



# Self-Love Journey

Dr. Pinkie Feinstein

## Step 2: Your "God."

The concept of "God," in certain contexts, can become a source of tension, argument, misunderstanding, and even violence among human beings.

Some people hold a secular worldview and prefer to avoid including concepts such as "God" or "divinity" in their thoughts, language, or the areas to which they feel connected. Some are even sharply and explicitly averse to the inclusion of any matters that remind them of a theological or religious dimension.

Others hold a less defined sense of divinity and do not reject anything outright. Some describe themselves as one type or another of "religious," and from that self-definition arises their particular view of what the concept of "God" means to them.

And then there are people, and I count myself among them, who regard the concept of "God" as a deeply personal and private worldview, one that does not follow any particular rules or definitions about how "God" is supposed to be. This worldview does not necessarily include certain actions, such as prayers or rituals.

But this is not really our subject here, at least not directly. We are here to prepare the inner ground for cultivating self-love in the deepest and most beneficial way possible.

Along this journey, we ask ourselves: what is love? We may not always be able to answer with precision or clarity. On this path, we will try to open our hearts rather than close them. We will strive to expand our inner space as we explore the concept of love within us and in general. We will try to move away from limiting myths, narrowing prejudices, and stereotypes that only perpetuate our fears.

So why does "God" enter this conversation? What is the role of this concept, representing what is greater and vaster than us, as we deepen our exploration of love and prepare ourselves for the journey that offers us the foundations of self-love?

Quite simply, in truth. Simple, yet challenging.

For now, I would like to suggest something you may have already heard before, yet it is important to examine it again to refine our understanding of love. I would like to

invite you to link the concept of “God” with the concept of “Love,” and to assume, for the purpose of our discussion and inner growth, that in many ways these two concepts are actually the same: God is Love, and Love is God.

Indeed, many times love, like God, feels larger than life.

It often seems that love can never truly be attained, and that it is difficult to hold onto it for long. Love, like God, can be found almost everywhere if we search for it and look deeply enough. Even within your enemy there is love, and even in those who are now angry with you, who have withdrawn from you, belittled you, hurt you, were hurt by you, or simply disappeared. In all of them, some form of love resides, and it can be found if we open our hearts, soften them a little, and allow ourselves to relax the emotional tension that has built up toward certain people.

Love, like God, transcends boundaries and exists not only in human beings. There is love among animals, and even plants respond positively to expressions of love. Love, like God, is in many ways infinite, without beginning and without end. It was here before us, and it will remain here after us.

Love, like God, is a concept that is very hard to understand and is surrounded by many opinions. Love, like God, fascinates millions and represents, like the concept of “God,” a human longing for something more exalted, broader, greater, and more encompassing.

For some people, love represents the place where the chaos of human life on Earth gains perspective, a simpler explanation, and guidance toward the right path, just as, for many, concepts of divinity serve that very function. We need love, and we probably also need some kind of personal God, whether or not that seems logical, or whether it appears to us as a great and foolish invention.

Let us expand this concept, which may later serve us well in our journey toward strengthening self-love. This exploration of divinity and God is not meant to convince, influence, or present any particular approach as the correct way to relate to this highly sensitive and charged concept.

There are secular intellectuals who describe faith in God as the creation of an “imaginary friend.” Such a view often carries a tone of condescension or dismissal, and sometimes it reflects the discomfort of intelligent people when they encounter ideas that do not align with their way of understanding life. These concepts may seem to them baseless, and therefore unnecessary.

But for us, in this journey, the imaginary friend is one of the most important and critical elements in understanding what love is, and in growing from it into an ever-expanding, ever-deepening, and ever-strengthening self-love, forming one of the most profound and effective tools for self-healing that a person can give themselves.

For us, regardless of personal belief or non-belief, the concept of an imaginary friend who lives within us and loves us unconditionally, in an ever-growing way, a friend we can consult with, cry to, and eventually, as we evolve, listen to their words of love,

this concept only serves our interest. It helps open our hearts to love and to the meaning of love itself.

So what is the name of your God?

Is it a gentle and tender God? Is it a God who knows you completely, with all your parts, and yet loves you, supports you, contains you, accepts you, and nourishes you?

I believe that the ability to feel love is also the ability to feel the God within us, the wondrous, the universal, the infinite and vast presence that lives somewhere deep inside. As we progress toward self-love, it is that inner God who, through our actions and thoughts, will express boundless and total love toward us. This love will be like that of a parent who delights in their child and does everything possible to provide the conditions for meaningful growth and a fulfilling life. All of this has nothing to do with belief or disbelief. It is not dependent on whether you define yourself as secular, traditional, religious, or atheist. Rather, it is a way to challenge the soul to contemplate the comparison between the two concepts: love and God.

Whether we wish it or not, our soul has touched the matter of God many times and has formed its own inner worldview. Somewhere deep inside, there is always a quiet discussion taking place about this topic, and many questions continue to arise, as they should.

We are not required to continue asking ourselves questions about integrating this supposedly religious concept into our journey toward cultivating self-love. We may forget about it and move on, and that would be perfectly fine and would not harm the process. But there are those among us who need this comparison, this gentle reflection between the most wondrous emotion of all and the symbol of what is greater than humankind. For them, it is worthwhile to let this question, which quietly guides us toward understanding love, remain alive: What is the name of your God?

**Practice Questions (Answer in handwriting or share in a practice group):**

1. What kind of relationship do you currently have with your **“God”**?
2. What do you think about the possibility of having a **“pleasant meeting”** with the God within you?
3. What is the first thing you would like to say to God when you **“meet”** her?
4. What do you think about the possibility that God has always been within you, always part of you, and that in fact there are no real differences between you?
5. What do you think about the possibility that getting to know the God within you is the same as getting to know the love within you?
6. Any other thoughts, feelings, insights or questions you would like to share about this step in the journey?