

Yoga Week 27: Yoga for Self-Love

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Self-love is the most important love in your life.

Practicing self-love allows us to take on the world in a new perspective.

It is okay to not be always happy with yourself (we are human beings, and it is normal to have negative emotions, especially towards ourselves).

Where to Begin?

Self-love starts with being mindful, mindfulness comes from being transparent with yourself and being who you truly are meant to be.

Mindfulness comes from slowing down and cultivating a slowness in our bodies by breath work, movement or stillness, and presence.

It's not every day we wake up giving ourselves the love we need. It can be uncomfortable. However, sometimes discomfort leads to growth. Growth is part of self-love.

Truly understanding the desire to take control and make positive changes in our lives may be confusing & take a long time, but just having the thought of putting effort into the area of self-love starts the journey for you

What does self-love look like?

- Forgiving yourself
- Asking for help
- Making healthy choices
- Spending time around people who support you
- Pursuing your interests and goals and challenging yourself
- Noticing progress
- Not comparing yourself to others

Throwing away the negative:

Verbalize something you say to yourself that you want to get rid of such as negative self-talk, and throw it away, let it go, metaphorically

Cup of Tea Breathing:

- Think of your favorite warm drink (tea, hot chocolate, hot cup of soup).
- Hold the beverage in your hand.
- Take a deep inhale through your nose and visualize as if you are smelling your favorite beverage.
- Let out a slow exhale.
- Repeat the process for about 2-4 minutes, slowing your breath down and grounding.

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Movements that work with your breath allows you to become mindful in your practice, cultivating more self-love

- Take slow deep inhales and exhales while standing in a comfortable position opening out the arms laterally, making a capital "T" with your arms, and then bring them in towards your body.
- Repeat slowly 5-10 times.
- Take slow deep inhale and exhales while standing a comfortable position, bringing arms up above your head, exhale, and forward fold, bringing your hands down to the floor.
- Repeat slowly 5-10 times.
- Take slow deep inhale and exhales while standing a comfortable position, bring one arm overhead diagonally across, while your other arm rests along your side.
- Repeat on the other side, bringing your other arm up above your head and then diagonally over.
- Repeat slowly 5-10 times.
- Take a deep breath and step one leg back and one forward, creating a high crescent lunge. As you inhale, bring both arms up over head, breath out, bringing your arms out to a "T" position and stretching deeper into the lunge.
- Bring the arms back up overhead, back to a high crescent lunge.
- Repeat slowly 5-10 times.

Self-Hug

- Lying on your back, bring your arms on to the sides while you exhale.
- On the inhale, bring your arms around your upper torso, giving yourself a self-hug.
- Repeat opening arms out and bringing them back slowly 5-10 times.

End this physical practice with lying on your back and going back to that imaginary cup of tea you were holding. Imagine the room filling with this wonderful smell. As your eyes close, let the smell take over and let your body sink into the earth. Let every part of you relax, give yourself a moment to inhale and smell that amazing smell, and exhale, letting go of all that no longer serves you.

"You as yourself carry around just as much magic and meaning as anyone else in the world. You are just as valuable as those who you admire. You have purpose and meaning. You aren't just loved, you are love. You have the responsibility and privilege of taking care of your body and mind that you inhabit, which involves more than just indulging in everything you crave. Reclaim the true meaning of self-care and self-love, and watch your life bloom"

"How you love yourself is how you teach others to love you."

-Rupi Kaur

