

How to Not Give a Fuck About What People Think About Your Tattoos

6 HELPFUL TIPS TO HELP YOU
STOP WORRYING AND START
LOVING YOUR BODY ART.



So many of us know the anxiety that comes with getting a new tattoo and then worrying what people will say about it.

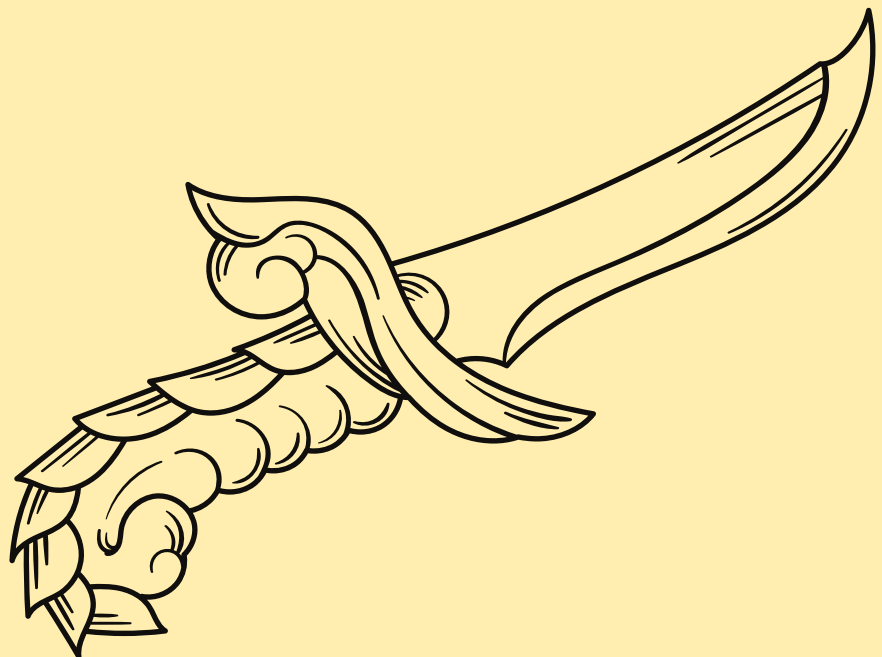
This anxiety gets even worse when we ourselves have doubts about the tattoo or are unhappy about the way it turned out.

It's sobering to realize how little control we actually have over our lives. Anyone who is grieving knows this.

But the reality is that we cannot control what others think of us. So how do we let go of control and stop worrying so much?

This guide is for those who are anxious about being out in the world with their new ink.

So whether you're grieving your new tattoo but still able to function or spending sleepless nights wondering what you got yourself into, here are 6 steps that will help you not give a fuck what other people think about your tattoos (or, you know, just you in general).



1. Cultivate Compassion for Yourself (and Talk Back to That Inner Critic!)

Your body is a sacred manifestation of everything you've experienced and worked for. Your tattoos are a part of that, and they, like you, are worth honoring.

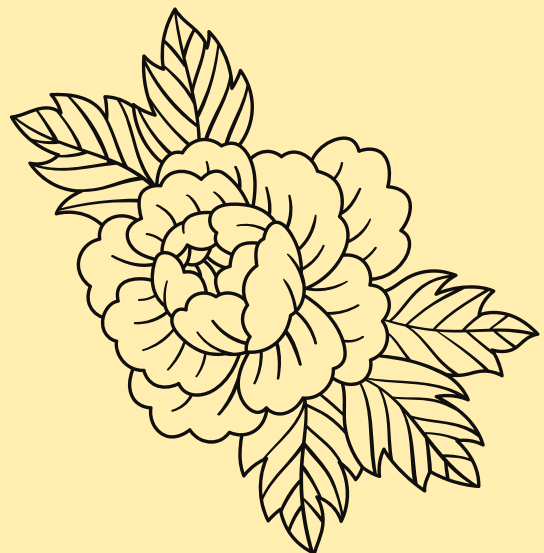
No one else has lived your life—your body and your tattoos are for you and you alone. You have come so far, have done so much, and deserve to feel at home in your body.

Bring kindness and compassion into every interaction you have with your temple, even if it's only in a small way.

One way you can do this is to talk back to the critical voice in your head.

This is a trick my therapist taught me that has helped a lot, especially with treating myself with more compassion, and it's actually at the root of cognitive therapy.

So when your critical inner voice says things like, "Wow, you were stupid to get that tattoo," or "I can't believe you let them give you such a huge and dark tattoo! What were you thinking?", you can say, "I am not stupid; I made a decision and am doing my best to live with it."



