

# *love your dragon*



*monica batiste*

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*Your dragon is you,  
Love your dragon  
'Cause dragon loves you*

## Table of Contents

<b>Self-esteem</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>The Five Aspects of Emotional Intelligence</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Self-awareness</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Self-regulation</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Motivation</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Empathy</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Social Skills</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Loving your self</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Being present</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Friendship</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Laughter</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>Move your body</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Be You</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Surround yourself with people that care</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>You are already perfect</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>play</b> .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
<b>Empathy</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>Acceptance</b> .....	<b>23</b>
<b>References</b> .....	<b>24</b>

## Self-esteem

Self-esteem and self-love grow when adults take loving care of themselves, and extend this loving care to the children around them. Helping children identify positive behaviours teaches them self-regulation. Children want to feel good, they want to love and care for themselves. When you help a child build a positive inner mirror, you will help that child have a bright and wonderful future.

This book is designed to help children identify the actions that grow self-love and self-care. We often spend time children how to be caring to one another, but the most important action a child can learn is how to care for themselves, as this is the only way they can care for another.

It's not vanity to teach children self-love. It's important and necessary for children to know they are important and valued in society. From this place children take the steps to live a healthy and productive life, taking responsibility for the environment and the people around them.

People with high self-esteem make positive change, innovative solutions to old problems, and bring higher care and love to the people around them.

Self-esteem is the most important virtue for all of the other virtues to function effectively, and it's the fabric of high emotional intelligence.

### **How to use this book**

Each illustration is for children to enjoy, colour in, draw around, and write words or stories about themselves.

Each illustration has accompanying text for the parent or teacher to discuss how we take care of ourselves, and why it is so important.

## The Five Aspects of Emotional Intelligence

### **Self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills**

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the capacity to recognise your emotions, to have the ability to make healthy choices based on those emotions, and the resilience or intelligence to keep growing in a positive way.

Emotional intelligence is a key factor for a successful and happy life.

Emotionally intelligent children communicate effectively with each other, giving them an advantage in achieving their goals, and at the same time supporting the emotional needs of others.

Emotionally intelligent children don't depend on others to solve their problems, and they accept personal responsibility for how they feel.

Emotional intelligence builds confidence and intuition, which leads to higher intelligence in other areas.

## *Self-awareness*

Self-awareness is the ability to recognise emotions, moods and their effect on self and others. Children can be helped to understand emotions through the adult naming the virtue they are demonstrating. Adults learn to understand and recognise their emotions in the same way a child does, however an adult can use self-reflection and focus to find their own virtues.

Naming virtues and becoming aware of how feelings affect behaviour, helps develop self-awareness.

Drawing or writing about emotions and virtues helps the brain consolidate learning into long-term memory and can assist in behaviour modification.

## *Self-regulation*

Self-regulation is the process of recognising emotions and acting on them in an appropriate way. Teaching children to become aware of how they feel, and to understand their virtues allows children to develop the ability to recognise their emotions and regulate behaviour for healthier outcomes.

An adult can become aware of their feelings by ‘checking in’ to see how they feel, and then using this as the basis to choose behaviour that is most appropriate.

An example of self-regulation is when you are feeling angry, detach yourself from the anger and choose an appropriate behaviour. For instance, a parent might be angry with their child for their behaviour, but rather than lashing out with feelings, the parent could detach, take a deep breath and choose an appropriate consequence for the child that would help the child grow in a positive way.

Remind yourself that all feelings are okay; it’s what you do with feelings that is important.

Using detachment and appropriate behaviour develops self-regulation and builds trust, self-acceptance and confidence. Self-acceptance leads to non-judgement, acceptance and empathy towards others.

## *Motivation*

Motivation is the ability to become excited about, and to take action towards achieving goals and enjoying life.

Motivation occurs when there is a belief that goals are possible.

Belief grows when there is faith that appropriate action will be taken to achieve goals.

As small goals are achieved the confidence to take action towards bigger goals improves.

Like a perpetuating cycle, ideas turn into goals and goals are fuelled by motivation and belief, which leads to confidence, action, and faith in fulfilment. This is often followed by another idea.

Skills and virtues are developed through experience. This means that if you develop a virtue in one area, you can use that virtue in another. For example, practising oral presentations in school grows confidence in speaking, which leads to the confidence to speak to a potential employer or in public presentations.

Acknowledging virtues in yourself and others grows a strong sense of belief in yourself in other situations.

The opposite is also true; if you tell yourself you've made a mistake, you can't do it or think about the consequences of failure, your motivation shrinks. If you tell someone (including yourself) they are bad, or will make a mistake, then this person will lose faith in themselves, and will have low motivation to achieve.

