

### ***What, This Old Thing? In Praise of Praise***

Accepting praise is a positive sign of self-acceptance. Accepting praise establishes and develops interpersonal relationships because it requires an exchange of ideas and opinions. Accepting praise does not mean that you're done growing or improving – it simply means that you recognize that someone saw something in you worth acknowledging.

Giving genuine praise feels good. When you reject the praise, you reject the person. It's like handing back a present that someone has just given to you. And that feels bad for everyone.

Here are ten questions to explore your relationship with praise.

1. What kind of praise feels most uncomfortable for me to receive? What's that about?
2. What kind of praise feels comfortable for me to receive? What's behind that?
3. Am I more comfortable receiving praise from people I know vs. strangers? What about this might be significant?
4. What do I believe about people's motivations to give me praise?
5. Who do I know who receives praise with poise? What can I ask them about this that might help me?
6. How would I really feel if people stopped praising me?
7. How does giving genuine praise make me feel?
8. How might I feel if I just accepted the praise? Undeserving? Egotistical? Needy?
9. What would I want someone to say when I praise them?
10. What would happen if I just said, "thank you" and smiled?

### **Recommendations:**

Ask yourself the questions above, and see what surprises you or concerns you. Then ask yourself:

- What implicit or explicit messages are you sending your colleagues, direct reports, superiors, family and friends about your self-acceptance and self-esteem in how you accept or reject their praise?
- What messages are you sending them about how much you value their opinions and feelings in how you accept or reject their praise?
- What do you want to do differently? Who can help inform you and support you in this?
- When are you going to start engaging in your new behavior?
- What will success look like and feel like?