

women's
services & resources
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY



10-DAY
CHALLENGE



TEN DAY CHALLENGE

Instructions

Introduction: Every day, thousands of men and women all over the world are searching for ways to feel good about themselves. Even the most confident of people are looking for opportunities to change who they are in hopes of becoming better. Unfortunately, those standards of perfection and self-worth are defined by the ways of others rather than ourselves. By conforming to worldly ideals and expectations, it is impossible to live a life of happiness and self-esteem suffers.

Be You is a campaign aimed to help you find your own self worth and build a life of health and happiness. This campaign program consists of a 10-Day Challenge that is intended to provide education, resources and experience to each of us suffering from perfectionism and lack of self-acceptance. Each day implements a different activity that will promote change in one's life, allowing healthy habits and thoughts to be formed. By participating in the next 10 days, you will have the opportunity to redefine what self-worth means to you and create a life of purpose and meaning.

#byuBEYOU

How This Works: For the next week and a half, you will be given 10 activities that will challenge you to improve self-acceptance. Each day will consist of one 30-min activity that is designed to help increase your level of self-acceptance and confidence, a journal prompt to promote continual change even after the 10 days are finished, and a social media photo challenge so you can share your success with those around you!

What You'll Need: Along with this guide, you will need a journal or something to write in, and a camera to record your thoughts and experiences for the next ten days! Don't forget to use the hashtag #byuBEYOU so others can share your experience! Also feel free to visit beyou.byu.edu for more resources and upcoming events to help you complete the challenge.

GOOD LUCK!



DAY ONE CHALLENGE: **Be Purposeful**

“Goal setting is one of the basic tools used by individuals to assist in setting a direction and achieving it. Successful individuals often set long- and short-term goals for personal development, self improvement, reducing errors, becoming more focused, and building better internal and public relationships.”

-Anonymous

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Challenge: Create a SMART goal describing what you would like to accomplish in the next 10 days as part of the Be You Challenge. Write it down and hang it somewhere you will see it everyday.

Journal Prompt: What are you hoping to achieve the next 10 days? Record the goal you just made in your journal. Why is this goal important to you? How will it help you make a change to reach your full potential?

Photo-Op: Using the hashtag **#byuBEYOU**, post a picture on social media to help raise awareness of the Be You 10-Day Challenge! Tag one friend to complete the challenge with you. Let's spread the word!

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Over the next 10 days, the goal of the Be You challenge is for you to experience a journey of overall self-improvement. One of the best ways to ensure success is by setting a goal. We set goals because we have things that are important to us which influence who we want to be and what we want to do. We set goals because it brings clarity, meaning and purpose to our lives. We set goals to push ourselves and ultimately reach our full potential. Goals help us achieve our dreams, and as author C.S. Lewis says, “You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.”

A dream written down in detail becomes a goal. A goal broken down into steps becomes a plan. A plan backed by action can make your dreams come true.

An effective strategy for creating a goal and following through is by making it SMART. SMART stands for: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-Bound.

By creating a SMART goal, you will be providing yourself direction and understanding for the next 10 days about what you want to achieve and how you are going to achieve it. When you have something to work for, your experience will be more fulfilling and you will walk away with success.



DAY TWO CHALLENGE: Be Grateful

“Reflect on your **present blessings**, on which every man has many, not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some.”

-Anonymous

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Challenge: Think about a person who has been influential in your life. Take a few moments to send them a thank you card or give them a call to express your gratitude. You could even send a quick text... Any expression of gratitude, regardless of how small, can make an impact!

Journal Prompt: Who has had the greatest influence on your life? Write down your thoughts about these people, including who they are and why you are grateful for them. What do you have to be grateful for in your life? Every day may not be good, but there is something good in every day. What has been good about today?

Photo-Op: Using the hashtag #byuBEYOU, post a picture on social media of you and a person you are grateful for or who has positively influenced your life. Tag them and let them know why you appreciate them.

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Scientific research shows that **S**one of the greatest contributing factors to overall happiness in your life is how much gratitude you show. The benefits of appreciation can cause you to be happy, physically healthy, have peace of mind, and have more satisfying personal relationships. Research has also shown that being grateful is linked with positive emotions, such as hope, pride, happiness and contentment. Those of us who consciously focus on gratitude experience greater emotional wellbeing and physical health than those who don't.

