



## Self-Love

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Self-love is one of those things I get tired of hearing about. I generally like myself and feel that I have healthy self-esteem. Of course, I understand that if I am kinder to myself, I will feel better. But, when I am unhappy with myself, I resent hearing I should take a bath or take a walk or hug myself. I have also noticed that many self-love teachings focus on loving our outer self and taking action to care for our physical bodies.

However, recently I was introduced to a practice that invites me to look at all the different aspects of my inner self. It's enlightening to look at a part of myself that I judge as misbehaving and making an attempt to understand why it is happening.

For example, I have noticed that a part of me starts making a list of every potential negative outcome when I am fearful. This part of me keeps reading the list to me, stirring up my anxiety. I want that voice to shut up and leave me alone. However, if I step back and look at why my brain is doing this, I notice that it just wants me to be aware of the things that could go wrong. It's trying to protect me from being blindsided. It is giving me information that it thinks I need to make a plan to defend myself. It isn't malicious and taunting. It wants to help me.

In looking at this negative listmaker and seeing the intention, I can accept that part of me. I can appreciate it and dismiss it with love when I don't need it. I don't have to argue with that voice and tell it to leave.

This approach is an entirely new way for me to explore self-love. I connect with the idea of not just taking action to care for myself but also looking deeper and trusting that all of me is good and wants the best for me.

What aspects of yourself do you wish weren't a part of you? Can you determine how they are trying to help you and love them for their efforts? I am learning, but I think this may be the path to genuine self-love.

