

How to Love Yourself without Guilt, Shame, or Condemnation

A “Journey Back to Self” Introductory Mini Course



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Authenticity and Transparency Alert!

I am a perfectionist in recovery. As a result, this document is **imperfection on steroids**. I'm ok with that. You will notice formatting inconsistencies,

improper placements of capital and lower-case letters, spelling errors, grammar errors, and punctuation marks that randomly appear and disappear where they may or may not belong. Obviously, my “go to” editing program isn’t always working. Should I have hired a professional editor? Maybe, but I didn’t, so here we are. If you are a writer, editor, or goodness forbid, a perfectionist, maybe you should take a nerve pill before reading this. It is not my goal to create a literary masterpiece. I simply want to guide you through the process of unlearning the person you had to become simply to survive certain memories, experiences and circumstances.

And for a perfectionist in recovery, that’s perfect progress.

A Body-Mind-Spirit and Soul Note:

Heads up! I am not a preacher and I’m not trying to challenge anyone’s faith or beliefs. Throughout this workbook/journal, you will encounter references to God. You may even stumble upon a scripture or two. This book is not about religion, but an opportunity to freely explore spirituality. For some, that may include religion. For others it may not. Train this book to be YOUR personal road map. Not anyone else’s ideas.

Welcome

Hey there!

This is the very brief "About Me" section. Otherwise, my stories about surviving life with my incredibly detailed, perfectionist, people-pleasing mother and my predictably unpredictable alcoholic father would consume much of this mini-course.

The remainder of this course would be devoted to all the reasons I believed I wasn't enough: my hair was too nappy and too short. My skin was too dark. I wasn't smart enough, attractive enough, talented enough—or simply not enough. My inner critics apparently believed they’d been hired to live in

my mind, rent free with all “utilities” included: fear, doubt, anxiety, guilt and sometimes, shame.

But this course isn't really about me...well, not *entirely* about me.

It's about everyone who, for one reason or another, learned that loving yourself was selfish, arrogant, or simply wrong. It's for the people who desperately want to treat themselves with respect and kindness but somehow feel guilty for trying. It's for anyone who has spent years believing they had to earn love, approval, or acceptance before they were finally allowed to believe they were enough.

This is for those who hide their visibility and silence their voices.

If that's you, welcome. You're in good company. But unlike our inner critics, you are safe here.

The critics have been evicted. They still stop by to visit but I don't let them stay.

How Did The Freeloading Inner Critics Take Control in the First Place?

That's easy.

The memories tucked away in your subconscious mind probably convinced you that you didn't really deserve love and respect in the first place.

Unfortunately, your subconscious doesn't require fact-checking. It happily files childhood opinions under "**Absolute Truth**" and then spends decades reminding you about them...usually at 2:59 a.m.

So, what did you do?

You became:

*The therapist who needed therapy.

*The cheerleader who forgot to cheer for herself.

*The Uber driver for everyone else's dreams while your own goals sat on the curb wondering if you were ever coming back.

But here's the problem.

You can't give what you don't have.

You can certainly *loan* it for a while.

You can hand out compassion like free samples at the grocery store.

You can smile until the greeters at your favorite superstore file complaints that you're trying to replace them.

You can say, "I'm fine," so many times that even your nervous system begins to roll its eyes.

But eventually, the bill comes due.

Because if you can't genuinely care for yourself, how can you continue giving care and compassion to everyone else without eventually arriving at burnout, frustration, resentment, guilt, or shame?

You may convince yourself that sacrificing your own needs for everyone else's is noble.

Sometimes it is.

But when self-sacrifice becomes your permanent identity, eventually you start looking in the mirror asking questions like:

- *Who am I, really?*
- *Why do I keep feeling used, unappreciated, and disappointed in myself?*
- *Why am I lonely even when I am surrounded by people?*
- *Why do I feel drained and depressed?*
- *How did my life end up here?*
- *And why does everyone else's emergency automatically become my full-time job?*

Here's the truth.

Loving someone else begins with loving you.

That statement makes some people uncomfortable.

If it makes you uncomfortable, ask yourself why.

Many people aren't actually loving others from a place of abundance.

They're desperately hoping that if they:

love enough

serve enough

fix enough

forgive enough

minimize themselves enough

silence their voice enough

hide behind their selfless deeds enough

Someone will *finally* say,

"Congratulations! You've officially earned the right to be seen, heard, appreciated, accepted and loved."