One of the many studies which proved this theory was published in 2013. Findings revealed that people who show more gratitude in their lives reported to live with more vitality and agency, and were filled with less anxiety. This study also found that thankfulness was directly connected to a trait of better health, which encompassed physical health, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and optimism.



DAY THREE CHALLENGE: **Be Happy**

“Optimism is a happiness magnet. If you stay positive, good things and good people will be drawn to you.”

-Mary Lou Retton

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Challenge: Spend 30 minutes doing something that makes you happy. This could be reading a book, going for a walk, or calling a friend.

Journal Prompt: What activity did you choose to participate in today? Why does that activity make you happy? It is important to be happy every day, so what is something you can do each day to continue this feeling of happiness? What can you do to make lemonade when life gives you lemons?

Photo-Op: Using the hashtag #byuBEYOU, post a picture on social media of you doing that which makes you happy and tell everyone why it makes you happy.

Optimism is associated with success and happiness more than any other quality. Optimistic thinking promotes positive moods, vitality, and high morale. Researchers have shown that optimists are more likely to persevere and to engage fully even in the face of difficulty. It motivates us and leads us to take initiative, which can positively affect our mental and physical health.

So why is happiness linked to successful outcomes? It isn't happiness alone that causes one to be successful, but it is the effect of happiness that stimulates success. As we have a happy outlook on life, we remain confident in ourselves and our abilities. Being negative bogs us down and can cause us to become critical of ourselves and our surroundings.

Of course it's okay to not feel happy sometimes. It is just important to not let that unhappiness make us feel ungrateful or resentful. Happiness is meant to empower us. It is a feeling that is contagious and that can spread to others around us. As we are more optimistic, we can see our life for how it really is and enjoy the good all around us.

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DAY FOUR CHALLENGE: **Be Mindful**

**“Do not dwell in the past.
Do not dream of the future.
Concentrate the mind on the
present moment.”**

-Buddha

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Challenge: Have a social media fast. For the next 24 hours, turn off all access to Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, blogs, and other forms of social media. Instead of spending time on social media, use the time to reflect on your own life and be mindful of everything around you.

Journal Prompt: Anytime you are tempted to log onto social media or visit a website, pull out your journal instead. What are some things that you have done today in place of social media? What have you noticed in the environment around you? How has it made an impact on your day?

Photo-Op: No photo challenge today as part of the social media fast!

A factor of self-acceptance that is extremely important is the ability and willingness to let others see you for who you really are. Living mindfully means experiencing life daily without worrying that others are judging you negatively. It means that you are in the moment and not concerned about how you come across to others. A dream written down in detail becomes a goal. A goal broken down into steps becomes a plan. A plan backed by action can make your dreams come true.

We live in a world that is oversaturated with blogs, social media accounts, websites, magazines, TV shows and movies that tell us who we should be. We virtually live through others to experience the latest fashion or the seemingly perfect life. We are bombarded with instructions on how to obtain that coveted thigh gap or how to follow the next fad diet and achieve “the perfect body.” Rather than recognizing the environment surrounding us and the impact it has on our self-esteem, or rather than genuinely engaging with the people around us, we put up a front and wish that we were somewhere or someone else.

This is not to say that all social media is bad. It is great to have role models and resources to turn to that help make us better people. We just need to remember who we are and be that person. Positive change only happens when we are mindful of the responsibilities and opportunities we have in our lives, instead of comparing ourselves to others. Recognizing and appreciating our own lives will surely lead to complete and unconditional self-acceptance.

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DAY FIVE CHALLENGE: Be Fearless

“We must live by faith and not by fear.”

-Quinton L. Cook

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Challenge: Spend 20 minutes participating in a faith building activity. This could include reading your scriptures, praying out loud, or even meditating.

Journal Prompt: What was the faith building activity you participated in today? Write down your experience, including how you felt. Did you do it with anyone or by yourself? How has this activity helped you achieve your goal for the 10-day challenge?

Photo-Op: Using the hashtag #byuBEYOU, post a picture on social media of something that reflects the activity you chose to help build your faith. It can be a photo of you, or simply a picture of a quote that inspires you. Let your faith help build the faith of others.

