

Giving Ourselves the Love We Want (Self-Love Made Easy)

The question, “*How can I love myself?*” can be difficult to answer, because we’re so out of touch with the process of actually loving ourselves. We haven’t been shown truly compassionate and nourishing ways to do this on a regular basis.

I’ve found that rephrasing the question ‘*How can I love myself?*’ to ‘**How can I give myself the love I want someone else to give me?**’ Or ‘**How can I love myself the way I want to be loved by someone else?**’ cuts to the heart of the matter.

Two questions that we can use to narrow in are...

- 1. How do I desire to be loved, cared for, and nurtured by someone else?*
- 2. How can I tangibly give myself the love I crave through my own self-directed actions, words, and deeds?*

Use these questions as guides to make a list for yourself. And then **make a list of all the ways you dream about someone else loving you**. How would someone else show you they really, truly unconditionally loved and cared for you?

And for each item you notate, flip it around to create a self-loving action that mirrors the action or quality you desire in someone else.

My 'How I Want to Be Loved' list

Here's my list of the ways I desire to be loved by someone else as well as their self-loving companion versions.

I want someone to look deep into my eyes and tell me they love me like they mean it.

I can do this for myself when I look in the mirror each morning. I can stare lovingly into my eyes and tell myself I love myself.

I want someone to be tender, gentle, and un-pressing with me when I’m having a rough moment.

*I can do this for myself by being gentle and attentive to my needs in moments when I'm feeling overwhelmed. I can **allow** myself to lean out of to-do's and fear-driven pressures and lovingly choose rest instead of productivity in those moments.*

I want someone to love me in a way that respects my intuition and the nudges I receive from my Higher Self.

I can do this for myself by honoring my intuition and my intuitive knowings as they pulse into my awareness. Instead of allowing my mind to resist, doubt, or judge in fear, I can revere and honor this loving wisdom by listening to it, by taking when and where appropriate, and by cultivating enough stillness each day to clearly tune into my Higher Self.

I want someone to lovingly cook me a meal that nourishes me (body, mind, and soul).

I can do this for myself by taking the time to prepare nourishing meals for myself instead of rushing to throw together whatever's easiest.

I want someone to have my back in a respectful and compassionate way when someone is stomping on my boundaries or treating me unkindly.

I can have my own back by kindly and compassionately standing up for myself, holding firm to my self-loving boundaries, and removing myself from situations and people that aren't able to hold a safe space for me.

I want someone to love, appreciate, revere, and respect my body.

I can do this for myself by listening to my body's needs and honoring them in a nurturing, tender, and loving way. Instead of rushing as I get ready, I can move gently and lovingly. For example, I can slowly and tenderly wash my hair in the shower just as I would want a lover to do.

I want someone to welcome in and forgive my flaws with a loving embrace.

I can do this for myself by loving all the seemingly competing parts of myself. By being gentle with my "imperfections" and by acknowledging, allowing, and loving the once disavowed and unloved aspects of myself. I can use 'I allow' statements to neutralize and allow the once "unallowable" parts of myself.

I want someone to ask me how I'm feeling and really mean it—to listen attentively, giving me their full attention in that moment, and to hold space for the fullness of my emotions without trying to "fix" or diminish my feelings.

I can do this for myself by journaling about my feelings and exploring my experiences in writing. By prioritizing daily acts of self-reflection and giving myself the time to do this each day.

I want someone to share in my curiosities with me.

I can do this for myself by allowing myself to explore my curiosities each and every day. To prioritize play, inspiration, and the spaciousness of exploration over rushing through those moments to get to “productive” ones.

I want someone to be completely honest and upfront with me, even and especially when it’s difficult to do so.

There are many ways to do this but here's one:

I can do this for myself through honest and humbled self-reflection. By acknowledging in a loving way when and where I’ve abandoned myself, sabotaged myself, or have led myself astray by choosing comfort over vulnerable curiosity. By noticing when I’ve stifled my authenticity to please others in hopes of earning their approval at the expense of my own truth.

I want someone to laugh with and be silly with.

I can laugh and be silly with myself by ensuring I take time each day to “shake out seriousness” and obligation and center into carefree playfulness.

I want someone to remember the little things and to reach out “just because” they’re thinking about me and wondering how I’m doing in that moment.

I can do this for myself by pausing during busy moments to check-in with myself—“How are you feeling, Ashley? What do you need right now? What would make this moment feel easier or more supported? How can I nurture you right now?”

I want someone to take my work, my passions, and my interests seriously (even if they're entirely different from their own).

I can do this for myself by showing up for my work in an honest and open-hearted way each day. By trusting rather than doubting the importance of my work, by reminding myself to never wait for perfect (self-sabotage) but rather that 'good enough' is great,

*and by lovingly allowing my work to be 'seen' in the world. **And** to respect my creativity by remembering to rest just as much (if not more than) I work.*

I want someone to recognize when I'm teetering on the edge of over-working and to lovingly nudge me to rest by creating an environment or situation that supports that.

I can do this for myself by noticing when I'm nearing my max and lovingly pausing or stopping my work to shift to something restorative instead. I can draw a warm bath and insist on taking that time for myself. I can cozy up with a warm blanket and a good book. Or I can go for a walk out in nature.

I want someone to occasionally leave me a handwritten love note and to once-in-a-while buy me flowers just because.

I can do this for myself by giving myself a loving pat on the back just because... by leaving self-love notes on my mirror... and by buying flowers for myself "just because" instead of waiting for "special" occasions like when I have family coming to visit.

I want someone to lovingly and gently place their hands over my heart, close their eyes, and feel joyful simply because I exist... to feel grateful that my heart is beating in this precise moment in time.

I can do this for myself by placing my hands over my heart, closing my eyes, and feeling into the gratitude I have for myself in the moment... feeling profoundly grateful for my own beating heart.

I want someone to honor and respect my self-loving 'no' without guiltting me to try to convert it to a 'yes'.

I can do this for myself by honoring my 'no' and speaking it rather than saying 'yes' out of guilt or out of fear of upsetting someone else. I can do this by saying 'no' even when it means disappointing someone else.

I want someone to gently and tenderly nudge me to question my unkind and judgmental thoughts about myself (rather than feed them)...

I can do this for myself by questioning my self-judging thoughts, by holding my harshest criticisms up to the light of my awareness to lovingly examine. And by

compassionately challenging the accuracy of my thoughts. Or by, at the very least, continuing to love myself even and especially when I'm feeling disappointed in myself.

I want someone to be true to their word with me and to do what they say they'll do. I want someone to live in integrity with their heart-led intentions rather than overcommitting or under-committing out of fear.

I can do this for myself by honoring my promises to myself and by not overcommitting to others (at the cost of myself) out of a fear of losing their approval or under-committing out of a fear of vulnerability. I can do this by keeping my heart open and vulnerably expressing my heart-led truths while being mindful not to over-give or over-promise what I can't genuinely deliver on.