

Love the one you're with....YOURSELF!

To state the obvious - we all need love! Most of us look only for love outside of ourselves – from partners, spouses, family, children, friends, God. But we often forget a most important source of love and that is **OURSELF**. One big problem is that criticism and blame toward ourselves or others has replaced loving action. And often our lives are so full of activities and demands that we put ourselves at the bottom of the list when it comes to loving action. Being connected to the love within us makes it possible for us to feel greater love all around us. **It even makes attracting love possible.** However, long term cutoff from true self love means that there is a need to learn how to love ourselves.

Loving ourselves means being willing to love our bodies. That is often problematic as many of us have learned to criticize and reject our bodies in one way or another. True love involves what I call the “Triple A’s of Love”: **Acknowledging, Accepting, and Appreciating.** **Acknowledging** ourselves means that we pay attention to what’s going on inside, learning what we need to learn about our feelings and thoughts and saying “yes, that’s what is going on right now.” **Accepting** means letting whatever comes up be ok just like you would be ok with a loved child. Accepting is often mistaken for compliance that what is going on will never change. True acceptance is the beginning of change. When we accept something in ourselves we set the wheels in motion for whatever needs to change. The act of **Appreciating** ourselves is very powerful. Most of us treat appreciation as a response to something – we get something and we say thank you. Here it means **valuing accurately who we are, what we do, what we have in our life.** This can be a radical move, but it is the move that will create more of what you want in life.

You begin creating love by attending to your daily body care mindfully. For example treat yourself as you would a loved child or pet. When you bath or shower, **use loving touch.** When you brush your teeth, **brush love throughout your mouth.** When you feed yourself, **bless the food with love and know that you are taking love into your body.** This kind of self-love is not the narcissistic kind that devalues others over yourself, **but rather fuels true love, honor, regard, and respect for others.** What you give to yourself, you give to others. It may help to keep in mind that in order to continue to give love you need to generate love within yourself. **Love is a circle that goes out from us and back into us to go out again.**

When you attend to yourself in this way your health and relationships will all be enhanced. You create on a moment to moment basis a very important fuel that heals and sustains life. You will become a bigger source of love than you’ve ever imagined.

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