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Did you know that religious involvement, particularly the focus of having faith, could be important for your health? Those who worship, pray, or tend to have less depression and anxiety, and a greater sense of well being. Research using MRI's suggests that faith actually alters the structure of the brain in people at high risk for depression. It is also linked to better physical health and healthy behaviors such as less smoking, more exercising, and having a better diet. Religious people typically have less cardiac disease and hypertension and better measurable immune function.

It turns out, however, that faith itself doesn't mean much. What matters is whether faith is carried out through some sort of action, such as gathering with others in a faith community, spending time in prayer or meditation, reading scriptures or volunteering. Conforming life around your faith is where the biggest benefits are found. Spiritual cultivation is the ongoing commitment to the transformation of one's life for the better.

It is so easy in today's world to be fearful. Fear of past choices or fear of failing is very apparent in the present culture. This fear can hinder you from reaching your full potential. Instead of focusing on those things that make you afraid, use your energy to put your mind towards building your faith.



DAY SIX CHALLENGE: **Be Healthy**

“Goal setting is one of the basic tools used by individuals to assist in setting a direction and achieving it. Successful individuals often set long- and short-term goals for personal development, self improvement, reducing errors, becoming more focused, and building better internal and public relationships.”

-Anonymous

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Studies have shown there are many mental-health benefits of physical activity. Every year, statistics show that being active improves mood and lessens symptoms of depression and anxiety. Physical activity could be anything from weight lifting and aerobic exercises, to participating in sports, to yoga and dancing. The possibilities are endless. As you engage in physical activity, you will learn to appreciate your body and witness the power that it has to offer. As explained by the Beauty Redefined Foundation, “Physical activity is shown to lead to body satisfaction when persons develop an appreciation of what their bodies can do.” What can your body do?

There have also been many research studies that reflect the benefits of nutrition. Eating healthy does not mean participating in the latest diet or food restriction fad. It means eating the proper amounts of fruits, vegetables, grains and proteins everyday. It means recognizing when your body is hungry or when it is full. Your body needs to be fueled properly in order to function properly.

Health is defined to be the state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. This definition highlights how important it is for us to take care of ourselves. Being healthy is not the result of a quick fix or secret trick. It happens slowly over a long period of time. It is the result of a series of small manageable actions. By taking care of our bodies, we will be empowered to live a healthy, and well-rounded life.



DAY SEVEN CHALLENGE: **Be Positive**

“Somehow we have come to believe that greatness is only for the chosen few, for the superstars. The truth is, **greatness is for us all.** This is not about lowering expectations; it is about raising them for every last one of us. Greatness is not in one special place, and it is not in one special person. Greatness is wherever somebody is trying to find it.”

-Nike

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Challenge: Write yourself a positive motivational phrase and hang it next to your SMART goal where you can see it.

Journal Prompt: Record your motivational phrase in your journal. Also, take a look at your SMART goal and reflect on how the past few days have gone. Have you been able to reach your goal yet? Even if you haven't, what positive changes have you noticed?

Photo-Op: Using the hashtag #byuBEYOU, post a picture on social media of your positive motivational phrase.

#byuBEYOU

It has been said that those with a positive mind-set are likely to be more accepting of themselves than those with negative thoughts. When we believe in ourselves, we better understand that we are in control of our lives. While we may not always be able to control what happens, we can control how we approach or feel about a situation.

Positive self-acceptance is linked to self-motivation. As a motivational factor, being positive allows us to see our own potential and abilities. It allows us to cope effectively with change, it helps us to be more social and accepting of others, and it provides emotional stability and integrity. On the contrary, negative thoughts about ourselves can lead to drug and alcohol abuse, depression, eating disorders, and other unhealthy habits. The reasons to be positive are quite clear.

As you continue on with this 10-day challenge, it is important to remain positive and keep your head up! While the activities only last 10 days, the hope is that all of us can find lasting change from our experiences. Know that you can achieve greatness! The only way we can do that is by being confident and accepting of ourselves.



DAY EIGHT CHALLENGE: **Be Charitable**

“We can make every day better for each other. If we’re all on the same team, let’s start acting like it. We’ve got work to do. We can cry about it, or we can dance about it.”
-Kid President

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Challenge: Perform an act of service in your home or community. It can be for someone you know, or even someone you have never met.

