

# 40 Days of Self Love

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*A journey of no distance...week one*

Self Love; these words trigger so many people. I've heard it all. From the mumble of selfishness to the disgust of "who do you think you are?" At one point these comments could have swayed me to change the title of this program (& eventual book). Even someone I respect suggested I use different language. Now, in this moment of writing I couldn't imagine using any other words because Self Love is absolutely what this is all about; loving ourselves.

It's something we are born knowing how to do. Oscar Wilde said "To love oneself is the beginning of a lifelong romance." We cry when we need attention from the day we arrive on the earth till the day we die. We learn how to care for ourselves as we grow and we create environments early on that get us what we want. But somewhere in our childhood our psyche gets the information that we are not worthy.

A Course in Miracles tells us that we all suffer from believing we are separate from God. Whether you believe in God in a "traditional" sense, or were raised in a religion, or just feel a connection to Spirit; the truth is we are all part of the expansiveness of God, Spirit, Divine; or whatever name you give it. This world supports the illusion that we are separate and therefore we are not "good enough". We must find ways to truly remember that we are all Children of God. Even those that walk with us but do terrible things are simply *lost* Children of God, confused about who they are, how to remember that they too are worthy of love and deserve to receive it from others and themselves.

This collective belief has created a programming of sorts, in humankind, that we are not worthy of love, from others, from God, and ultimately from ourselves. Those of us that choose to "wake up" and begin on our spiritual path realize that we are NOT separate from God, we are all part of the Divine presence that IS God; and the sooner we can remember that the better we experience our lives.

Between birth and seven years old; (unless we experience severe early trauma, we generally love ourselves unconditionally. Then between seven and fourteen years of age everything begins shifting. We discover comparison, negative thoughts, and ultimately doubt. The next seven year cycle of life validates all the negative feelings that have accumulated with-in our being, showing up as negative self talk and projection. From twenty-one till we have the opportunity to explore the possibility of Self-Love, our ego creates the circumstances to prove the limiting beliefs that support everything but the love we so desire to show ourselves.

This program is designed to give you tools to support you in remembering who you truly are; a Child of God, a Divine Spiritual Being having a human experience.

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There are only three relationships we have in our lifetime; the relationship with God, the relationship with self, and the relationship with others. Michael Mirdad explains this perfectly in his book Creating Fulfilling Relationships: Changing Cell Mates into Soul Mates:

“...we would never be able to express or experience true, authentic love for ourselves or *others* without having nurtured a reasonable level of relationship with the Source of Love – God.

Furthermore we cannot experience a fulfilling relationship with others without having a fulfilling relationship with *ourselves*.”

So, even though this program is focused on Self Love you will see your connection with God and others deepening as you open to the connection to self. And, as you will see shortly, the weekly SoulWork is often reflective of how we communicate with God and others, both leading to our connection with Self.

Divine Self Love is authentic love, love for the truth that lives in each of us. It is unconditional. It has nothing to do with ego or how we look or act or speak or how much money we make. It has everything to do with the Divine truth that we are all deserving of our desires because we are Children of God, because we are alive on earth, and because we each have a purpose. Whenever the word Divine is added to the front or back of a word or words it means Godly, authentically, absolutely; Divine service, Divine love, Divine purpose...etc.

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Divine Self Love sets us free of needing outside validation from others. It doesn't mean we won't be human; we will still desire outside love from others, but as we practice this kind of love we won't feel destructive, or destroyed if and when someone denies us love or retracts their love. We will eventually begin to see all outside love as the “icing on the cake.” And the “cake” is us.

All the love that is needed is within each of us; how we receive that love varies. The “easy” way out is to sit upon the mountain side and love ourselves silly. But the true test of all love is in our relationships. The relationship you have with anyone is the relationship you are having with yourself.

The love we give to our family, children, friends, teachers, clients, mankind, lead us to desire love *from* all of those people. But, if and when we do not receive it the goal is to not take it personally. This is much more likely if we are filled with love for ourselves.

This is a process. Though some people seem to have a handle on Self Love more so than others there is humanness to all of us. We all want to be loved. It takes practice to release and see that what others think/do/say has nothing to do with us and is **not** to be taken personally.

