



REFUTURE YOUR LIFE
INTERNATIONAL



Embodying Self-Love

We've talked a lot about the importance of love in this program because truly it is the key to everything – to being in our power, to living an expanded life, to transformation of old pains and heartaches, to living a life of joy, passion and abundance. It really is the heart of it all.

At the foundation of being loving with others is being loving with ourselves. We know our own stories, shame, guilt and “failings” so intimately, that it's easier to love others and treat others better than we treat ourselves. Still, what we don't love and accept in ourselves, we unconsciously project onto others. The more we love and accept *all* the parts of ourselves, the more we're a clear space to see other people and situations as they truly are. We meet life more openly and trustingly, with less need for control.

This is the kind of thing that can feel so easy to agree with mentally, “Yes, I will love myself more. Here I go”, while the doing of it can feel so hard.

In my book, I talk about the **levels of knowing**. We can know things mentally, like that molecules of hydrogen and oxygen combine to make water. We can know things in our hearts, like that we love a beloved pet. We can know things in our bodies, like that ice is cold. And, we can know things to different depths at each level, like the difference for most of us between knowing that H₂O is a water molecule (knowledge we can call up if needed, maybe after a bit of effort) and knowing to call 911 in an emergency (information that we know well and comes quickly).

When we love ourselves deeply on all three levels, then that's our default position. We consistently and effortlessly meet situations and ourselves from a place of love.

There are two approaches to getting this knowing more deeply on all levels – top-down and bottom-up.

Top-down methods begin with the “higher brain” or neo-cortex and focus on loving and treating the limbic system (heart) and primal brain (gut/body) with love and compassion. Reason and understanding are hallmarks of this method. Talk therapy and mindset work are top-down approaches.

Bottom-up processes begin with changing the way that the primal brain and the unconscious mind *experience life*. This in turn affects and changes the emotional response and then the cortical thinking response.

Both are effective, and powerful transformations can happen when they're combined.

One thing I've loved about working with energy is that it plays between the two approaches. It's not fully either one, and includes both. Energy is part of and affects both the mind and the body. This is important because for lasting changes to be made, they need to happen on all levels – mental (new-cortex) / emotional (limbic) / physical (primal).

What I'm discovering doing the VITA certification program is that, with so much emphasis on the mind in our culture, focusing on body-centered practices makes an incredible difference. They help to create a *vibration of love* within our bodies and experience, which holds and infuses everything.

In Western cultures, though, millennia of disconnection for our bodies makes it difficult for us to trust our bodies, or to even be aware of physical sensations.

Bringing more awareness to our bodies means that we shine a light into our subconscious. We also gain access to a huge source of wisdom and intuition. Bringing in more somatic processes helps to create more balance. Focusing these processes on experiencing love in our bodies is expansive at a deep level.

So this month, we're going to focus on *embodying* love for ourselves.

Adyashanti teaches that **we have two hearts: a spiritual heart and a human heart. The spiritual heart is unaffected by life experiences.** It's always open, always loving, and always available to us. Our spiritual heart connects us with all of creation and with the Divine.

Our human heart is a storehouse of our emotions and old stories. It expands and contracts, *which is what it's meant to do*. It's here for the experience of being human. It wants to live its human drama and feel all of its feelings. The human heart is held *within* the spiritual heart and its infinite capacity for love.

Not knowing this, we often judge our human heart, thinking, "I shouldn't feel this way. I should be more loving. I shouldn't get angry." **This forcing the human heart to act like the spiritual heart is the source of a lot of spiritual by-passing.** Loving, accepting and expressing our full range of emotions is an important part of loving and accepting our full selves. We'll work more next month on expressing our full range of feelings. Right now, we're focusing on creating more a more loving vibration in which to hold them.

By connecting with our bodies and both our spiritual and human hearts, we're able to have a somatic experience of loving ourselves. This is a bottom-up approach to having more love and acceptance of ourselves.

I'll say all of this again on the call, and to help your mind be at ease right now, know that:

- **Your job is to do this at your own pace.** Rushing the process and trying to force yourself to feel causes more disconnection. You're building a relationship of trust, which can take time. *Honoring your body and process is more important than anything else.* If this means you stay at step 1, stay at step 1. You can always come back to the recording.
- **Feeling nothing is something.** If you start to get frustrated because you aren't aware of any particular sensations in your body, relax. It's okay. Honor the nothingness. Your body has been protecting you *by not feeling things.* Thank it. Honor it. Love it. Let it know it can take all the time it needs. All you need to do right now is to show up for your body.
- **It's possible to feel love and pain at the same time.** In the practice, if pain or a painful memory comes up, it can be held with love. Remember that the human heart is held within the spiritual heart. *Your pain and painful experiences are held within the love of your spiritual heart.*

To prepare for our embodiment practice, let your mind come to a bit more to ease by expressing the following:

When I think of being more in my body, I notice the following thoughts:

When I think of being more in my body, I notice the following emotions:

When I think of being more in my body, I notice the following physical sensations:

When I imagine loving and accepting all of me, I see new possibilities for myself, like:

What excites me the most about getting more in my body is:
