

## SELF-ACCEPTANCE PROCESS AS AN IDEA IN THE CREATION OF GRAPHIC ART

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### *Abstract*

*The process of creating art is often closely intertwined with the direct experiences of an artist. Various emotions experienced during the journey towards self-acceptance have the potential to serve as sources of inspiration, with empirical experiences encompassing a range of feelings such as sadness, disappointment, or even feelings of inadequacy, to acceptance and gratitude in everyday life. Efforts to depict the journey of self-acceptance involve presenting excerpts of self-acceptance stories, the acceptance process, and the array of emotions felt by the artist into graphic art. The symbolic manifestation of the artwork is supported by realistic figures, presenting the journey of self-acceptance with relevant idioms to support ideas using high printing techniques.*

*Keywords: self-acceptance, gratitude, graphic art, high printing*

### **A. Introduction**

#### **1. Background of Creation**

In life, various emotions are often experienced by humans, which can sometimes be difficult to control, such as the anxiety that arises from seeing something possessed by others that is not possessed oneself. This often leads to a lack of gratitude and a tendency to constantly compare oneself to others. This was personally felt when peers achieving success in their respective fields were observed, such as participating in international exhibitions, having extensive connections, always selling their works, running successful businesses, and being able to buy what they want with the money earned from their hard work. Social media also contributes to increased insecurity through friends' posts frequently appearing on the feed, prompting the posts to be hidden to avoid feeling hurt. Feelings of worthlessness often arise, leading to questions about the purpose in life.

According to Marianto (2019: 243-244) in the book *Seni & Daya Hidup dalam Perspektif Quantum*, feeling is one of the special powers of the human body. With feeling, one becomes aware of something, whether through sight, hearing, smell, touch, perception, or a combination of more than one sense. With feeling, we can not only interpret reality as it is and present it in black and white, but we can also break that reality

into fragments and layers, and then reassemble it into a new pattern that is more meaningful to the individual. In the context of fine arts, artworks are created through a reflective process that combines various elements of feeling to produce deep and meaningful works. There is often a sense of having nothing, being unable to give anything, and being unable to do anything, leading to deep disappointment from the constant comparison of personal achievements with others.

In early 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic occurred and a return home was made, feelings of being adrift in the anxiety of determining a path to the future were experienced. Peers' successes were observed, and attempts were made to follow in their footsteps, but only half-heartedly and not to the fullest due to indecision about pursuing future endeavors. Envy and jealousy towards others' successes had tainted life, triggering unhappiness and a life full of negative burdens. It was eventually realized that everyone has different life paths and purposes.

In September 2022, peace was felt with the awareness of different goals and backgrounds of each person. This moment of acceptance resulted in a calmer state, clear thinking, and the realization that others' success could not be a benchmark for personal success. The change also influenced the produced works, which, initially featuring free and general objects with little meaning, transformed into expressions of the heart with the image of a girl representing the creator.

The drive of self-acceptance feelings has altered the perspective on life. It is hoped that the emotions poured into the artworks, besides serving as a form of self-appreciation, also act as an application of the self-acceptance concept. With the realization that life is a gift from God, the meaning of gratitude, comfort, and accepting strengths and weaknesses without comparison to others began to be understood. Life comparisons are now seen as triggers for continuous growth, not as a competition with others. The experience of self-acceptance is manifested in graphic art using relief printing techniques to highlight objects, create pseudo textures, and emphasize emotions, experiences, and thoughts.

## **2. Creation Formulation**

Based on the background description, several creation formulations arise, as follows:

- a. How is the process of self-acceptance transformed into a creative idea?
- b. How is this idea visualized in graphic art?

## **3. Objectives**

The objectives of this writing are:

- a. To express feelings about the journey of self-acceptance in life.
- b. To share the suggestion that art can be used as a therapeutic means to release problems.

## **B. Method of Creation**

### **1. Concept of Creation**

The moment of self-acceptance is incredibly challenging to achieve, and thus, numerous obstacles are faced on this journey. Up to the time of writing, the true essence of self-acceptance has not yet been fully grasped. Self-acceptance is the extent to which one can recognize and acknowledge personal characteristics and utilize them in navigating life. It is manifested in the acknowledgment of strengths and weaknesses without blaming others, coupled with a continuous desire for self-improvement (Handayani, Ratnawati, & Helmi, 1998).

