



Empowering you Organically - Season 3 - Episode 16

Title: 10 Essential Keys to Unlocking Self-Love

Hosts: Jonathan Hunsaker & TeriAnn Trevenen

Guest: N/A

Description: Let's talk about LOVE! Self-Love isn't some trendy phrase. It's scientifically proven that increasing your self-love muscle improves your health. Tune in to hear empirically-validated ways to exercise your self-love muscle.

We learn that self-love isn't a destination but a continual practice. Self-love is a not a state of just feeling good but an action. And the benefits! Wait until you hear the long list of benefits.

Join us as we dive into what sabotages our self-love and ways to overcome the challenges we place in our way.

Is it selfish to practice self-love? Tune in to hear what Jonathan's take is on the subject!

* * *

What is Self-Love?

- Self-love is a not a destination; it's a practice.
- Self-love is an action not a state of feeling good.
- Self-love is the foundation on which we build a happy life.
- Without self-love, we have nowhere to put the love or abundance that comes to us.

What self-criticism is good for?

- It keeps you focused on what's wrong with you, thereby decreasing your confidence.
- It makes you afraid of failure which hurts your performance, makes you give up more easily, and leads to poor decision-making.
- It makes you less resilient in the face of failure and also less likely to learn from mistakes.
- It holds you back from reaching your goals and dreams.

Benefits of Self-Love

- increases motivation and willpower
- brings you greater perspective and therefore better decision-making
- makes you more resilient: You more easily bounce back in the face of failure and learn from your mistakes

- makes you more emotionally intelligent and therefore improves your relationships
- lowers your stress levels and decreases feelings of being overwhelmed
- boosts your psychological well-being and decreases anxiety and depression
- improves your health.
- increases motivation and willpower
- brings you greater perspective and therefore better decision-making
- makes you more resilient: You more easily bounce back in the face of failure and learn from your mistakes
- makes you more emotionally intelligent and therefore improves your relationships
- lowers your stress levels and decreases feelings of being overwhelmed
- boosts your psychological well-being and decreases anxiety and depression
- improves your health

10 Ways to Improve Self-Love & TeriAnn's BONUS Reason

1. **Become mindful.** People who have more self-love tend to know what they think, feel and want. They are mindful of who they are and act on this knowledge, rather than on what others want for them.
2. **Act on what you need rather than what you want.** You love yourself when you can turn away from something that feels good and exciting to what you need to stay strong, centered, and moving forward in your life, instead.
3. **Set boundaries.** You'll love yourself more when you set limits or say no to work, love, or activities that deplete or harm you physically, emotionally and spiritually, or express poorly who you are.
4. **Protect yourself.** Understand the term frenemies. It describes so well the type of "friends" who take pleasure in your pain and loss rather than in your happiness and success. Suggestion here: Get rid of them!
5. **Forgive yourself.** We humans can be so hard on ourselves. You have to accept your humanness (the fact that you are not perfect), before you can truly love yourself. Practice being less hard on yourself when you make a mistake.
6. **Live intentionally.** If your intention is to live a meaningful and healthy life, you will make decisions that support this intention, and feel good about yourself when you succeed in this purpose.
7. **Become a master communicator.** Every great relationship relies on positive communication, so take the time to check in with yourself. Remember: ALWAYS speak to yourself in a loving way. How would you speak to someone you love? How can you speak to yourself in a more loving way?
8. **Be kind and gentle with yourself.** We give the people we love space to make mistakes. We're compassionate of their challenges and appreciative of their efforts. So, remember to give yourself a little understanding while you learn how to truly love yourself.
9. **Trust yourself.** It's important to trust yourself to look after your best interests—don't sacrifice your needs for the needs of those around you. Honor and PRIORITIZE commitment you make to yourself.
10. **Practice good self-care.** You will love yourself more, when you take better care of your basic needs. People high in self-love nourish themselves daily through healthy activities, like sound nutrition, exercise, proper sleep, intimacy and healthy social interactions.

11. **Being honest with ourselves.** Being honest with yourself is one of the ways you can love yourself the very best. Because when you're honest with yourself, it allows you to see all the places that you need to improve, and places where you can be better, and places where you can stretch yourself a little farther.

Start a Self-Love Practice

As a pioneer in Positive Psychology, Emma Seppala offers 4 empirically-validated ways to exercise your self-love muscle: *[Adapted from THE HAPPINESS TRACK by Emma Seppala, Ph.D. © 2016]*

1. **Notice your self-talk.** In times of failure or challenge, noticing your self-talk can help you curb self-criticism and replace it with self-compassion. For example, instead of saying things like, "How could I have done this? I'm such an idiot!" you might say, "I had a moment of absent-mindedness and that's okay. It could have happened to anyone; it's no big deal."

2. **Write yourself a letter.** When your emotions are overwhelming, writing a letter to yourself as if you were writing to a friend. Let's say you made a costly error and are feeling angry with yourself. It might feel stilted or strange at first but write a letter as if you were writing it to someone dear to you who had committed the same mistake. Your words should comfort and not attack, normalizing the situation rather than blowing it out of proportion. A number of studies demonstrate that writing about your emotions can help regulate them.

3. **Develop a self-compassion phrase.** Consider using a self-compassion mantra or phrase that you can turn to in challenging situations, so you can deal with them calmly and with grace. Hers is: "This is a moment of suffering. Suffering is part of life. May I be kind to myself in this moment; may I give myself the compassion I need."

4. **Make a daily gratitude list.** Write down five things you feel grateful for every day. Again, this may sound overly simplistic. However, this extremely short exercise has been shown to produce powerful and long-lasting results. To increase your self-compassion, at the end of each day, write down five things you are proud of having accomplished or five positive qualities you see in yourself.

Deeper Dive Resources

American Psychological Association study abstract: *Self-compassion, affect, and health promoting behaviors*:

<https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2014-38834-001>

Emotional Intelligence:

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/emotional-intelligence>

Kristin Neff:

She is currently an Associate Professor at the University of Texas at Austin.

<https://self-compassion.org/the-research/>

Guided Meditations & Exercises.

<https://self-compassion.org/category/exercises/#guided-meditations>

Emma Seppala, Ph.D.:

Science Director of the Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education at Stanford University and
Co-Director of the Yale College Emotional Intelligence Project at Yale University
<https://emmaseppala.com/about/>

The Happiness Track: How to Apply the Science of Happiness to Accelerate Your Success:

<https://amzn.to/2SixhK2>