

The 5 Minute Guide to Self-Love

- SPECIAL REPORT -

By Priya Florence Shah

[Naaree Academy](#)

Self-love is the foundation of confidence and well-being. Everybody needs to love themselves in order to move forward.

Unfortunately, nobody has any idea how to do this. The problem is compounded by the fact that modern society is actually geared towards programming people to be unhappy.

We are taught to put on makeup and cologne because that is what will make other people like us. This is the opposite of the truth, and the more inauthentic a person is, the less he will be genuinely liked.

How to Find Self-Love

For many, finding the 'self' and finding self-love are one and the same. Because we can only love ourselves when we finally find out who we are.

To do this, we need to rid ourselves of societal programming. If you are asking what this is, the answer is that it is pretty much everything.

Most people grow up in a certain environment, adopt the values of their tribe/society, and view anybody outside of their tribe as foreign and alien.

But this is just an identification of values that we never consciously adopted. One way to find out how illusory these values really are is to travel extensively and immerse yourself in a different culture.

You will see that the other people are really no different from you, aside from having different beliefs.

Removing the Ego

It is impossible to love yourself as you are because you do not actually know who you are. As we grow up, we identify with certain things in order to have a platform.

It might be a political belief, our appearance, our principles, our jobs, our expertise, and most likely a combination of all of these. So, we get an idea of ourselves and what we are.

But it is not possible to really love an illusion. We first have to rid ourselves of ego as much as possible.

Ego can be termed as synonymous with identification/attachment to material objects and ideas. The less attached a person is, the closer he or she is to enlightenment.

The ego can be thought of as a protective skin that protects us in a certain incarnation. When the person is ready to evolve, the skin is shed.

In order to become who, we really are, there are practical steps to be taken. You could start by:

1. Eliminating or reducing cable TV and social media.
2. Reducing your use of technology and getting out in nature.
3. Reading spiritual material daily.

4. Meditating daily.
5. Doing yoga or some other transformative practice.
6. Examining your belief system.
7. Consciously detaching from material objects.
8. Embracing a minimalist lifestyle.

The last item is arguably one of the most significant when it comes to reducing the personality. The less that we rely on external objects, the closer we are to our true selves.

This is another subtle reason why technology is so damaging. It distracts us from our innate resources and intuition.

Shadow Work

Shadow work is another item that you can do if you need to try and integrate the aspects of your personality that you find hard to deal with.

Many are contending that shadow work is the missing piece of the puzzle in a world where everyone is pretending to be nice in order to get what they want.

If we can face all aspects of ourselves then we can get more whole and integrated. The shadow is separate from the ego/persona in the work of Carl Jung.

The persona is the conscious mask while the shadow represents the unconscious and repressed tendencies.

Modern society has forced our tendencies to stay repressed in the shadow self. But these tendencies do not simply evaporate into thin air. They must be expressed.

In any case, repressed beliefs and emotions are a huge stumbling block on the quest for self-love. You cannot love yourself if you won't look at yourself.

This is why shadow work has taken off in recent years as the first step towards self-realization at the detriment of the popular law of attraction.

Carl Jung:

“What we call civilized consciousness has steadily separated itself from the basic instincts. But these instincts have not disappeared. They have merely lost their contact with our consciousness and are thus forced to assert themselves in an indirect fashion. Modern man protects himself against seeing his own split state by a system of compartments. Certain areas of outer life and of his own behavior are kept, as it were, in separate drawers and are never confronted with one another”

Directly Developing Self-Love

There are more direct ways to develop self-love. The first thing that you must do is write down and analyze your beliefs.

You need to figure out which ones are limiting your progress. Every- body has core beliefs that prevent them from moving

forward.

These beliefs are ingrained deep in their psyche and are very difficult to remove. For example, you might believe that you are un- worthy of love due to being abandoned as a child.

This is a very tough belief to deal with and is incredibly deep-rooted. People who deal with these kinds of traumas will typically derive more benefit from shadow work.

When faced with such trauma, the individual will split its consciousness apart in order to avoid facing it.

This is a primary cause of schizophrenia where people cannot confront an aspect of themselves. But to really proceed down the path of self-love, you need to love all parts of yourself, not just certain parts.

There is no single method to develop self-love. It comes from a variety of different modalities and is usually a lifelong process.