The complexity of self-acceptance experienced is described in detail by the views of Muryantinah Mulyo Handayani, Sofia Ratnawati, and Avin Fadilla Helmi, and is considered highly relevant. Numerous obstacles must be overcome to achieve self-acceptance, ranging from recognizing and acknowledging personal characteristics to accepting weaknesses without blaming others. The following are some crucial concepts of self-acceptance outlined in this Final Project:

#### **a. Concept of Self-Acceptance**

##### **i. Javanese Culture**

In Javanese culture, the concept of "nrimo ing pandum" or willingly accepting all of God's gifts is highly relevant. "Nrimo ing pandum" means accepting and not complaining about one's shortcomings. Three psychological aspects that form this philosophy are gratitude, patience, and acceptance (Maharani, 2018). Being more open-hearted in facing personal shortcomings and not complaining about limitations is strived

for. By integrating this concept, inner peace is hoped to be found and full acceptance of oneself is aimed to be achieved.

## **ii. Western Psychological Theory**

Carl Rogers stated that those who feel liked, accepted, and capable usually have self-acceptance. People who reject themselves are generally unhappy and unable to form and maintain good relationships with others (Wayne, 1993). This was also experienced. Previously, self-rejection was always felt, accompanied by feelings of unworthiness and a lack of social connections, leading to poor relationships with those around.

## **b. The Feeling of Self-Acceptance**

The feeling of self-acceptance is the process of embracing all aspects of oneself, including weaknesses and strengths, with full awareness without surrendering to those shortcomings. Here is a further explanation:

### **i. Psychological Theory**

Self-acceptance is an attitude where one accepts oneself objectively, recognizing unique talents, abilities, and general values, as well as having a realistic acknowledgment of limitations (Reber, 2010). This theory is highly relevant to personal experience, which has led to the realization that self-acceptance means accepting oneself with all strengths and limitations.

Personal experience in the process of self-discovery also brings awareness to the need to approach each problem more wisely. When the works and achievements of campus friends are seen, a sense of being less productive is often felt and difficulties in socializing are encountered. It is realized that the basis of the spirit to create, aside from the drive from within, is the environment and friendships. A lack of relationships and interactions leads to a lack of enthusiasm to create and feelings of inferiority.

As a person who frequently wavers about life goals, it is realized that the lack of enthusiasm to create may stem from uncertainty about the future as an artist. More time is spent on other activities such as online selling, creating content, and learning music. The different focuses and goals of friends cause a sense of being unable to reach their level. It is understood that happiness and fulfillment do not require being the same as others. The days are lived by doing different things with different people, shaping different characters and goals.

By realizing these things, a more mature approach to problems that previously disturbed feelings is strived for, so that problems that should not happen can be avoided. Gratitude is begun to be instilled, and others' achievements are seen as motivation. Many changes are felt, such as not needing to think about what others have achieved, with focus placed solely on personal goals.

Based on these experiences, an interest in reflecting on the experience of self-acceptance as an idea for creating graphic art has arisen. These experiences are used as material for reflection and self-introspection. Art therapy is a creative process that connects thoughts and feelings using art as a medium for communication (Farokhi, 2011; Gussak, 2007; Malchiodi, 2003; Rubin, 2001; Bowdler, 1998). In this Final Project, an exploration of how art therapy can be used as a tool to facilitate communication and self-understanding is undertaken. Art is viewed not just as the final aesthetic result but also as a process of self-exploration involving the mind and emotions. Art is utilized as a medium for communication, allowing feelings that are difficult to articulate with words to be expressed.

## **2. Concept Realization**

The following are some elements, principles, and elements of fine arts that will be realized in the form of graphic art:

### **a. Line**

According to Dharsono (2004: 40), lines are also symbols of expression from an artist's feelings, such as the lines found in non-figurative art or expressionism and abstractionism. Lines function as logical signs in exact sciences, symbols of information in logos and traffic signs, as well as representations in illustrations. In this final project, lines are a visual element and a tool for personal expression, creating dimension and volume in objects.

