

How To Love Yourself Unconditionally

written by Princess R. Lakshman

Self-Love

You say you care about the world
Yet you care not for yourself
You say you love the children of the world
Yet you love not the child in you
You say you forgive others
Yet you forgive not yourself
You say you want the best for others
Yet you embrace not the good that comes your way
You say you want to heal from all that causes you pain
Yet you choose to re-live painful memories everyday
You say you love ALLAH
Yet you are unkind to ALLAH's creation that is closest to you
Yes, you are ALLAH's creation that is closest to you
Appreciate yourself
Care for yourself
Be kind to yourself
Be compassionate with yourself
Forgive yourself
Love yourself
Remember...
You are ALLAH's creation that is closest to you.

How many times in a day or week do you tell someone you love them? How many times do you tell yourself that you love yourself? Daily? Weekly? Monthly?

Almost never?

Observe your body and your thoughts as you try this little exercise – read this affirmation out loud: I Love Myself.

Say it again, a few times. If you're feeling a little uncomfortable saying it, ask yourself why. It took me 38 years to learn to love myself. My goal now is to love myself unconditionally. I am yet to master the 'unconditional' aspect of self-love.

I usually do a "mirror" exercise with my clients where they look at their face in a compact mirror and say "I love you". Only a handful of my clients have been successful at completing this exercise. Some even told me they 'hate' themselves. Some expressed that 'love' was a very strong word and they didn't feel they deserved it. Some said 'there was nothing there to love'.

I resonate with all these statements. It's not easy to love yourself. In fact, it's easier to keep living in shame or guilt. But remember, what is easier to do isn't always in alignment with ALLAH's commandments.

*“It is Allah Who has made for you the earth as a resting place, and the sky as a canopy, and has given you shape- **and made your shapes beautiful**, - and has provided for you Sustenance, of things pure and good;- such is Allah your Lord. So Glory to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds!”* (Holy Quran: Surah 40 – The Believer, Ayat 64)

Ponder on this ayat. One can only implement this commandment if one lives with unconditional love. That unconditional love must start from unconditionally loving yourself first.

So why is it so difficult for so many people to love themselves? It’s because we tend to forget that we are not our experiences. We are a force that can overcome experiences, no matter how negative they may be. Whatever you have been through in life, you are still here, well and alive. You made it.

I realised something when I learned to love myself. It wasn’t that I hated myself – it was that I hated all the choices I made in my life that brought about the negative experiences. It was that I hated my behaviours that I was displaying most of my life. It was that I couldn’t differentiate that my body was different from my soul. I learned self-love when I began to connect with my essential self – my intuitive voice, the voice of my soul.

The voice which never misguides because it is pure and isn’t affected by past conditioning. When I began to acknowledge my authentic, essential self, I understood that I am a pure being created by ALLAH and I must love this being that dwells inside my body.

Daily Practice of Self-Love

1. After salah, sit on your prayer mat for about five minutes and focus on your breathing.
2. With each in-breath, feel your body energised with light. Imagine light entering through the crown of your head and dispersing through every part of your body.
3. With each out-breath, praise ALLAH for creating you and giving you this precious body to live in. Imagine the light pouring out of your body and reaching other members in your home, your neighbours, your community, the nation, and to the rest of the world. Your mind is powerful enough to create this image. Praise ALLAH for the power of your beautiful mind.
4. Say these words in your mind or out loud if you are comfortable: I am a beautiful creation of ALLAH. I love myself. I receive only love, light, kindness, peace and joy. I give out only love, light, kindness, peace and joy.

Always remember, you are not your experiences. You are the FORCE that overcomes them.

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