



FEATURE - FEBRUARY 2019

I Can Love Myself!

Tips from Louise Hay

I love and approve of myself.

How did you feel when you read that affirmation? Self-love. Sometimes it's easier said than done. For a true health care program to work, self-love is the umbrella that determines how we treat ourselves, others and, ultimately, the earth. Louise Hay, the inspirational grandmother of self-love, has 12 great tips on beginning to love ourselves.

#1 - Stop criticizing yourself. Has that ever worked for anyone? Criticism is a black hole. One thought of criticism attracts another, and another, and another. Choose to look at yourself and your life as precious, sacred gifts from Spirit. (Insert your definition of Spirit here.) Acknowledge your beauty and affirm it often.

#2 - Forgive yourself. The past has passed, move forward. Yes, you've screwed up. Everyone has made mistakes. We've all said and done the wrong thing. It's called being human. When a child makes a mistake, we gently correct them. We are all children of God (insert your definition of God here), so continue to gently correct yourself.

#3 - Don't scare yourself. Why do we sometimes imagine the worst happenings? We all have powerful imaginations, so use them in constructive ways. Stop terrorizing yourself with your thoughts. Start picturing massive amounts of goodness unfolding in your life. Imagine wondrous possibilities. Learn to practice the Law of Substitution. Catch your negative thoughts and immediately switch them to positive ones.

#4 - Be gentle, kind, and patient. Ahhh. These heart qualities are magic elixirs. Whether it's learning to be positive, forgiving someone, learning how to climb silks—be patient. Growth can be messy, and it's not a linear process. Breathe! Enjoy your journey.

#5 - Be kind to your mind. The spiritual life doesn't mean that we will never have negative thoughts about ourselves and others. We will and so must learn to focus on the positives and transform negative thoughts into life-affirming ones. This comes with practice. Meditation and yoga are great ways to begin paying attention to the thoughts you think. Thoughts are the most powerful forces on the planet. Be gentle with yourself, young Jedi.

#6 - Praise yourself. There are so many amazing things about this city, this nation, this world, and you. Yes, YOU! Pause for a minute. Think about one challenge you've overcome. Think about one interesting fact most people don't know about you. You are worthy of praise, so lavish it on yourself daily. Marianne Williamson says, "I'm not depressed about the distance between me and Jesus. I'm impressed about the distance between me and who I used to be." Amen.

#7 - Support yourself. Asking for help is a great strength. No one is completely independent. Rather, we are all interdependent on each other. People are here to help you achieve your highest, truest potential. My boxing trainer, Barry Becker, changed my life. He was instrumental in rescuing my self-esteem and inspiring me. Inspiration is all around you, too. Affirm daily, "Everyone is a golden link in the chain for my highest good." People are also your ministry. Look for ways you can offer support and lend a helping hand. Community. Unity.

#8 - Be loving to your negatives. Many emotional patterns or mental tendencies were created because they were once needed to survive. As we do our consciousness work, we can look at the patterns that no longer serve us. Thank them for their service by saying, "Thank you for being there, but I don't need you anymore." This allows you to make conscious choices in creating a healthier emotional and mental track.

#9 - Take care of your body. Nutrition and exercise are the first two health habits. They are instrumental foundations for self-realization. Look for daily actions to show your body how much you love and appreciate it. You can show love one step at a time—one carrot, one glass of water, one compliment, one massage. Your body is the temple of the Divine. (Insert your definition of the Divine here.)

#10 - Have fun! Don't forget to have fun and keep a healthy dose of silliness in your life. I love teaching Laughter Yoga because it's incredibly healing on so many levels. And it's just silly and fun. As adults, we need to continue to goof off. Stay connected to your inner child. Life is too short to not have fun every day.

#11 - Love yourself. Do it now. You are worth loving, even before you lose the weight, find Mr. Right, or get that perfect job. Your journey is sacred. Don't waste a precious second. See every step, failure, mistake, joy, and experience as a thread in the beautiful tapestry of your life. Weave in self-love throughout because you are worthy. Now.

#12 - Do your mirror work. Saying your affirmations in a mirror while looking into your own eyes is a transformational experience. You may not have dry eyes the first few times. Keep at it. Talk to other people in the mirror. It can help you process your own emotions. Try this experiment, too. Look deeply into other people's eyes and hold their gaze when you're talking to them. You can see entire universes in the eyes. Everyone wants to be seen, heard, loved.

Louise Hay was right. Our peace depends on our ability to love ourselves. Remember that everyone struggles with this. That is how intimately connected we are to each other. A happy, peaceful, loving world starts right at your doorstep. Self-love is the key to personal transformation, and it leads to a loving community, nation, and ultimately, a loving world. Thank you, Louise. I love you.



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