### **b. Plane**

According to the KBBI, a plane is a flat surface with defined boundaries. In this final project, artworks will be produced in various print sizes and planes with different dimensions, using paper as the medium. The variation in media sizes allows for broader creative expression and exploration of different appearances and feels. Using various media sizes results in interesting and diverse print artworks, providing a rich visual experience for the viewers.

### **c. Color**

According to Karja (2021), color is light and energy, visible due to reflection through all types of particles, molecules, and objects. There are various wavelengths that can be categorized as light. The choice of color in this final project is crucial in creating relief print artworks. Black is chosen to depict the main objects and supporting elements such as plants and flowers. This color choice aims not only to reflect the journey toward self-acceptance involving emotions far from happiness and gratitude but also to create an aesthetic and minimalist impression. With this approach, the form of the objects in the artwork can stand out without distraction from excessive color combinations.

### **d. Texture**

Pseudo-texture in this final project allows for the creation of a realistic texture appearance and feel in flat prints. Visual texture includes simulation, abstraction, and artificial texture in art and design. Simulated texture looks like the substance but is not real. Simulated textures are deliberately created to visualize real textures or to depict the creator's imagination (Gong & Shin, 2013). Pseudo-texture in printmaking refers to the relief print technique that creates the illusion of texture and visual depth. Using linoleum for printing various materials and structures creates a deep visual and tactile experience.

### **e. Illustration**

Illustration is defined as a medium of visual expression involving the use of images or drawings to convey stories, concepts, or ideas. According to Fleishman (2004), illustration can explain the meaning. It can take the form of photographic works or realistic drawings. The form used depends on the need, but essentially it can be seen by the eye. In other words, illustration can create a style, a form of metamorphosis, or translate an object from an emotional and physical perspective. Primarily, illustration can influence and even provoke its audience. Illustrations in the final project's graphic works depict narratives and convey messages illustratively, using images of human faces and plant objects as main elements.

### **f. Symbol**

De Saussure states that a symbol is a sign indicating a relationship between the signifier and the signified, which is non-arbitrary to some extent. However, Peirce viewed it differently (Cristomy, 2004: 109-145). Symbols in this final project, such as faces reflecting identity and flowers symbolizing hope and beauty, are not merely visual depictions. Deep meanings and emotional dimensions are conveyed through these

symbols, allowing the message of the visual expression to be felt more profoundly by the audience.

### g. Composition

According to Herlina (2007), composition is the arrangement of image elements within a space/format. The face figure is the center in the final project's composition, surrounded by floral motifs, plants, and other objects. The aim is to create a dramatic harmonious visual unity, combining various forms and styles to stimulate the audience's feelings with complex visual dimensions and narratives.

## C. Creation Process

### 1. Pre-creation

#### a. Reference Artwork



**Image 1**

Kathleen Powell, *Wildwood Dreamer*, 2000  
(<https://pin.it/5eNQNaYc5>, 11/5/2023)

Kathleen Powell's work, titled *Wildwood Dreamer*, visualizes a beautiful woman figure with a composition of ornaments that reinforce the depiction of femininity, such as plant tendrils, flowers, and butterflies. The above work serves as a reference in creating figurative objects in the graphic art. The depiction of realistic visual objects and dominant body gestures in the work can be interpreted as symbols to convey the concept or content of the artwork to the viewers.



**Image 2**  
Karin Rytter, Rite of Spring  
(<https://pin.it/5yck3GpNx>, 11/5/2023)

The second work to be referenced is a high-relief print work. The high-relief print work of artist Karin Rytter is referred to as a source of inspiration. Captivation is felt due to its beauty and visual complexity. The floral form, layout, and plant tendrils in this high-relief print work will be referenced.

## **2. Creation**

### **a. Tools**

Tools referred to here are the instruments used to support the process of printmaking and the printing of artworks. Several tools used include:

1. Carving Knife
2. Rubber Roller
3. Glass Jar Lid
4. Spoon
5. Writing Utensils
6. Cloth Rag
7. Scrap Pieces of Linoleum



## **b. Materials**

1. Linoleum
2. Printing Ink
3. Paper

## **c. Technique**

In the process of creating graphic art, various techniques are employed in their application. Each artist has different preferences for techniques, depending on their suitability and comfort in the artistic creation process. The relief printing technique has been chosen as the method to realize ideas in creating artworks. Linoleum, often referred to as linoleum rubber, is used in the relief printing technique. It is carved to create small trenches on its surface to create a master for printing.