Recent events in my own life have showed me that I am still very human, ego intact. A peer expressed her dissatisfaction about my upcoming speaking engagement and it crushed me, (well it

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crushed my ego). How could she not LOVE me? What did I ever do to her? What does she want from me? Am I a terrible speaker? Should I pull out of the engagement? Should I get another profession? If she feels that way who else does? Yikes! And this was ONE person's casual comment! It took me a bit to recover and to remember who I am and that I *am* enough. And that the only power this person's words hold is the power I give them. And...the good news is; I did remember, and I am grateful for the tools I have to do so. And...I will share them with you now.

As I personally learn to remember who I am, why I am here and that I deserve all I desire; life becomes easier and easier. Don't think that you will read this and do the exercises and all your problems will be resolved. What you will discover is that you will have tools you can choose from and use when needed. It may look like; instead of holding on to a "hurt" for 3 years; you may heal and release it in 3 months, 3 weeks, 3 days, 3 hours, and eventually 3 minutes...and after some practice you may sense the pain inside and 3 seconds later, know the truth is that it's not yours to feel.

This first week is divided into the four bodies; the mental body, the emotional body, the physical body and the spiritual body. The daily rituals are called the "Foundation". This is the basis for the 40 days. The four daily rituals are meant to give you time to spend caring for yourself in all the bodies. The importance of this first week is to get the Foundation grounded with daily rituals you can begin trusting and utilizing right away and throughout the 40 days. These tools will evolve as the assignments change your perspective.

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HERE WE GO

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## Week One - The Foundation

### **Your Physical Body:**

The physical body's purpose is to help you tell the difference between right and wrong. It can be affected by the foods we eat, the thoughts we think and our emotions. Feeling situations in the body is the best way to utilize our bodies to their highest good. Your heart will always guide you best, learning to feel what your body is telling you is extremely beneficial. Our bodies remember everything that has ever happened to us. Our experiences are recorded in our cells.

In order to keep our bodies working for us we need to take care of it. Give it oxygen and movement, love and touch as much as possible.

We must move our bodies every day. You know what your body needs. I love Yoga, Pilates, walking, dancing, and swimming. I do a bit of yoga every morning and a yoga class once or twice a week. In the warm months I walk or hike the Sedona trails...and in the summer I hit the pool. Every day move your body till it feels exhilarated. This is the only vehicle we get for this human experience, and not only do we need to take care of it, we also need to enjoy it! Moving the external body also helps us get moving internally.

This is a simple component of the Foundation; moving your body. If you already run a mile a day consider doing some yoga. If you do yoga, consider hiking or another form of movement. The intention here is to give attention to our body in a loving and caring way. Some days you may not feel like exercise of any kind, on those days take a bath, get a massage, make love, or lay in the sun. As long as the majority of the days are spent moving your body in a form of exercise. Length of time doesn't matter. If you don't do daily exercise currently, start with 15 minutes. You are in charge, you know what's best.

### **Emotional Body:**

Emotion means "energy in motion". Our emotional body holds every emotion we have ever had. We all have layers of negative emotions that can hold us down and imprison us in darkness if we never heal the wounds of the past. Have you ever felt yourself acting in a certain way that did not feel like your true self? These unwanted reactions are due to emotional wounds that are driving your behavior. As we become aware and heal we limit this behavior. Thank God that in our emotional

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body there is also love. The joy we feel when we experience love is the desired state of being. We must honor our hearts, this is our life's purpose.

Expressing gratitude in a journal is a wonderful way to release our emotions and get into a state of love and respect for ourselves and those around us. The acknowledgement of the good things that happen in our days help us reprogram our emotional body and shift from negativity to joy. Your gratitude journal can include such things as; the nice person at the coffee shop to acknowledging ourselves for a job well done, showing patience with someone or for beginning these 40 days of Self Love. Writing down at least ten things we are grateful for each day is a sacred practice to carry into our lives and pass on to our children. Living in gratitude shifts our perception of the world.

Most people find this part of the Foundation the easiest but then unfortunately let it go shortly after they start and therefore never get to the part where they begin honoring their own accomplishments as things to be grateful for. As you move into the latter weeks of the program we will explore the gratitude journal in different forms. For now just take 5 minutes before bed or anytime during the day and write down 10 things you feel grateful for...and yes, you guessed it no repeating!

