

Parental 'Accepting Myself' Exercise

Instructions: This exercise is designed to help you challenge the belief that, if you have not been successful in an aspect of your parenting, or if someone criticises your parenting, you are a totally hopeless failure as a parent.

To overcome your negative thinking (which leads to low self esteem), complete the top half of the circle by writing things you do well as a parent in the spaces with pluses (+), and writing things you don't do so well as a parent in the spaces with minuses (—). Then complete the bottom half of the circle by writing in things you do well and things you like about yourself, as well as things you don't do well or don't like about yourself in other areas of your life.

To counter the tendency to put yourself down when things aren't going so well with your parenting, ask yourself the following questions:

- Does this negative situation (mistake, failure, rejection, criticism) detract from my good qualities?
- Does it make sense to conclude that 'I am totally hopeless' because of one or more negative things that have happened?

