

# WELLNESSMONTHLY

Overcoming Inadequacies to Become More Than Enough | **May 2023**



Mental Health Awareness Month has been observed in the U.S. since 1949. This May the theme chosen by the [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#) is *More Than Enough*.

## Overcoming Inadequacies to Become More Than Enough

Deeply rooted feelings of inadequacy affect many people's physical and mental health. The practice of self-love with humility is not an easy state to achieve.

Identifying as "not enough" or "less than" is so common among U.S. adults that *More Than Enough* was selected by the [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#) (NAMI) as the theme for Mental Health Awareness Month (May 2023). According to NAMI:

"The More Than Enough campaign creates an opportunity for all of us to come together and remember the inherent value we each hold – no matter our diagnosis, appearance, socio-economic status, background or ability. We want every person out there to know that if all you did was wake up today, that's more than enough. No matter what, you are inherently worthy of more than enough life, love and healing. Showing up, just as you are, for yourself and the people around you is more than enough."

### Inadequacy and Inferiority

Inadequacy manifests itself in a number of ways. It may be described as low self-esteem or lack of confidence; feeling inferior, incompetent or stupid; or suffering from a sense of guilt, shame or powerlessness. These feelings are usually not based on a person's actual performance or abilities.

Certain related behaviors may be subconsciously driven. Adverse childhood experiences are often cited as a root cause of "not enoughness" in adulthood. Children internalize psychological wounds caused by sources such as an overly critical, inattentive or narcissistic parent; cruel siblings or friends; or verbally or physically abusive authority figures. Some children are not encouraged to do things that help build self-confidence. Some parents lay the groundwork by mocking their children's personality traits, comparing their accomplishments or scolding them for being too sensitive.

Some additional contributing factors include:

- Untreated mental health conditions like depression, anxiety and PTSD
- Social pressures requiring conformance to attain a sense of belonging

- Unrealistic expectations to be a “perfect” employee, parent or partner
- Fear of repeated failure to sustain a relationship or achieve career goals
- Socio-economic status and growing up in a “disadvantaged” environment
- Having a physical disability, deformity or poor body image

Inadequacy involves a complex set of emotions. Severe feelings of inferiority or chronic low self-esteem may be characterized as an inferiority complex. The American Psychological Association defines an inferiority complex as inadequacy or insecurity stemming from actual or imagined physical or psychological deficiencies.

**“I’m gonna like me cause I’m loved and I know it, and liking myself is the best way to show it. I’m gonna like me. I already do! But enough about me. How about you?”**

*– Excerpt from “I’m Gonna Like Me: Letting Off a Little Self-Esteem,” by Jamie Lee Curtis and Laura Cornell*

People who feel “less than” often withdraw to cope with difficult social situations. They may suffer anxiety from imposter syndrome (feeling like a fraud). Other associated signs and symptoms include depression, negativity, low motivation, inability to accept compliments or take pride in successes, perceived weakness, poor sleep quality, endocrine disorders

## Did You Know?

**More Than Enough** is just one of the themes for Mental Health Awareness Month. [Mental Health America’s May 2023 campaign](#), *Look Around, Look Within*, focuses on how your surroundings impact mental health. Related topics include safe housing, healthy home environments, neighborhoods and towns, the outdoors and nature.

and decreased immunity. In some cases, people have suicidal ideation or develop substance addictions.

A superiority complex is the flip side of an inferiority complex. For example, a person might exhibit aggressive, competitive behavior, inappropriately seek attention or refuse to admit mistakes. There are various theories about the causes of a superiority complex – it might be a need to hide deep feelings of inferiority, a desire to control others or a mistaken impression of one’s own abilities.

## What Can You Do?

To feel more secure with yourself and overcome feelings of inadequacy:

1. Talk to a psychotherapist to better understand your feelings and their root causes.
2. Take medications as prescribed for diagnosed, treatable mental health disorders.
3. Write down goals you can reasonably achieve and monitor your progress.
4. Use professional, peer and family networks to get support when you need it.
5. Take steps to pursue new interests, skills and expertise; take a class or start a hobby.
6. Learn to regulate emotions and do affirming self-talk; negative emotions fuel inadequacy.
7. Surround yourself with positive people who care about and believe in you.
8. Practice loving-kindness meditation for yourself and extend your love to others.
9. Build a growth mindset by focusing on your strengths and ability to improve your situation.
10. Worry less about what people think of you and disassociate yourself from their judgments.

References:

- [Counseling & Psychiatry Center](#)
- [Good Therapy](#)
- [Medical News Today](#)
- [Psychology Today](#)
- [Psychreg](#)