Spoiler alert...

None of this stuff is supposed to come with a score card.

Because here's the question:

If you struggle to love yourself exactly as you are, how can you expect to get from others what you have never given yourself permission to receive?

And if you don't know your own worth, how will you recognize the difference between healthy love that grows from your heart and toxic love that feeds on your fears?

As a proud recovering people-pleaser—and yes, a "SELF-centered" advocate, mentor, and consultant—I teach practical, guilt-free strategies for embracing self-worth and self-awareness, self-care, self-compassion, and yes...self-love.

Stay with me. *SELF-centered*, doesn't mean standing in front of the bathroom mirror whispering, *"I'm the greatest human who has ever lived."*

I mean finally putting yourself *somewhere* on your own priority list.

Coincidentally—or perhaps by God's perfect design—I'm also a mental health nurse.

This combination of clinical knowledge, personal experience, and more life lessons than I ever volunteered for, has taught me something incredibly liberating:

It is possible to love all of God's creations...including the one staring back at you in the mirror.

Without guilt.

Without shame

Without condemnation.

Without apology.

And

When you do believe you are lovable, something amazing happens.

Your body breathes easier.

Your mind quiets down.

Your emotions become more honest.

Your relationships become more meaningful and healthy.

Your soul finally gets to rest.

You allow yourself to be seen.

You allow yourself to be heard.

Trust me, you'll thank yourself along the way.

The journey may not be easy, but your nervous system is waiting for you to catch up.

So, let's go.

Introduction:

About 6 weeks after the birth of my daughter, I was sitting at my grandmother's kitchen table watching her prepare dinner. She casually

asked me a question that would play a lead role on my journey to becoming the SELF-centered advocate, mentor and consultant I am today:

“If you have one slice of bread and both you and the baby are hungry, who gets the bread, you or the baby?”

The catch? I can’t tear the slice in half. One of us gets all of it or none of it.

My answer?

“The baby of course”.

To me, this was no brainer until Grandma, without looking away from her masterpiece of bubbling homemade chicken and dumplings said,

“Then you’ll be a starving fool with a starving baby.”

“What are you talking about, Grandma?”..

I thought the answer was common sense. Now, I looked at her dazed and confused, like I’d gotten an “F” on a pop quiz about how to spell my name.

She continued.

“If you give the whole slice to the baby, in 2 hours she’ll be hungry again and you’ll be too weak from hunger to do anything about it. Both of you will struggle to survive. The baby can’t walk, talk, or do anything without your strength, knowledge, and experience. She depends on you for everything, so you must stay prepared. If you eat the only slice of bread, you can use your strength, knowledge, and experience to go out and get loaves of bread to assure that neither you nor your baby will ever be hungry again. In order to love, nurture and protect our baby girl, you must love, nurture and protect yourself first”.

Believe it, or not, when I tell this story, many people, parents in particular, struggle to grasp the concept. So, I often try a more familiar, universal example.

For those of you who’ve travelled by air, you are familiar with the safety instructions given by the flight crew before take-off. When they review the part about applying oxygen masks to adjust to a sudden change in cabin pressure, whose oxygen mask do they tell you to apply first?”

Everyone who’s been on a commercial aircraft knows the answer:

“Mine”.

If you pass out before you place your own mask, you can't get the breath of life into someone else.

You suffocate. They suffocate.

My daughter never went hungry because I remembered to feed myself first.

Now, as a mother herself, she feeds herself first.

My granddaughter eats plenty and enjoys her carefree life.

Thanks Grandma. I love and miss you. Rest well.

Many people struggle with the idea of "me first"; even when "me first" can save their life.

Why?

Thanks to history, culture, tradition and in some cases, religion, we are programmed for service to others, at the expense of ourselves.

We struggle with the term "self-love" because we've been taught that we come last. We tip toe around self-love and self-compassion with "safe" words like "self-maintenance" but how is maintenance possible if we have not learned the difference between intentional "servitude" and destructive "sacrifice".

We've learned to define our worth by how other people define our value.

FYI:

Self-worth is the unchanging belief that you are inherently significant. You are worthy of love, dignity, and respect simply because you exist.

Value is the usefulness, benefit, or contribution you provide in a particular role, relationship, or situation. It can increase, decrease, or change overtime without changing your worth.