## **Mental Body:**

There are two parts to the mental body: the ego mind and the Divine mind. The ego is always looking for ways to stay the same, never change, and keep us small. American culture in past decades used the word ego as a term for someone who was arrogant. Though this may be true as a mask to the darker sides of our limiting beliefs, the ego is part of everyone and it is a human creation that continues to keep us believing we are separate from God. Our Divine Self is our true self, authentic self, God Self, our Soul.

The experience of Divine Self in our minds happens when the egoic mind is empty. It can be emptied by exhaustion or sleep, alternate states of being brought on by drugs or much better by Spiritual Highs of Divine Awareness. (more on this later)

Morning Pages; an amazing tool created years ago in Julia Cameron's book *The Artist's Way*. Begin every morning with free-writing. Journal whatever comes into your mind. It doesn't have to make sense, have punctuation or grammar...just download your mind onto the page. This empties the chaos in our minds and opens us up to the possibilities of the day. It empties the ego. Also this form of free writing, continuously, without stopping to think, judge, or edit creates a flow of thought on the page.

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Some of my best ideas have come out of my morning pages. Just pour out whatever comes through your mind and keep going for a minimum of three pages...every morning, before your coffee and shower, even before you get out of bed.

The other purpose aside from emptying the mind of egoist thoughts is to capture the subconscious before the conscious mind squeezes it out. To catch the mind in it's Divine state before it is filled with ego. The space between the dream state and waking is sacred. Honoring this time each morning can bring clarity to confusing situations, peace to chaos, and a deeper connection to Self and ultimately to God. It most likely will be a bit of a challenge in the beginning, so plan carefully to set yourself up for success. Just let your mind empty onto the page. You may be surprised about what you have to say. Practice the morning pages every day. If you miss a day just do it the next morning. Give yourself 15 minutes, it goes by fast. Use a pencil – pens aren't good in bed.

## **Spiritual Body:**

The Spiritual body is expanded awareness, enlightened awakening, and our mystical self. “The secret of the four bodies of existence is that when the physical, mental and emotional bodies reach a state of harmony and balance, the higher vibration of our spiritual body is activated.” This quote by Dr. Dr. Stainetti from his article on the Four Bodies sums it up well. We are always seeking our state of Divinity, and desiring enlightenment, even though we may not realize it. In fact we do everything to ignore this calling. When we do allow ourselves to expand our consciousness we experience the light of our Souls. We can get a bit closer everyday by listening to the space between our thoughts what we call meditating.

Daily Meditation is a pathway to Spirit...quieting the mind and stilling the ego...even for a few minutes each day. The commitment to meditation practice is the number one thing I recommend to all my clients. This is the time spent with Divine. Some people meditate in prayer, some use guided imagery on audio, Transcendental Meditation, Affirmations, Mantras...there are many ways to meditate. Find what works best for you, and by best I mean whatever you can do with love. Once you experiment with the various forms of meditation stick with what feels right.

If you don't currently meditate set yourself up for success by setting a gentle alarm for 5 minutes and just breathe silently until the alarm goes off. Start with deep breathes then just watch and listen to your breathing. We will talk about this part of the Foundation more on our call and I will share my dear friend Sarah McLean's “loving kindness” meditation with you. It is the most amazing meditation, short, sweet, and easy. Time will eventually be nonexistent. Meditate Daily and don't judge yourself if it doesn't "work" right away, it will serve you regardless. If you meditate daily

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already, try changing it up and doing a different kind of practice, increase the length of time or the frequency of your meditations.

Receive your Miracles!

The amount of time you spend on the Foundation is up to you. Do it to the best of your ability. It's simple;

1. When you wake up, stay in bed and reach for your pencil and journal and write for 15 minutes. Don't stop writing, don't think about it--just do it.
2. At some point during your day (morning is nice) do some yoga or other form of exercise for 20 minutes. Keep it easy and feel your body while you do it, be present.
3. Meditate or breathe for 5 or more minutes during the day. Midday is good to take a break and regroup, but anytime is fine.
4. Keep a gratitude journal of the things you are thankful for during your day. This is easy to do before bed. Don't duplicate, and as you practice this you'll catch yourself looking for the good things throughout your day.

“Your truth is your power...don't lie to yourself ...it weakens your strength.

Notes on your experience:

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