## **d. Stage of Formation**

### 1. Layout or Sketching

Creating a layout or sketch on the surface of linoleum rubber. This initial step involves sketching with a pencil on the linoleum to facilitate the subsequent carving process. The sketch is evaluated for its quality and allows for corrections before being reinforced with a pen to facilitate the carving process.

### 2. Carving Process

This process involves carving parts of the sketch pattern onto the surface of the linoleum. For wider carvings, a large U-shaped carving knife can be used, while for smooth and thin carving lines, a V or small U-shaped carving knife is recommended.

### 3. Printing/Transferring Process

After carving the linoleum rubber, the next step is to print it onto paper. Ink is prepared and applied to the linoleum by rolling it evenly with a rubber roller. The paper is placed on top of the linoleum, pressed down, and rubbed with pressure using a glass jar lid to ensure a perfect print.

### 4. Post-Printing Stage

#### a. Drying Process

The printed papers are arranged in rows on the floor to expedite drying.

#### b. Framing Process

The final stage involves framing the artwork with a wooden frame to preserve its longevity, enhance its beauty, and fulfill the requirements of the final project.

### **3. Post-creation**

Based on the concept of creation, manifestation, and the process of realization, some graphic art pieces themed "Self-Acceptance Process as an Idea in The Creation of Graphic Art" have been produced. The process of self-acceptance is visually depicted in this work. Each created piece will be accompanied by:

- Photo of the artwork,
- Artwork details such as creator's name, title, year of creation, technique used, dimensions, and edition,
- Description explaining the overall artwork, including its form and atmosphere.

a. Artwork 1

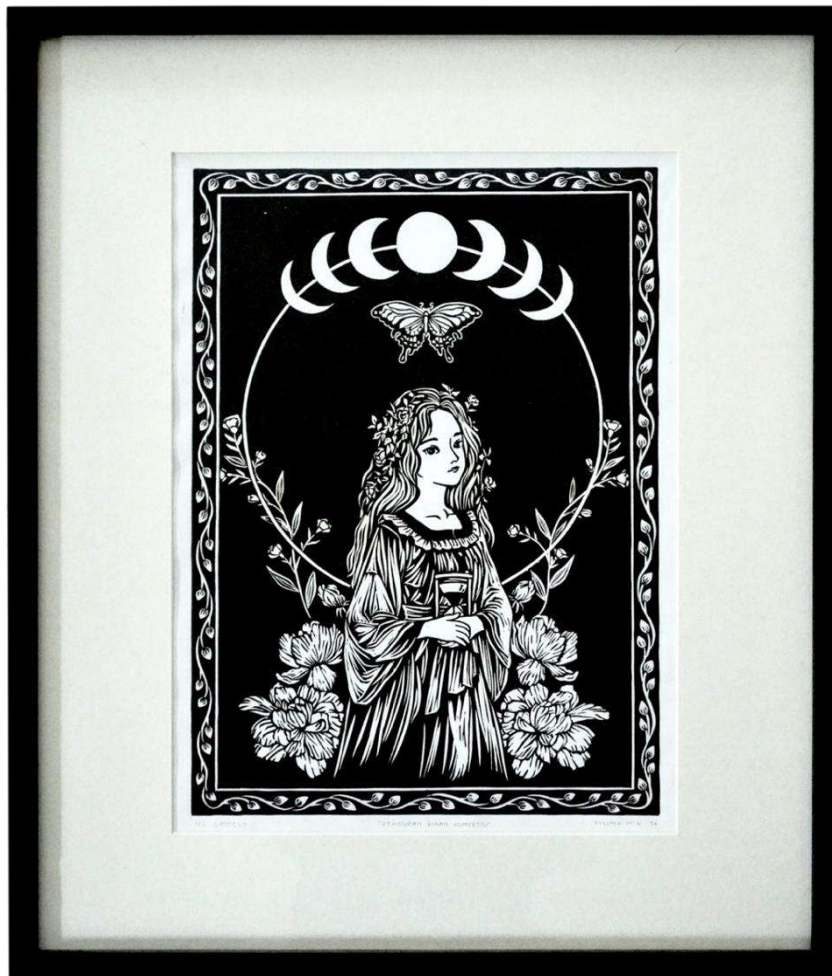


**Image 3**  
Firluna Maungidhotul Hasanah, *Begin to Understand*, 2024  
Linocut on Paper, 30 x 40 cm  
(Source: Personal documentation)