Your self-worth never changes because it comes from who you are. Your value changes depending on what you do, or who and what you know. Your value should never compete with your worth.

We are more likely to fall into the trap of attaching our identity to our value, instead of our worth.

If you give yourself permission to love yourself as God's masterpiece you will find that servitude can be a positive, selfless experience---free from guilt, shame, anger, frustration or resentment.

Why?

There is a distinct difference between ***Self-Love*** and ***Lover of Yourself***.

The Goal For This Course Is For You To Be Able To:

- Love yourself without feeling guilty for meeting your own needs.
- Replace shame with self-compassion.
- Release chronic self-condemnation while taking healthy responsibility for your actions.
- Set boundaries with confidence and kindness.
- Stop seeking validation through perfectionism, procrastination, or people-pleasing.
- Build an identity based on inherent worth rather than performance.
- Strengthen emotional resilience during life's challenges.
- Develop habits that support lasting confidence, peace, and healthy relationships.
- Experience greater freedom, authenticity, and joy in everyday life.
- Create a lifelong practice of treating yourself with the same grace, compassion, and respect you so readily offer others.
- Understand the difference between Self-love and being a lover of yourself. (This is a big one so let's start here.)

Mini Module One

The difference between *self-love* and *being a lover of yourself*.

At first glance, these two ideas sound identical. In fact, many people use them interchangeably.

But they are not the same.

One is spiritual. It creates humility, gratitude, healthy relationships, emotional wellness and genuine concern about the greater good for mankind.

The other is emotional and can create feelings of entitlement, self-absorption, isolation, and an unhealthy obsession with self and feelings of resentment toward others.

Let's explore the idea of:

"Love your neighbor as yourself."

What does that actually mean?

Does it mean put yourself first all the time?

Does it mean making yourself happy at any cost?

Does it mean focus on yourself before everyone else?

Or does it mean something much deeper?

Self-Love: A Deeper Look at Thriving

Self-love is the ability to recognize your worth without needing to prove your value.

It is understanding that your worth is inherent, not conditional.

It isn't earned through performance.

It isn't earned through perfection.

It isn't earned through people-pleasing.

It isn't earned through achievements, titles, income, popularity, or the numbers on a scale.

Self-love says:

"I have worth simply because I exist."

"I have value because I have something to offer".

It's treating yourself with the same kindness, compassion, grace, and respect that you would offer anyone you genuinely care about.

Self-love is not arrogance.

Self-love is not conceit.

Self-love is not superiority.

Self-love is not narcissism.

A healthy sense of self-love often makes people more empathetic and compassionate because they no longer operate from feelings of scarcity or fear.

When you know you are enough, you stop expecting others to prove it to you.

Lover of Self: The Dark Side of Survival

Being a lover *of* yourself is very different.

It revolves around personal wants, personal comfort, personal recognition, and personal importance.

The lover of self has the personal need to prove they matter.

If you observe closely you may see fear and insecurity.

The goal is not a healthy sense of self-respect.

The goal is self-elevation.

A person who loves themselves says:

"I matter."

A person who is a lover of themselves says:

"I matter more."

One is rooted in dignity, believing that they can contribute to the greater good.

The other is rooted in self-deception declaring "I *am* the greater good."

Self-love often builds meaningful connection.

Lovers of self often create separation or isolation.

A person who loves themselves believes:

"I have worth."

A person who is a lover of themselves believes:

"I deserve special treatment because of my worth."

There's a significant difference.

Self-Love is Identity Based and Creates Security

When you can answer, "Who am I?" with clarity and confidence:

- Criticism hurts less
- Rejection feels less devastating
- Mistakes become opportunities to learn
- Success becomes something to enjoy; not something to define you
- You no longer want to minimize your presence
- You believe that your words matter
- You stop chasing approval
- You stop begging for validation
- You stop trying to earn your place where you already belong
- You become more grounded
- You become more secure
- You become more emotionally regulated
- You serve without frustration or resentment
- You grow, mature and thrive.

Being a Lover of Yourself is Performance Based and Unstable

Ironically, excessive self-focus often increases emotional insecurity.

People who constantly need admiration become dependent on admiration.

People who constantly seek attention become dependent on attention.

People who need to feel superior become threatened when others succeed.

Their self-worth and their value is tied to comparing themselves to others.

