

Live Well Be Well

“Let's Talk Self-Love”

Welcome to Live Well, Be Well! A podcast where we speak candidly about all things health and well-being! My name is Renee Dell'Acqua, and I'm a Health Educator in Health Promotion Services here at UC San Diego.

On this episode of Live Well Be Well, we discuss self-love and ways to cultivate and incorporate self-love into your daily life.

So we hope you get inspired, we hope you feel connected, and we hope you discover new ways to live your best life. Let's get started!

February is often thought of as the month of love. But the type of love that is often discussed is that which is extended to our partner, our friends, our loved ones. But rarely do we talk about a type of love that can carry us through life even during the most challenging of days, a love that fills our hearts with joy and happiness, a love that props us up, a love that gives us our sense of worth. And that love is self-love.

The Brain and Behavior Research Foundation defines self-love as: a **state of appreciation for oneself** that grows from actions that support our physical, psychological and spiritual growth. Self-love means having a high regard for your own well-being and happiness. It means taking care of your own needs and not sacrificing your well-being to please others. Self-love means not settling for less than you deserve.

And the thing about self-love is that it presents differently to each and every person, but at the end of the day it's grounded in caring for and learning to love

our perfectly imperfect selves. And you may be wondering how do I even start this self-love journey. So I'll offer up a few strategies to start incorporating into your daily life -- most of which has to do with mindset. But before I begin, I want to make note of something I think is extremely important and that is:

Cultivating self-love isn't easy. In fact it's probably one of the hardest things to do but you know what it is so worth it. And your journey of self love isn't going to be linear, it will eb and flow, it will change over and over again with the seasons of your life. But like all good and worthy things in life — it takes effort and intentionality, it takes commitment. But I promise you that the work you put in to loving yourself -- for who you are, for the experiences you've lived through -- will make monumental impacts on your health and well-being.

So with that, let's talk about a few ways to cultivate one of the most important types of love in your life - self-love.

So the first step is knowing you are worthy of love. And I want you to say that to yourself right now! "I AM WORTHY OF LOVE!" Because when you have that mentality, when you have that belief, that is when you open your heart to all good things in life. So if you haven't been told this before -- let me tell you something honest and true: YOU are worthy of love, you are deserving of love.

The next thing is each and everyday, be intentional about extending kindness, patience, grace, and compassion towards yourself -- the way that you would to someone you love or care about like a best friend or family member. This can play out in the way that you speak to yourself as known as self-talk. But, it can also play out in the way you treat your body, mind, and heart. Move your body in ways that feel right to you -- dancing, running, walking, stretching; fuel your body with foods that it both needs and wants (it's ok to have treat yo self

moments -- all in moderation); give yourself space to rest and recover, really prioritizing time to recharge; reach out for support and develop meaningful and nurturing connections; engage in activities that bring you joy and happiness, that awaken your soul.

The next thing that is of utmost important is recognizing that comparison is the thief of self-love. It is far too easy to look at the lives of others, whether that's on instagram or linkedin and look at their successes and feel envious, feel down on yourself. When we do this we tend to grasp unhealthy and unproductive thoughts of "Well I don't have that fairytale romance, am I enough? Am I even worthy of that type of love and happiness?" OR "why haven't I heard back from that med school? Am I smart enough? Do I even belong in med school?" OR "Why didn't I land that job? Maybe I'm not good enough." So as you can see Tritons, comparison robs you of not only self-love, but of joy, of worthiness, of happiness. So hear me out when I say, don't compare your chapter 3 to someone else's chapter 20; in fact, don't compare your story with anyone else's story. Own your story for every chapter, for every plot twist, for every heroic and perhaps not so heroic moment because all of it has gotten you to where you are today and that is something to be proud of. Owning your story takes bravery and it is a hallmark sign of self-love.

So those are just a few ways to cultivate self-love, but I think these few tips will help you started as you begin or continue on in your self-love journey.

And before we close out this episode today, take a moment to gently close your eyes or in the least relax your gaze. Find a comfortable and relaxing position. Now, take a slow deep breath in through your nose -- breathing in love, worthiness, and self-gratitude -- hold that breath for just a moment. Let the love, worthiness, and gratitude penetrate deep into your heart and soul. Now exhale

-- releasing self-doubt, releasing comparison, releasing feelings of unworthiness. Once again take a deep breath in through your nose, and strongly release that breath out through your mouth.

Now go out into the world Tritons, with love in your heart and worthiness deep in your soul. Endless love, peace, and gratitude to you all!

So that concludes this episode of Live Well, Be Well! If you liked what you heard today and would like to learn more about topics related to health and well-being there's much more to come!

Be sure to check out our website hps.ucsd.edu and follow us on Instagram and Facebook under @UCSDHPS

Stay tuned for our next episode of Live Well, Be Well. Until next time, be kind, be true, be you. And remember, to be well is to live well.