To improve motivation encourage yourself to accept there is no right or wrong, only choices that lead to consequences, and some things will work out and some things won't.

If you make a choice that leads to something you *don't* like, make a new choice towards something you do like, and take away the pain of making a mistake. This will free you to try new things.

When you make choices that lead you to something you *do* want, take the time to name your virtues and congratulate yourself (this imprints your brain to success).

Feel the enthusiasm of your success (this will consolidate the habit of success and lead you towards the next positive step).

This shift from 'right or wrong' will motivate you in powerful and positive ways. You will take advantage of opportunities, embrace success and expect positive outcomes.

The stress on being 'right or wrong' causes changes in the brain that lead to resistance to try new things. Success can only occur if you are willing to take chances and make changes.

By encouraging a non-competitive self-accepting attitude, judgement is relaxed and community is embraced.

This doesn't mean there is no correction or encouragement to improve – there is, but adults and children are more likely to stay motivated and grow empathy when they are engaged in making empowered decisions.

## *Empathy*

Empathy is the ability to 'walk in another person's shoes'; it's the ability to know what another person is feeling. When you have empathy, you care about what the other person is feeling, and make choices to support their growth.

Empathy is developed when we seek to find virtues in others. As people learn to tune in to others, connections grow, which leads to unity, compassion and empathy.

Using the language of the virtues helps dissolve cultural and racial barriers, as virtues exist in all languages, cultures and races. If you look for them, virtues can be found everywhere.

Encourage children and adults to pay attention to how another is feeling in order to foster teamwork.

Notice colleagues at work and look for hidden virtues. These small acts of compassion will lead to greater motivation in the workplace and increase positive feelings and empathy.

## *Social Skills*

Social skills include the ability to connect with and communicate with others by using language, body language, facial expression, the reading of inflections, and other non-verbal cues.

Social skills evolve when people communicate and support one another to achieve their goals.

When you have strong social skills, you are adept at communicating your needs, and adept at eliciting desired responses from others.

The social networker can influence others towards a common goal. A strong leader has strong social skills; they know how to influence, motivate and encourage others, and have the skills to negotiate and resolve conflict.

Social skills build bonds with friends and colleagues. The social networker has empathy to offer support, guidance or correction when needed, and the intelligence to recognise the emotional or sensory language of others in order to communicate in the method that is most suitable.

*Why do we do the things we do?  
Because that's how much we love ourselves*

## Loving your self

### *Being present*

When you love yourself, you are able to be in the present moment.

Being present means tuning into what is around you and experiencing the world with all senses. Being present allows you to let go of stress and breathe in peace.

When you or the children are feeling agitated, this is the perfect opportunity to become present.

### **How to be present**

#### *Feel*

Ask children if they can feel their feet connecting them to the earth? How do their clothes feel against their skin? What is the texture of their skin? What does the sun feel like? What does the air feel like? Can they feel their heart beating?

#### *Taste*

What does food taste like? What does the air taste like?

#### *Sense*

What does emotion feel like? What does the moon/sun/wind/air/clouds feel like right now? Describe.

#### *Hear*

What can you hear? How many sounds are around you? What do you tune into? What do you tune out? What does sound look like?

#### *See*

What can you see? Describe something you like. What colours do you see? What colours don't you see? What is the difference between colours? If colours had a sound, what would they sound like? If colours were an animal, what would that animal look like?

When you are practising presence, you begin wherever you are, and what is around you. After a few minutes, you can extend the experience of presence to explore a deeper meaning to what is around, to help children experience now. Presence allows the brain to relax and release or lower stress hormones. Presence raises awareness and improves the ability to absorb information. Presence improves self-love and self-care because it supports safety and security. When children are afraid – they move out of the moment and into a fearful space. Bringing children back to the present moment helps them learn how to self-regulate their emotions and gives them a tool to move out of anxiety and into security.