This is often discouraging because someone else will always have:

- more money
- a bigger house
- a better job
- Younger looking skin
- better hair
- more followers
- a nicer car
- a more attractive partner
- smarter children
- more talent

Co

mparison is a game nobody wins and it's exhausting.

Lovers of self can't stop chasing approval because at some point in their lives approval was denied.

Lovers of self can't stop begging for validation because their identity is value driven, not worth driven.

Lovers of self can't stop trying to earn their place where they already belong, because deep down they really don't know where they belong.

Lovers of self often use the outer world as their stage because mentally, emotionally and spiritually they underperform.

Lovers of self often serve through the need to be needed, especially when they know they can deliver.

Being the one who can always save the day brings them immediate praise, but long-term, it can also save feelings of emptiness.

Loving Your Neighbor As Yourself

I thought this instruction was self-explanatory; now I'm convinced that some folks must have missed this lesson in Sunday school.

"Love your neighbor as yourself." (Mark 12:31)

Notice something important.

The instruction assumes you already have some level of care and compassion for yourself.

You eat foods that bring you pleasure.

You buy more stuff than you really need.

You forgive yourself. (sometimes)

You don't want just a car; you want *that* car.

You care about your own comfort, or suffering.

You wear make-up.

You get your hair done.

You trim your facial hair.

You pay attention to how you dress and the shoes you wear.

You spend an hour deciding which eyeglass frames make you look more attractive.

You wear colored contact lenses.

And don't forget your favorite fragrance. You must smell as good as you look, right?

Guess what? God doesn't care about any of that.

You care and caring is a form of love.

We are **not** instructed to:

"Love yourself instead of your neighbor."

Or:

"Love your neighbor instead of yourself."

It's both.

The standard is **equality**.

Treat your neighbor with respect and dignity and treat yourself with respect and dignity.

Show others the same grace you hope to receive from others.

When others fail, be patient with them. Look, listen and seek understanding...even if you must understand from a distance. (a lesson for a later time)

When you fail, be patient with yourself. Look within, listen to your inner voice and seek understanding.

Be the example of **who** love is when you do it from the *inside out*.

Mini Module Two

A Closer look at Why Loving Yourself Feels So Wrong

Many of us didn't learn the dynamics of self-love.

We learned:

- Be humble.
- Don't brag.
- Think of others first.
- Work harder.
- Don't disappoint anyone.
- Don't make mistakes.
- Don't be selfish.
- Keep your pain to yourself.

And honestly...

Each message may have its place.

But there's another side of the coin.

When taken to extremes, or in the absence of discernment, these messages can quietly settle into your nervous-system as:

"My needs don't matter."

"If I celebrate my achievements, I'm boastful".

"Other people deserve kindness more than I do."

"If I rest, I'm lazy".

"If I say no, I'm selfish".

"If I fail, I'm worthless".

"If I seek help, I'm weak".

"If I share my preferences, I'm ungrateful".

Eventually...

Your identity becomes based on pleasing others rather than being yourself. You may find that you have no clue what "being yourself" means.

Instead of being "who" (worth), you become "what" (value).

Reflection Questions

- When did I first learn that taking care of myself felt selfish?
- Who taught me that?
- Is that belief actually true? Why do I believe it?
- What does a healthy sense of self-love mean to me?
- What would change if I believed I was already enough?
- Do I identify more with *who* I am, or by *what* I can "bring to the table"?

Practical Strategy

What to Do

Identify one belief about yourself that creates guilt or shame.

Examples:

"I'm wrong if I say no to a request or decline an invitation."

"I feel that I must earn love and acceptance, not simply receive them."

"I avoid or delay tasks that are unpleasant or intimidating".

"I feel incompetent if things don't go as I planned."

"I am incompetent or betraying a loved one if I ask for help"

How to Do It

Write the old belief.

What is the evidence for this belief?

List evidence against this belief.

Replace the old belief with a new belief that fulfills your **worth**, not your value.

Example:

Old belief:

"I must make everyone happy."

New belief

"I can be kind without being responsible for everyone else's happiness."

Why It Works

Your brain(nervous system) automatically follows *familiar* beliefs, good, or bad.

Creating new beliefs also creates *new* emotional responses in your nervous system.

Your nervous system begins recognizing the new feelings as safe instead of dangerous.