2. Remember That You Don't Have to Tolerate Disrespect From Anyone, Ever.

Many of us get to a place about our tattoos—especially when we're in that anxiety-ridden, panic stage after just getting a new piece—where we're really hard on ourselves.

We're having trouble cultivating compassion for ourselves, and then we have to go out in the world and are terrified of what others will say about our new ink, perhaps because we have already been our harshest judges.

But even in this state when we're having trouble being kind to ourselves, we do not have to tolerate disrespect from other people.

If anyone is rude enough to make a negative comment about your piece, first, know that you did not deserve that comment.

Second, take a deep breath and recognize that when someone makes a negative comment, it's a reflection on themselves, not on you.

Trust me, I know it's truly hard to see this in the moment, especially if you're already feeling insecure.

You can create some space around that negativity, see it for what it is (unenlightened bullshit), and move on.

It might take you a few hours. It might take you a few days or weeks. Your experience will be unique, and your feelings are valid.

Allow yourself space to process your feelings and then, onward!



3. Use Self-Talk to Manifest Your Power.

Many of us don't realize just how scared we are or how hard we're being on ourselves until we hear ourselves actually say something positive and reassuring.

Your body is your own. Your body is incredible. Do not let anyone disrespect your temple and manifestation of your consciousness. You got this.

I like to talk myself up a little when I feel especially vulnerable about a new tattoo and say something like, "You are a badass, smart, and successful person. You do not need to tolerate disrespect from anyone because you deserve kindness."

This type of self-talk helps me realize that I AM actually a badass, smart, and successful person and that I DON'T need to tolerate disrespect from people who feel so poorly about themselves that they need to criticize ink deposits in someone else's dermis.

This positive and uplifting self-talk helps me see myself for who I am and helps me focus on what's important—my relationship with the tattoo and MYSELF.

Yes, even while I am grieving my new ink.



4. Make a Plan for Haters.

If you have anxiety like I do, it may help to play out the worst-case scenario in your head and have a plan for haters.

Sometimes I imagine what the worst thing someone could say to me about my tattoos is, and then I rehearse an answer to make myself feel more prepared.

This exercise is also very telling because, guess what—that critic in my head? They have WAY meaner things to say than what anyone else has ever said about my tattoos.

No one has ever told me my tattoos are ugly, improper, or stupid.

But that doesn't stop my brain from thinking that my self-worth will be compromised if someone says anything remotely judgmental or negative.

I have news for me, and I have news for you all—nothing anyone says, thinks, knows, or believes about you can damage your self-worth. And once you realize that—like, truly realize it—you are free.



5. Explore Your Feelings.

I've struggled with bad social anxiety since I was a child, which has included panic attacks, avoidance of almost all social events, and a lot of isolation.

A couple years ago, I realized the root of my social anxiety.

Want to know what it is?

It was that I had never recovered from the trauma of having adults in my childhood tell me bad things about myself, threaten me, or physically harm me when I did something “wrong.”

I was not raised in an emotionally mature household.

As an adult, my body and psyche carried the trauma of those events, and literally every time I left the house, I was petrified that every person I saw was going to say or do the same things to me that my parents and other people said or did that made me feel ashamed, unworthy, and unsafe.

To trauma survivors, even being seen can feel unsafe—which was the root of my social anxiety.

Sound familiar?

People seeing my tattoos made me scared as fuck!

My body and mind were literally WAITING for people to respond to me the way those people in my childhood did.

I was tense and sometimes so anxious that I would have panic attacks.

My body remembered the trauma and was preparing to relive it, because I learned as a child that the world is not a kind and safe place for me to be.

It sounds dramatic, but this was my reality for many years.

And you know what? A couple of people DID make me feel that way as an adult.

But almost no one has.

I realized that I have been living in literal fear of what other people think and what they will say to me because of my trauma.

That's not healthy, sustainable, or even true. People are not out there waiting to say bad things. In fact, most of them are kind.

I'm slowly growing out of this mindset and processing my trauma.

It's not an easy path, but just realizing this truth about myself makes me feel so much more free and like I can actually breathe and live my life as who I really am without being so scared, especially about what people say or think about my tattoos.