Some people derive benefit from exercise, others from creative writing. It usually comes down to the core issues or beliefs that are bothering that person the most. Somebody with social anxiety might have lots of inner demons to fight in terms of socializing.

Another person might be fixated on appearances and be unable to relate to other people in any meaningful way. There are always more ways to develop but everyone has their sticking points to get

over. For many, it is money, for others self-worth, and for yet more it is sexual relations.

Finding and working on core areas are the most beneficial. All aspects must be integrated to form a fully whole and complete human being.

Aside from this, there is a technique that can be incredibly fruitful to everybody who engages in it. It is simple and obvious but rarely implemented to the hilt by people. It's the law of attraction.

It involves doing what you want at all times and looking for things that raise your vibration by switching your thoughts as much as possible.

It requires following your dreams at all costs and being blissful regardless of the circumstances.

If you really love yourself, you would manifest the life you want, do all that you desire, never take no as an answer, travel the world, and pamper yourself.

There is no reason not to. You would want your loved ones taken care of, why not you?

Both the law of attraction and shadow work are remarkably effective for those who work at them for extended time periods.

Simple Practices

Remember to be kind and compassionate to yourself at all times. You are your own worst critic. It is a learning experience for everybody and each person has their own struggles to deal with.

Non-judgement is another valuable item in terms of developing true love. You can never know what another person is going through regardless of their actions.

And you could do well to consider that you would do the exact same if you were in the same shoes. Because we are all largely products of our environment subject to external conditions.

Being honest and realistic about where you are and where you are going is probably one of the most helpful practices that nobody really follows through with.

A simple exercise is to examine where you are now and examine where your current behavior will get you in 5 years. If you keep doing the same things, you will be in the same place.

Do you have a spiritual practice which you do every day? Do you have a good diet and exercise routine? Are you happy where you are?

Many people do not confront themselves with these basic questions and resort to football games, drugs, coffee and alcohol to get through the day and, in time, the years.

A useful spiritual practice is to constantly remind yourself that

everybody is a soul having a human experience and we all come from the same source.

Would you treat them like this if they were your brothers and sisters? Because in a very real sense, they are.

If you find yourself thinking negatively about someone, consider what their parents think about them. It is a quick way to bring yourself back to center and to eliminate all anger and hatred toward them.

A central theme in all spiritual practices is that what we do to another person we do to ourselves.

So how you treat other people will come back to you in some form. In contrast, if you love everybody, then that is what you will get back in this giant mirror.

Lastly, if you really want to develop self-love, then just meditate on someone you love for prolonged periods of time.

As you get better at this, you will come to realize that this love can be drawn up at will as its own kind of energy, without an object to bring it forward.

When you can do this, you are well on the path of self-love. It is what you are made of and where you came from, you when you can wield it at will you are very nearly there.

Self-Esteem and Self-Love

Self-esteem is a subset of self-love. In one sense you could say that they are the same, but this is not quite true.

While you can be confident in one category, you might be extremely under-confident in another. But if you are in love with your 'self, then this carries through across the board.

Self-esteem is needed in order to have a happy and balanced life. Self-esteem is simply self-love that has not been taken to its ultimate point, which is self-realization. But true confidence should be unshakable and stems from within.

If you want to develop self-esteem and love, then be very careful in terms of who you hang around with. They say that you are the average of the 5 people you associate with the most.

While it might sound harsh, if you are trying to nurture yourself to higher levels of awareness, then you need to be very selective in terms of your friends.

If you feel that other people are dragging you down, you need to cut them off. They will find their way on their own, which is more empowering than stealing the energy of another person unconsciously.

While few people can remain positive all the time, there are definitely those who make the effort to lift themselves out of negativity.

People who are of a like mind tend to attract one another. So while it might appear that one person is loved even though he or she is inauthentic, the only supporters are people of the same energy.

In other words, shoot for quality over quantity when it comes to your friends.

What's the Rush?

The reality of it all is that self-love is actually a lot easier than we think. We just have to let go of the silly attachments and conditioning that we have been programmed with.

This involves the removal of negative programming. As long as we make a conscious effort, we shed some more ego and get a little closer day by day.

We will get there in the end, and we have to learn to enjoy the ride and not be in any rush. Ultimately, self-love is not a chore but an empowering and enlivening process where we find deeper and deeper levels of ourselves.