magic of Approval**

## **by Stewart Blackburn**

In this era of self-help and personal development it is a radical notion to genuinely approve of ourselves as we are right now – no changes, no corrections. This is a tall order and goes against what so many of us have been taught: that we need to improve ourselves before we can be fully loved or take up our power.

Improving yourself is not what approval is all about. Truly approving of yourself is to feel good about who you are in this moment. You might want to change things later, but this is about seeing that you're fine as you are now. Self-approval is another way of talking about self-love. And we need a strong diet of self-love to develop into all that we can be.

Approval is much more than a sense of acceptance. Acceptance is a mental act. It removes active resistance to something and that's very useful. But it is emotionally neutral. Approval is a positive emotional act which opens the gates of energy. Approval says "Yes" to the life within us.

The idea then is to fully approve of ourselves: who we are, what we are, and how we are. A view of ourselves as students or adventurers allows us to see ourselves growing and expanding without having to have arrived anywhere in particular. We're becoming, and where we're at in that process is exactly where we need to be.

What we're looking at here is the amazing on/off energy switch of approval/disapproval. Acts of approval include appreciation, gratitude, fun, arousal, excitement, joy, and love. Acts of disapproval include shame, guilt, criticism, judgment, anger, and hate. Each of the approval ones work pretty much the same as the other approval ones. And each of the disapproval ones works the same way as the other disapprovals.

It doesn't matter which mode or particular style you want to use, if it's positive the energy will flow and if it's negative, the energy will not flow. And when that energy doesn't flow it first builds up in the energy body and then affects the physical body in ways that can look like pain and disease.

In order to understand emotionally the difference between acceptance and approval take a look at how you feel as you read the following sentences. As you do so, notice any resistances to these words. Do any of them trigger you? Take your time to fully feel your responses.

It is okay for me to be who I am.

My feelings are a natural part of who I am.

I approve of pleasure in all its forms.

I agree that everyone has the right to their own way of being.

I approve of who I am in this world.

I approve of how I have lived my life.

The emotional heart is the regulator (or valve) of life energy. When our hearts are open, energy flows easily. When we disapprove of something, even a little something, our heart closes and restricts the flow of energy. This is the same as the degree to which we are aligned with our Higher Self/Soul or not. If we pay attention we can be aware of our energy state and make changes as necessary to increase the flow of our personal energy.

When we disapprove of ourselves, either through guilt or shame we lose our self-esteem and feel bad about ourselves. This feels awful. It's no wonder that many people are afraid of their feelings. If what they feel is self-loathing and misery, why should they be willing to endure that?

The universal expression of approval is the smile. It is also a very potent symbol of approval. As such, it is a valuable tool in changing a disapproval to an approval. One actively smiles inwardly into what was previously disapproved of and allows the pleasurable energy to be enjoyed. Saying "yes" to yourself as you do this also helps. So does, if you can, saying "I approve of this." Smiling inwardly is also a potent technique for inner healing. Rather than focusing on a problem or probing what's wrong, a loving approval can often stimulate the healing energy we are looking for.

The principle that *The Moment Of Power Is Now* means that we can be effective only when we recognize and accept the present moment. Waiting for something else to happen before we do anything removes whatever power we might have had. And when we can go beyond accepting the present moment and approve of it in some way, we energize this moment dramatically so that we can creatively alter aspects of the next moment. That is the magic of approval: our ability to adjust our energy with a simple emotional act.

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