Journal Prompt: What was the act of service you participated in today? Why did you choose that act of service? How did your actions bless the life of the person you served? How did it make you feel?

Photo-Op: Using the hashtag #byuBEYOU, post a picture on social media showing what you did as your act of service.

We are constantly hearing that when we serve other people, we will forget about ourselves. It is true! The more time we spend thinking of others, the less time we spend thinking of ourselves and judging who we are. Over the years, many theories have been supported showing that people who serve more are more happy, and happy people serve more. It is a continuous cycle that keeps on giving.

Many journal articles suggest that those who volunteer more maintain a greater sense of well-being throughout their life. Those people are known to live longer and have less physical health problems. They suffer less from negative mental issues such as depression and anxiety. They overall experience a greater satisfaction with their life.

It doesn’t matter what the service activity is that you are doing, but rather it is the time and quality you put into your effort. Also, the motive behind giving service can be a large determinant on the experience you have. Are you doing it for gain and recognition? Or are you doing it because you genuinely want to help someone? As we take the time to make life better for others, our enjoyment and quality of life will increase substantially.

#byuBEYOU



DAY NINE CHALLENGE: **Be Social**

“You can make **more friends in two months by being interested in people than you can in two years of trying to get people interested in you.”**
-Anonymous

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Challenge: Say hello and smile to at least 10 people you have never met. This can be at school, at the store, or on the street. For an extra challenge, strike up a conversation with someone you have never met.

Journal Prompt: Write about the experience you had saying hello to new people today. How many people say hello back to you? Did you make a new friend? If so, write down what you learned about that person. How did you feel as you strived to make new friends and be more social?

Photo-Op: Using the hashtag #byuBEYOU, post a picture on social media of you and a friend and share what makes that friend so special.

Having friends and social ties is an essential element to positive mental health and emotional well-being. Consistent evidence has shown that social integration reduces the risks of depression, anxiety and other mental insecurities. This social interaction can come from friends, family or significant others. So long as the influence from others is positive, then it can improve our life.

Being part of a positive relationships means becoming acquainted with those who love you and accept you for who you are. It is common to change things about ourselves so certain people will approve of us. While this can make us feel good at times, the friendships and feelings associated are only temporary. Lasting friendships and happiness occur when we are with people who genuinely care about our well-being and appreciate us. The only way to find those people is by being ourselves and staying true to who we are.

As your circle of friends grows, your confidence will grow. As your confidence increases, your friendships will grow, too. It is a never-ending cycle that keeps on giving! When we think about the people who are most important in our lives, it is usually those who are loving, kind, compassionate, and accepting. Let us strive to be that type of person and the friend that every person wants.

#byuBEYOU



DAY TEN CHALLENGE: Be You

**“You were made to be awesome.
-Kid President**

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Challenge: Flood social media by posting a picture of you, explaining who you are. Include at least one way that the 10-day challenge has helped you this week.

Journal Prompt: What does it mean to “be you?” Write down a summary of who you are and what makes you special. For 10 days, you have worked on becoming more accepting of yourself, with the intent of improving your overall quality of life. What worked the best for you? What was your SMART goal that you set at the beginning? Did you achieve it? Even though the 10-day challenge is over, what will you implement to continue embracing who you are?

Photo-Op: For today’s 10-Day Challenge, don’t forget to use #byuBEYOU when flooding social media! Show the world who you really are and be confident in yourself!

We live in a world today where society has defined who we need to be. Rather than trusting in ourselves, we look to others for direction and guidance on how to live our own lives. We then become self-conscious and at times even feel like we aren’t enough. That’s when we start becoming less like ourselves and more like everyone else.

Having confidence in our own worth and abilities, along with self-respect, can greatly impact our health and overall sense of life. Self-confidence influences not only the mental state of well-being, but the physical and social aspects as well. Louise Hart said, “Self-esteem is as important to our well-being as legs are to a table. It is essential for physical and mental health and for happiness.”

There are so many people and so many different personalities in this world. We were not created to all be the same, but to be individuals. We were created to be unique and to be ourselves. It is absolutely impossible to be exactly like someone else or to please everyone, but it is completely possible to be exactly you. As a result of the 10-day challenge, remember who you are. Remember to think back on those things that promote positive self-acceptance and apply them to your everyday life. Never forget to BE YOU!

#byuBEYOU