*Smell flowers*



*Because flowers are beautiful*

## *Friendship*

*Share Your Love with a Friend*



*Sharing love makes you feel good*

*Laughter*

*Laugh*



*Because it's funny*

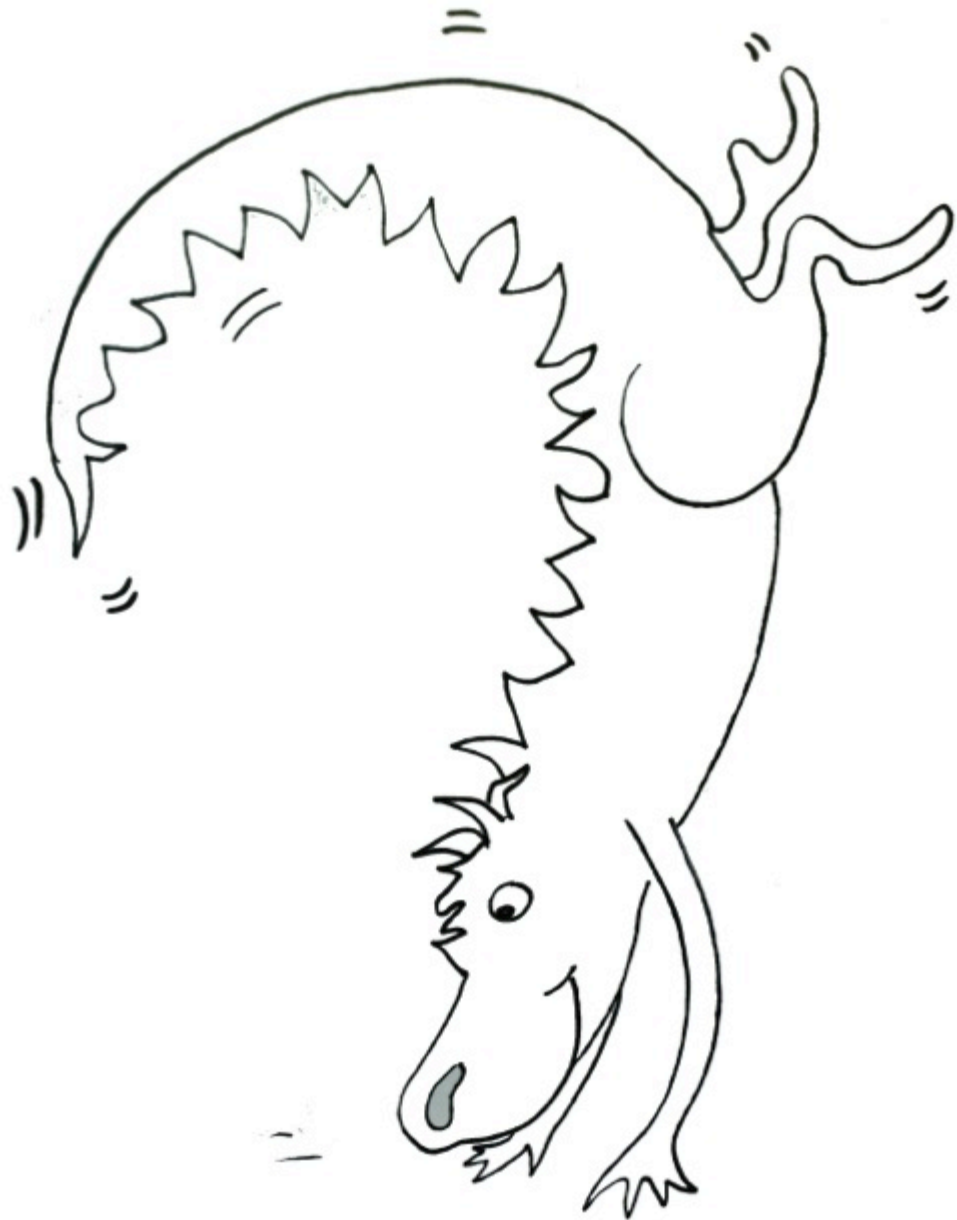
*Move your body*

*Dance your way*



*Be You*

*Walk your own way*



*Dress up*



*Surround yourself with people that care*

*Love your family*



*You are already perfect*

*Love your toes*



*Toes are wiggly*

*Play*

*Jump in puddles*





*Because it's fun*

## *Empathy*

*Be nice to those bigger than you*



*Be nice to those smaller than you*



*Because our spirits are all the same size*

## Acceptance

*Accept yourself, just as you are*



*You are already beautiful*

### *Looking after you*

Talk about your feelings

Be kind to yourself

Try new things

Paint, just for fun

Play music, just for fun

Stay away from people that are mean

Say no when you need to

Say yes when it feels right

Be grateful for all of the good things in your life

### *LOVING YOU*

Eat healthy foods

Drink plenty of pure water

Sleep when you need to

(Draw some healthy foods)

### *About Monica Batiste*

Monica has worked in the fitness and health industry for thirty years. She is a yoga teacher, author and artist.

She loves children and hopes to help all children learn about their emotions to help them make healthy choices.

She lives with her husband in north Brisbane and between them they have four daughters and seven grandchildren.

You can download free resources from her website [www.monicabatiste.com.au](http://www.monicabatiste.com.au)

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