The graphic artwork titled "Begin to Understand" measures 30x40cm. The phrase "Begin to Understand" is signified by the realization of the meaning of gratitude, comfort, and the ability to accept strengths and weaknesses without comparing oneself to others. The lotus flower is often symbolized as purity and wisdom in Eastern cultures. Despite being grown in mud, it remains clean and beautiful, symbolizing the ability to grow amidst difficulties. Thus, it is hoped that growth will occur amidst one's own strengths and weaknesses, without comparison to others. Wholeness and completeness are symbolized by the circle, which recognizes strengths and weaknesses without

comparison, reflecting self-acceptance as an integral part of life. Various line densities and thicknesses are used to emphasize and shape the image. The wider printing paper size is intended to provide ample space at the edges, enhancing the artwork's spacious appearance. Black is chosen for its ability to clearly depict objects. A three-dimensional impression and tactile sensation are aimed to be portrayed by the overall pseudo texture.

**b. Artwork 2**



**Image 4**  
Fi'luna Maungidhotul Hasanah, Life Is Not a Competition, 2024  
Linocut on Paper, 30 x 40 cm  
(Source: Personal documentation)

The graphic artwork titled "Life Is Not a Competition" measures 30x40cm. Here, "Life Is Not a Competition" is signified by the awareness that life is not about competing with others but about personal growth. Each life is marked by its own phases, and every

individual is given their own timing. There's no need to rush; focus is placed on what can be controlled and not worrying about what cannot be controlled. Trust is placed in the belief that God knows best for His servants. The girl depicted is meant to represent the artist. The unbroken circle is used to symbolize continuity and sustainability, reflecting life as an endless journey. The changing moon is shown to represent life's evolving phases. The flying butterfly is meant to symbolize the beauty of the journey and freedom, indicating that each individual has their own time to "fly" without comparison. The hourglass is used to symbolize the limitations of time, reminding us to cherish every moment and focus on what can be controlled. The blooming flower is meant to symbolize beauty and natural growth, reflecting each person's uniqueness and potential to develop according to their uniqueness. The artwork's frame form is used to emphasize focus on the content and what can be controlled. Varying line densities and thicknesses are used to give shape and definition to the image. The wider printing paper is chosen to provide sufficient space at the edges, enhancing its appearance. Black is chosen to clearly depict objects, and the pseudo texture is used to provide a three-dimensional impression and tactile sensation.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Based on this exposition, various emotions from life events since the twenties until now have been experienced. From envy to being able to accept and be grateful for God's gifts, these feelings are difficult to eradicate and have become inspiration for this final project. The importance of ideas and techniques in depicting feelings and life's journey has been realized through the process of completing this final assignment. The linocut technique was chosen due to its suitability and enjoyment since the beginning of studies. Challenges such as choosing the paper medium affecting the print results were faced, yet valuable lessons were provided. Despite the obstacles, the quality of the work was improved. Linocut strokes were learned to be controlled more delicately, and objects were chosen accurately. This experience has been a valuable learning process.

After working on this piece, more sensitivity and understanding of the root of feelings like envy and jealousy were gained. Self-recognition, including strengths and weaknesses, leads to gratitude. Calmness and the capability of transforming negative energy into positive ones are felt through creating art. Happiness and motivation are brought by creating and documenting the process, as well as uploading it on social media.

Numerous views and positive comments on the content make one feel valued and appreciated. A sense of not being alone and having supportive friends is felt. The hope is that this work captures the memorable moments of the self-acceptance process and provides valuable lessons for the future. Hopefully, the audience of this graphic art piece can feel and draw insights from the experiences shared. Critiques and suggestions are crucial for refining this writing. May this writing be beneficial to all.

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