Feelings of guilt and shame minimize or disappear completely.

You are more secure, confident and emotionally regulated.

Mini Module Three

A Quick Look at Guilt, Shame and Condemnation

Guilt can be a healthy, mature form of accountability that says:

"I shouldn't (or should) have said that"

"I shouldn't (or should) have done that"

Simply put, guilt is:

"I made a mistake through an action."

Even when it doesn't feel good, guilt can encourage personal insight, respect for self, respect for others and emotional regulation.

Guilt is "**doing**" centered

Shame attacks your worth and identity and says:

"I *AM* a mistake."

"I don't deserve to be here."

"I don't deserve love, acceptance or forgiveness."

Shame is "**being**" centered.

Living in shame can hinder your emotional, mental and spiritual growth.

Condemnation steals your hope and says:

"There is no hope for me."

"There is no place for me."

"I'll never be ok."

Condemnation removes possibilities.

It says:

You'll never change.

You'll never be enough.

You'll never deserve peace and happiness.

Reflection Questions

Do I apologize for things that aren't my fault?

Do I criticize myself more harshly than anyone else?

Would I speak to a child, student, or someone I really care for the way I speak to myself?

Practical Strategy

What to Do

Separate behavior (what you do) from identity (who you are).

How to Do It

Instead of saying:

"I am stupid."

Say:

"I made an unwise decision."

Instead of

"I failed."

Say

"I experienced a setback."

Why It Works

Your brain processes identity differently than behavior.

Identity feels permanent.

Behavior feels changeable.

Change becomes possible.

Possibly restores your sense of dignity and control.

Mini Module 4

Why Perfectionists, Procrastinators and People-Pleasers Struggle with Self-Love

As a SELF-centered consultant, I target perfectionists, procrastinators and people pleasers. There is no way to complete this course without extending “honorable” mention (if you want to call it that) to the “3-P’s”

Perfectionists-The Greatest Performers

Perfectionists generally believe “Either it’s all correct or it’s all incorrect. There is no room for error. Perfection is a form of control.

Their sense of love, worth, value and identity are tied to flawless performances that can sometimes stir a “wow!” response in others .

Perfectionists often believe that love and belonging must be earned.

Their internal dialogue sounds like:

- I'll be lovable when I lose weight.
- I'll be lovable when I'm a financial success.
- I'll be lovable when I stop making the same stupid mistakes.
- I'll be lovable when everyone approves of me.

Unfortunately, the finish line for perfectionists keeps moving.

They never seem to reach it.

Every achievement creates another requirement.

Every success creates another expectation.

Self-love for the perfectionist says:

"I can improve while accepting myself."

Perfectionism says:

"I can only accept myself after I improve."

Procrastinators-The Almighty Avoiders

Avoidance and delay aren't always about laziness or apathy.

Specific to fear driven procrastinators is the belief:

"If I'm comfortable not doing it, why should I do it, try to do it, or do it *now*?"

Procrastinators often struggle with the fear of leaving their comfort zones.

"If I never try it...I'll never fail at it."

Or

"Why waste my time? I'd rather do (fill in the blank) instead"

Often whatever occupies "fill in the blank" protects the procrastinator from feeling a loss of safety and control.

Lack of self-love and confidence hinders the emotional maturity to put forth an effort.

People-Pleasers-The "I'm Gonna Make You Love Me" Crew

People-Pleasers generally believe:

"If I can keep everyone else happy...I'll be happy."

Spoiler alert. They are usually still unhappy.

Resentful and feeling taken for granted maybe.

but not happy.

People-Pleasers often hear:

"Love everybody instead of yourself."

So, they become everybody's:

- therapist
- bank
- chauffeur
- babysitter
- cook
- handy man
- Emotional support animal

People-pleasers often sacrifice their
health.

sleep.

peace.

finances.

boundaries.

emotional stability.

Then they wonder why they feel exhausted, alone and dissatisfied with life.

Well...

They store nothing for themselves.

No care.

No compassion.

No love.

No “me time”.

No “just say no” time

No bread.

No oxygen.

That's not balanced.

That's self-abandonment.

They reject the idea that healthy love also includes love for them.

ATTENTION!!!!!!:

I Interrupt This Mini Course For A Special Report

Perfectionism, Procrastination & People-Pleasing are **not** personality traits.

They are trauma responses.