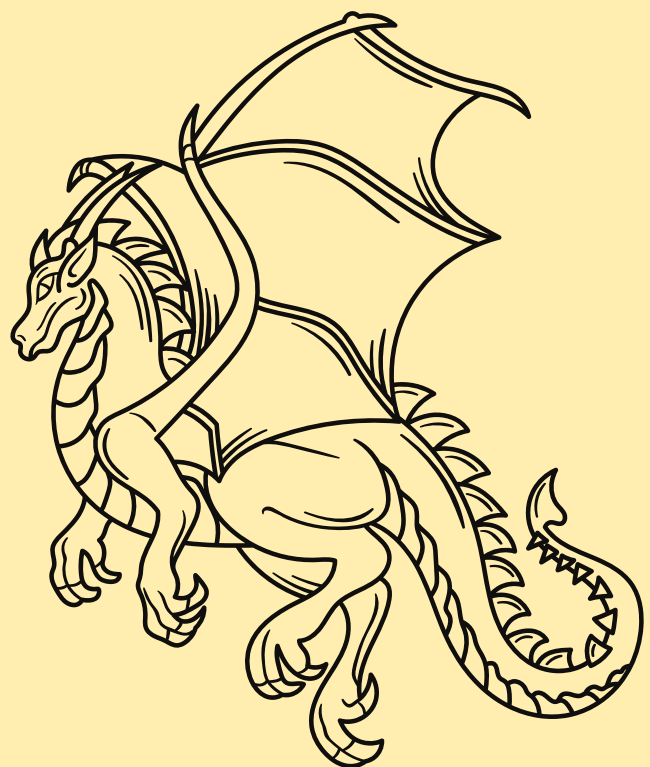
So what's beneath your anxiety about your new tattoo, what people will say about it, or about you in general? What is being threatened?

When you realize that you are an infinite being and your body is merely a tiny part of you and your physical manifestation on this earth, you realize you can't be threatened in any way that affects your self-worth.

You are holy, worthy, beautiful, timeless, and ethereal, with or without your tattoos.

You are not your body, mind, thoughts, or experiences. You are free to grow and heal.

You are free to understand yourself better and observe what triggers you instead of staying completely immersed in your mind's experience of this reality.



6. Be Assertive + Set Boundaries.

I can't say how much of a conversation boundaries need to be in our society and our personal lives. And that is absolutely true when it comes to our tattoos.

Setting boundaries when it comes to people who disrespect you or have something negative to say can be immensely helpful in creating a safe space for yourself in the world.

In fact, setting boundaries is the only healthy way to create a safe space for you to exist in the world.

Boundaries around our tattoos can sound like this:

- “I’m not willing to discuss my tattoos with you. If you bring them up again, I will end this conversation.”
- “I feel hurt when you make mean comments about my tattoos. I expect you not to say anything negative about my ink.”
- “My tattoos are important to me, and I won’t tolerate any negative comments you may have about them.”
- “I’m sensitive about my new tattoo, and I’m not ready to talk about it.”
- “I’m uncomfortable with you commenting on my body art in that way. Please stop.”
- “I’d prefer not to discuss my tattoos right now.”

- “My tattoos are very personal, and I’d rather not talk about them. Let’s talk about something else.”
- “Thank you for being honest and sharing your feelings with me. However, it’s my body and my choice, and I’m not looking for advice or feedback about my tattoos.”
- “I won’t talk to you if you’re going to make negative comments about my body art.”
- "My body art is really personal and significant to me and it's not up for discussion. Please don't bring up my tattoos anymore in conversation."
- "I feel hurt and disrespected when you comment on my body art in a negative way. Please don't make negative comments about my appearance."

If you're a rookie at setting boundaries like I was, these statements will sound aggressive.

Please repeat after me: *They are not aggressive. They are assertive. There is a difference.*

Start cultivating assertiveness in your life and stand up for yourself. Create a safe space for you and your tattoos to exist.

You deserve to feel safe, healthy, and happy when existing in the world and interacting with others!



More Resources

Therapy

Working with a therapist—something I put off doing for 15 years—has also been immensely helpful to me, and not just about my tattoos.

It took me a few tries to find the right person, and I have switched therapists over the years as my needs have changed, but I would absolutely advocate for exploring your feelings more with the right professional.

I have found it insanely enlightening, and I have grown more through working with therapists than I have at any point throughout the last decade of my life.

You can start searching for a therapist [here](#).

Self-Help Books

- *Inner Bonding*, by Margaret Paul
- *Set Boundaries, Find Peace*, by Nedra Glover Tawwab
- *Adult Children of Emotionally Immature Parents*, by Lindsay C. Gibson
- *The Body Never Lies*, by Alice Miller
- *A New Earth, The Power of Now, and Stillness Speaks*, all by Eckhart Tolle
- *The Subtle Art of Not Giving a Fuck*, by Mark Manson
- *Feeding Your Demons*, by Tsultrim Allione
- *Daring Greatly*, by Brene Brown
- *Codependent No More*, by Melody Beattie

Thank you!

Thank you for reading this guide. I hope you found it helpful.

Please let me know your thoughts or share feedback by emailing me at:
hello@jennsaharIsrael.com.

I am always available to speak with you for a free coaching session.

Sending tender thoughts, immense love, and soft comfort to you as you grieve.

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