



Dance of the Soul Hypnotherapy™

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SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, 92130

CALL: 760.889.4180

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## ReFlections on Self-Love

I have seen a lot of people touting the need to love ourselves. They say this state changes lives and how we view the world. I ask myself what do these 2 little words mean? Love yourself.

Why is it that in an information rich society we still are unable to find our joy, our peace and love for self?

Love - have we really grasped what this is or do we use the word too flippantly? It is thrown around in our language easily and quickly - so what does this mean to us? The dictionary defines it as "a feeling of warm personal attachment or deep affection, as for a parent, child, or friend". Affection relates to the strong feelings we have of joy, fear, sorrow and so on. In ancient Greek there are "The Four Loves":

**Eros** (érōs): Romantic love (in ancient Greek, desire). This may also be considered "lust" or intertwined with the word 'erotic'.

**Philia** (philía): Friendship, Love (this refers to love of a "platonic" nature).

**Agape** (agápē): Divine, unconditional love.

**Storge** (storgē) Natural affection. (This relates to the love between parent and child.).

The origin of this word is unclear. Is it because it involves emotions which are often ambiguous even to ourselves? So should we have a new word for self love and what do people really mean when they shout this from the roof tops? From one human being to another I think this is more complex than is the scope of this short presentation. Self love may mean many things. It may be superficial and just touch the surface, it may be of medium depth or extremely deep. I feel the difference becomes apparent when we place meaning on our experience. So if loving myself means putting on make up, buying clothes and going to the dry bar then someone may say that is fine. Another may feel that giving themselves a treat is loving - it could be food, a massage or spa day. That is fine too. But if we look at these examples they seem to have a common theme. Yes they make us feel better but its only momentary. It's like many things that we delve into - the joyous moment seems just that, a momentous occasion with little longevity. We are used to getting our quick fixes with little long-term satisfaction. Is this really showing love for ourselves? Is this really seeing what is inside? Is getting what we think we want from outside of ourselves the answer?

Love involves emotion, it involves the physiological sensation of warmth in the body. Some feel it in the gut others in the heart. This feeling is so strong that it has astounding effects on our physiology. Just think about that for a second - we are able to create a cascade of chemical reactions in the body because of a feeling that we have that creates this sensation of warmth and well-being. And if we look at the cause for that feeling we see that it is based on observation and perspective. If we look at our pet cat for example, we know the cat, we share moments with the cat - our feelings are evoked

and we feel warm and joyful in it's company. It is an animate being with whom we interact. We have the fantastic ability not only to observe this being and be in its company but also to recall memories and relive each moment with fondness and affection. All of this without it's physical presence. So we can see that it's how something or some one makes us feel that is important. It leaves a permanent imprint on our lives. Our emotions leave an imprint on our physical bodies. So how does this relate to self love. When we go to the spa are we nurturing that warm feeling for ourselves? Do we still have those thoughts that have been implanted during our childhood when our script was still forming? Are we just chasing the symptoms of our experience and providing a handy band aid that is short lived. These are questions that only you can answer.

For me self love is more than this. It's more than the external band aids. It's accepting that I feel a certain way, that I am learning, I am ok, I don't need to take myself so seriously and that what others think doesn't really matter. For their ideas are theirs alone. Based on their experiences, not mine. Based on their splintered view of me. Yes, it is just that a fractional view of who I really am, only a small part of the real me. Only a part. That external desires are the ego. The ego is not me in my entirety, it is not me in my completeness it is a part of me that is there to remind me that the past experiences that have shaped my existence have been rooted so deeply that they drive me towards self preservation. Shrouding myself in beliefs and thoughts that feed themselves endlessly and compete with the parts of me that are fluid, creative, giving, nurturing, restoring, passionate and that sensation of warmth, that feeling of openness

and vastness. It is seeing the truth about who I am, what really makes me tick, what doesn't make me tick and challenging the motives of my decisions and my actions. Why am I doing this? Where is this feeling coming from? Is it for self gratification or is it for convenience or do I really feel that warm sensation and joy? Seeing patterns that are recurring in my life that cause havoc and drama like a broken record and using a method that allows me to release myself from *the knowns* and start a new script a new recording - my way. For me there is no simple and easy fix - it involves work, insight, strength and resourcefulness - all of which we can find - right inside myself with the support and guidance of I choose to surround me.

So are you loving yourself? Are you allowing yourself to see the magnificence and beauty of being human. Is it through our personal pain we learn who we truly are. Our struggles become dusty doors that open to parts of ourselves never explored before. Some rooms are dark and filled with cob webs - viewing them offers a different perspective. Others offer insights and gifts that we never dream of because of our limiting beliefs. After all is said and done seeing and experiencing differing aspects and sides of ourselves does make a difference. Placing expectations on self and others does not resolve matters, it only compounds them by adding more pressure and limiting our ability to be creative and to expand ourselves. So each day I look at one thing that I love about that day - what I achieved with gratitude, knowing that with each passing day I am no longer a budding flower but am blooming one petal at a time.

Are you blooming? What beliefs are holding you back?