Different behaviors (although they can overlap)

Same fear.

"I am not enough."

Don't worry. I have courses for 3 P's too.

But for now, back to this course.

Reflection Questions

Which "P" best describes me?

*Perfectionism

*Procrastination

*People pleasing

How have "P" behaviors protected me from feelings of disapproval or rejection?

How have they hurt me physically, mentally, emotionally and/or spiritually?

Practical Strategy

What to Do

Notice when your inner critic is speaking. Don't try to ignore the thoughts or reject them.

How to Do It

Carry a journal.

Each time you criticize, or doubt yourself write about:

- *The situation
- *Your thought(s)
- *Your emotion(s)
- *Your reactions

Ask yourself:

*Are my thoughts and emotions mostly based on the truth, what I was taught or what I personally believe?

*Make a list of new mental, emotional and behavioral responses that reflect self-worth, self-compassion, self-care and self-love, in spite of any feelings of guilt, fear, or doubt.

*Practice these new responses as often as possible.

Why It Works

*Awareness and repetition interrupt automatic and familiar thought patterns.

*You cannot change patterns you never notice.

*Awareness is a vital part of change, growth and personal development..

*Your nervous system adapts to new, less threatening thoughts, feelings and behaviors

Mini Module 5

Replacing Self-Judgment with Self-Compassion

Imagine your closest friend, or loved one saying:

"I made a mistake."

Would you tell them...

"It's ok because you're hopeless, stupid and will never amount to much of anything anyway."?

Probably not.

Yet...

Many people often say exactly this kind of stuff to themselves.

Self-compassion is a form of self-love that allows you to say:

"I made a mistake."

"I can learn."

"I am still worthy."

"I still matter"

"There is still hope"

Reflection Questions

How would I comfort my best friend?

Why don't I deserve the same compassion?

What prevents me from extending grace to myself?

Even if I can't resist the urge to critique myself, can I at least do so in love?

Practical Strategy

What to Do

Practice compassionate self-talk.

How to Do It

Ask yourself:

What would someone who truly loved me say right now?

Then...

Say it.

Out loud.

And then...

Go to a mirror. Look into your beautiful eyes and say:

“I am not a mistake.”

“I am my Creator’s masterpiece”

“Every day is another chance to try again”

Recite these words, or something like them, **every** time you look into a mirror until you can **give yourself permission** to believe.

Why It Works

*Repeated compassionate language rewires your nervous system to respond to love instead of fear.

*Self-criticism activates and maintains threat responses.

*Self-compassion activates and maintains safety responses.

*Safety responses allow you to thrive, grow and learn to trust yourself.

Mini Module 6

Avoid the “Lover of Self” Trap

This can be simple and easy.

Keep in mind:

Self-love = "I matter and you matter"

Lover of Self = "Only I matter." or "I matter more".

Explore and adopt compassionate, respectful, emotionally regulated and *nonjudgemental* (or at least *minimal* nonjudgemental) ways to:

- *Say no.
- *Rest.
- *Ask for help.
- *Protect your personal space.
- *Manage unhealthy relationships.
- *Show up for yourself.
- *Hydrate.
- *Exercise.
- *Pay attention to what you put in your body.
- *Pay attention to the words you speak to yourself.
- *Monitor and manage your moods.
- *Pause, think and respond to others by intention, not emotion.
- *Set healthy boundaries that allow you to thrive, not just survive.

Soon you'll discover:

People who genuinely and routinely practice self-respect, self-compassion, minimal self-criticism and emotional control often become **MORE** generous toward others because honestly...

We are *designed* to protect and serve others.

Wait...What?!

I hear you.

Protecting and serving everyone else is how you got screwed up in the first place.

Stay with me.

Think about how humans nurture their children, partners, parents, friends, and their communities.

Protection and servitude are forms of survival for our species.

What would happen if we didn't protect and serve each other?

What if no one did?

The bonding and "love chemical" (oxytocin) is activated in humans when we do good for others.

Ironically, the more secure you become in your own worth, the freer you become to love others. You are not influenced by obligation, guilt, or fear, but by genuine compassion. That kind of generosity doesn't leave you empty. It leaves both you and those you serve stronger.

As a result:

Self-Love Becomes a form of Stewardship

When you care and protect your:

- body
- mind
- emotions
- relationships
- talents and
- resources

You can freely and wisely ask:

"What can I share with others?"

