



Self-Love Journey

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Step 5: Self Love = "Not Loving Others"?

The exact opposite.

Someone who does not love themselves expresses feelings toward others from relative emptiness, from a basic misunderstanding of the experience of love, and many times from hidden motives that have no connection to love at all. It seems that most people feel more comfortable loving another person than loving themselves. This is a social norm that distances people from the knowledge, the tools, and the understanding of the importance of self-love.

Self-love is the foundation of every form of love. It is the root, the basic charge, and the inner example of the essence of love, of its principles, and of the possibilities involved in it. All of these take shape and direction when cultivating self-love becomes an important goal for the individual.

A person who does not devote attention, focus, practice, and motivation to self-love will, in one way or another, find themselves involved in actions, systems, agreements, or conditions that harm them again and again. The reason is simple. There is no empty space in the human soul. Where self-love is lacking, an emotional "pit" forms that quickly becomes a source of negative feelings that inevitably pull the person into paths of pain and suffering. The absence of self-love means difficulty with self-esteem, difficulty with self-nurturing, difficulty with self-support, difficulty with self-trust, and more.

A person who lacks self-love is inevitably led toward growing and widespread damage to their self-image and, as a result, toward involvement in harm to the quality of their life in various domains, including health, family, finances, and work. They bring their deficits with them to every place they go and into every contact they have with others.

When such a person wishes to love another and to build a relationship, they will be forced to waste too many resources on dealing with the absence of self-love and all of its consequences. There is not much left for that person to give, and their ability to provide full and steady love to another will, in all likelihood, be greatly impaired.

Let us not be confused. People with low awareness of self-love and with low implementation of it, and whose presence is accordingly shaped, may at times behave

with great devotion and giving within a relationship. Such people, who are ready to give of themselves and even to sacrifice themselves for another, while at the same time holding very low self-esteem and regarding it as unimportant or unnecessary, will in the end cause harm both to themselves and to anyone who comes into contact with their so-called love.

A person who lacks self-love will express that lack in one way or another everywhere they go. They will never be able to completely hide the gaping hole, and both they and others will suffer from this condition. To call such a system “love” is a fundamental problem in understanding the human soul and the way it connects to its surroundings.

In contrast, the person who loves themselves more and more, who persists with mirror smiles, with self-talk that includes as much love, support, and tolerance as possible, who continues with self-support and with activities that cultivate the self, arrives at a relationship rich in inner content that is connected to love, to the inner work involved in it, to its genuine language, and to the unique experiences it brings when one meets it within.

It is true that someone whose self-love is growing may sometimes be not very nice and even assertive. Such a person can refuse to do or to remain in situations that many others would accept when those situations do not align with their inner values regarding what is worthy and what is not worthy to be or to participate in. Such a person may regard common norms and accepted ways of doing and maintaining things as irrelevant for them when these are not in sync with their self-love and with the inner requirement to align their personal needs with what occurs wherever they are.

Therefore, people for whom self-love is a foreign and threatening concept may perceive those who hold self-love as a central and supreme value as people who do not truly love them and do not truly give them the attention they deserve. They may even see them as not quite normal or as not belonging to the kind of reasonable people they usually encounter.

Among people who do not cultivate or value self-love, interpersonal love cannot exist so long as those individuals are focused on their own needs and place them high on their list of priorities. Such people will complain that you supposedly do not love them. You will need to choose whether it is worthwhile for you to remain in relationships with those for whom your path of healing and change does not seem important or meaningful.

When self-love develops, many positive changes occur at a pace and in a style that match that person. Self-love gradually leads a person to love larger parts of their surroundings, because the love that grows within tends to move outward naturally. The person becomes full of love and a close friend of love, because it exists within them and they can meet it, feel it, and benefit from it, without any dependence on the presence, approval, or satisfaction of another person.

As self-love develops and takes up more space in the personality, it gradually replaces fears, hesitations, doubts, and the very common tendency toward self-harm through

addiction to an unkind and non-nurturing lifestyle. It becomes a personal and private experience that cannot be removed. Self-love can be quickly reawakened and strengthened through attention and a few simple gestures. It provides excellent nourishment and a perfect tool for helping to meet life's challenges. As it grows within a person, it strengthens their self-confidence and, through its clear values, guides them to connect with people who are more suitable and more right for them, with those who can connect in the right way with someone who comes to relationships equipped with self-love and with a benevolent inner bond that does not depend on another person.

Where does the confusion begin? It begins where people expect those who enter an intimate relationship with them to be dependent on them. Many times, without admitting it, we would prefer that someone who loves us not have too strong a backbone, not hold firm opinions, and not have fully formed desires. People like that, it is claimed, will not be able to surrender to love, will not be eager to give of themselves, will not compromise, will not yield, and will not negotiate where there is conflict and misunderstanding.

This is only confusion and the blurring of concepts. Everything here is reversed in a polar way. Precisely the people who enter an intimate relationship with a good inner connection and with clear boundaries regarding what they allow in the spaces where they are involved are the ones with whom there is a chance to maintain a nourishing relationship that can blossom and thrive. Precisely the people who will not agree to hurt themselves and will not sacrifice themselves on the altar of the relationship are the ones who can ensure that the relationship will be conducted according to principles of respect, appreciation, and mutual cultivation.

They are the ones who are able to love more, because they contain within themselves an abundance of love and are not dependent on another in-order to encounter love within themselves. Such people can enjoy love that arrives, and they will never fear the supposed waste of their love resources, because they can renew those resources at any moment they choose. Let us seek those for whom self-love is important, those in whom self-love already bubbles within. They are the more rewarding partners. They are the ones with whom we can find love, strengthen love, and make love that carries significant personal value and contribution.

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

1. How do you currently connect **“love for yourself”** and **“love for others”**?
2. How do you feel about the possibility that **love is your private asset**, something that can never disappear and can never be taken away from you?
3. What do you think about the possibility that you are actually the **producer of the love within you**, and therefore you are also the **primary person responsible for it**?
4. How do you feel about the possibility, which eventually always manifests, that **the more you love yourself, the more the people around you will recognize you and accept you as you truly are**?
5. How do you feel about the sentence **“There is no place for stinginess in love”**? How do you intend to apply this sentence **toward yourself in the near future**?

6. Any other thoughts or feelings about this step that you would like to share?