

25 Ways We Discount the Positive

(and how to gently challenge those thoughts)

Discounting the Positive

Discounting the positive means finding ways to dismiss or minimize good things — compliments, progress, or accomplishments. Survivors often learned this as a survival strategy in childhood, but today it can keep us stuck.

Do any of these sound familiar?

Common Phrases

- They were just being polite.
- They didn't really mean it.
- That doesn't count.
- It was just luck.
- Anyone could have done that.

Gentle Challenge: Try saying, “Maybe it is true, even if it feels uncomfortable right now.”

Minimizing Effort or Success

- Sure, I did it, but it took me too long.
- I only finished because someone helped me.
- That's not an achievement — it's just the bare minimum.
- It wasn't that hard.
- Other people have done much more than this.

Gentle Challenge: Ask yourself, “Would I say this to a friend who did the same thing?”

Discounting the Positive, Continued

Shifting Credit Away from Yourself

- I didn't really contribute anything.
- It was all because of them, not me.
- I just got lucky with timing.
- Anyone in my place would have done the same.
- It doesn't matter — I won't be able to do it again.

Gentle Challenge: Try the “pie chart” exercise: notice even the smallest slice of credit that belongs to you.

Criticizing Instead of Celebrating

- I did well, but I should've done better.
- It's too small to matter.
- I passed, but barely.
- It's nothing compared to what I should be able to do.
- I only did well because expectations were low.

Gentle Challenge: Pause and name one thing that went well before naming what could be improved.

Discounting the Positive, Continued

Questioning the Compliment Itself

- If they knew the real me, they wouldn't say that.
- They just wanted something from me.
- They were exaggerating.
- They didn't see the mistakes I made.
- They were only saying that to make me feel better.

Gentle Challenge: Consider the source: if the praise came from someone who knows you or is skilled in that area, maybe it deserves more weight.

♥ How This Helps You Heal

Discounting the positive was once a survival skill — lowering expectations, avoiding attention, or bracing for disappointment. But in adulthood, it keeps you from feeling proud of your progress or believing in your strengths. Learning to gently challenge those dismissive thoughts helps you notice what's real: the effort you've made, the growth you've achieved, and the support you deserve. Over time, that shift builds self-trust, increases motivation, and allows you to celebrate healing as it happens.

You're Not Alone.

Healing isn't easy, and there are no shortcuts. But you've already made it through the hardest parts—and that strength is still with you. This resource was created to support you on your path. Take what helps. Leave what doesn't. Keep going.

◆ More Support Is Available

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that's gentle, grounded, and real.

Your voice matters.

If this resource was helpful, confusing, or brought something up for you — I'd love to know. I'm always working to make these tools more useful and more supportive. You can share feedback (even anonymously) here:

<https://www.communiDID/feedback>

☀ This document is more heartfelt than fancy—made to support you, not impress anyone.