Instead of:

"How can I keep it all for myself?"

That is how you avoid the "lover of self" trap.

Practical Strategy

What to Do

Become a Steward Instead of a Martyr

View self-awareness, self-love, self-care and self-compassion as fruitful stewardship.

Instead of asking:

"How much more must I sacrifice?"

Ask:

"How can I care for myself well enough to serve others from strength and abundance instead of obligation and depletion?"

The goal isn't to stop loving, caring for, or helping people.

The goal is to not self-destruct in the process.

How to Do It

Practice "Self-Wellness Checks"

Keep in touch with yourself:

- Am I rested?
- Am I emotionally overwhelmed?
- Am I anxious?
- Do I need quiet time?
- Do I need encouragement?
- Do I need movement?
- Do I need prayer or time alone with God?
- Do I simply need to say no?
- Do I need to ask for help?

- *Begin each day with:*
What do I need to make this day productive?

- *During the afternoon ask:*

What am feeling?
What am I thinking?
Am I in a good mood, bad mood or somewhere in between?
What adjustments must I make?

- *Every evening ask:*
 - How did I show love to myself today?
 - What did I share with others?
 - Am I satisfied with my choices?
 - If not, what will I change?

Why It Works

- +Awareness promotes consistency.
- +Consistency establishes identity.
- +Identity creates long-term transformation.
- +You have something meaningful to offer others.

Eventually...

- +Loving yourself and others stops being something you do.
- +Loving yourself and others becomes part of who you are.

From your overflow you can discern how and when to share:

- wisdom
- encouragement
- time
- finances
- attention
- compassion and
- gifts

without emptying the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual reservoirs that sustain you.

Spiritually, stewardship shifts the focus from fear-based self-preservation to faith-based stability and security.

Reflection Question

Who would I become if I truly believed being myself, just as I am was enough?

Final Exercise

My Self-Love Declaration

Complete these statements.

I no longer believe...

Today I choose...

I deserve...

I forgive myself for...

I release...

I welcome...

I am becoming...

Weekly Self-Love Challenge

For the next seven days:

- ✓ Speak kindly to yourself.
- ✓ Accept one compliment without deflecting it.
- ✓ Say no once without apologizing.
- ✓ Rest before you're exhausted.
- ✓ Celebrate one small win every day.

✓ Forgive one mistake.

✓ Look in the mirror each morning and say:

"I am worthy of love, respect, grace, and compassion—not because I earned it, but because I am human. Today, I choose to treat myself with the same kindness I so freely give to others."

Tips to Keep in Mind:

Give Yourself Permission to Release the Need for Constant Approval

Not everyone will understand you.

Not everyone will agree with you.

Not everyone will like you.

And that's okay.

The goal is not universal approval.

The goal is integrity.

Self-love allows you to disagree without feeling guilty and to be disliked without feeling worthless.

Last, but certainly not least...

Strengthen Your Relationship with God

Many people spend their lives trying to earn love that has already been offered.

When your identity is rooted in a relationship with God, your worth becomes more stable than public opinion.

You stop viewing yourself through the eyes of critics.

You stop viewing yourself through the lens of mistakes.

You begin viewing yourself through grace.

You recognize:

If God loves me when I succeed, God loves me when I struggle.

If God loves me when I'm strong, God loves me when I'm weak.

If God loves me when I get it right, God loves me when I get it wrong.

These truths create a level of emotional security that perfectionism, procrastination, and people-pleasing can never provide.

Closing Message

Self-love isn't giving you permission to neglect yourself, nor is it giving you permission to worship yourself.

It is recognizing your value without allowing it to justify your existence.

It is treating yourself with dignity while extending that same dignity to others.

It is giving yourself permission to allow everyone else to find their own way on their life journey.

It is answering the question:

"How can I leave this world better than I found it?"

When you genuinely embrace your identity, and understand your worth, you no longer need to prove it, protect it, perform for it, or purchase it.

You simply live and learn.

Embracing your identity and understanding your worth are the greatest acts of Love you'll ever experience.

This course is enhanced by the workbook/journal of the same name. If you desire to get the most out of your personal growth experience I suggest you follow the link below and purchase the workbook/journal as well.

[Workbook/Journal How to Love Yourself Without Guilt, Shame or Condemnation](#)

Workbook/Journal

