

"If I'm not perfect, I'm a failure." Perfectionism is the brain's largest rival. The brain may trick itself in thinking it loves itself by this discipline, but instead perfectionism is dangerous. Perfectionists often don't love themselves because their best is never good enough. In order to overcome perfectionism, we must simply just accept what is and jump in (Ecclesiastes 11:4). God wants us to rejoice in our work (Proverbs 14:14; Galatians 6:4)—He knows it won't be perfect, yet He still wants us to rejoice—let's take Him up on the offer.

"I don't deserve anything good." It is not wise to constantly berate oneself over one's unworthiness. No one is in the worthy boat (cf. Luke 17:10)—so we should not be so down on ourselves. Perhaps we feel this way due to a past sin or mistake. Sometimes past mistakes are heightened to such a degree where if we would simply assess the situation, we would not be so hard on ourselves. Did you know you are blessed right now? Being human automatically grants you with blessings unfathomable (Psalm 145:9; Matthew 5:45; Acts 14:17). If you are a Christian—you get extra perks (Ephesians 1:3). Instead of saying you don't deserve something because of your past, correct it, obey God, and start examining God's gifts.

"I'm a nobody." No one is a nobody—everybody is a somebody and everybody who is a somebody, can be anybody they want to be. Western civilization has recognized the importance of self. The world needs us and the more we realize that it doesn't, the worse we become.[15] We should never forget how important we are and always realize the value we have. In fact, God wrote that we are “crowned...with glory and honor” (Psalm 8:5). We should never forget that someone appreciates us, needs us, and loves us.

Subtract these five distortions from your life—you will only be better because of it.

Multiply These 5 Applications to Your Daily Routine.[16] Multiplication is key to mathematics; spiritual multiplication is key to spiritual growth. Let us practice self-love by meditating upon these five applications daily. These principles are both Biblically accurate and therapeutically sound. They will help us treat ourselves

the way God treats us.

Give yourself some grace. One of the best things we can do is to give ourselves some room to wiggle. Not everything is the end of the world. Someone is noted as having said “To err is human...” Don't give up after a mistake, get up and try again. Don't take God's heightened place and say you are more powerful than His blood. He gives us a lot of mercy (Ephesians 2:4), we should too; it will only benefit our souls (Proverbs 11:17). “Dr. Karl Menninger said that if he could convince his patients in psychiatric hospitals that their sins were forgiven, 75 percent could walk out the next day!”[17] Give yourself some grace—it's ok.

Be kind to yourself. Politicians are their own best friends, but self-haters are their own worst enemies.[18] Sometimes we can listen to our own heads instead of God's. We are allowed to treat ourselves with kindness. Take a vacation (Mark 6:31) or treat yourself (Proverbs 25:16). Go spend money on your favorite hobby or read that book you've wanted to read. Allow yourself to go to therapy if needed. God commands us to be kind to everyone—you are included in this scope.

Create Boundaries (Proverbs 25:17). Robert Frost said, “Good fences make good neighbors.” Benjamin Franklin said, “Fish and houseguests smell after three days.” Boundaries are healthy ways we prevent self-harm for in attempting to help others to the maximum we may hurt ourselves. It is ok to say no and set up boundaries from those who will hurt our mental health, physical health, and spiritual health. Solomon wrote: “He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls” (Proverbs 25:28).

Surround Yourself with Supportive People. The importance of one's close circle cannot be overemphasized. God knew the importance of this to oneself entire being (Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:25). If you really love yourself have a good group of people who can encourage you, sharpen you, and love you (Proverbs 27:17).

This tract includes an extra single page on the third page full page. Tracts always begin on the right side of the first page and end on the middle of the first page. This tract is an exception

How to Love Yourself

NOAH OLSON



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One of, if not the greatest longing by all beings is to be loved. Spouses want to be loved. Children want to be loved. Friends want to be loved. In his book *What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About Women*, James Dobson wrote, "If I could write a prescription for the women of the world it would provide them with a healthy dose of self-esteem and personal worth...I have no doubt this is their greatest need."^[1] "Madalyn Murray O'Hair vanished in 1995. When her diaries were found she often cried, 'Somebody, somewhere please love me.'"^[2]

What is self love? According to Merriam Webster, self love is "an appreciation of one's own worth or virtue." Sometimes people don't practice self love, which leads to their detriment. There are many reasons for one's lack of self-love, some include past abuse, trauma, false perceptions about others, or perhaps a "big sin." God never meant for us to self-loathe; He made for us to self-love.

Jesus never called people to change their personality^[3], but their choices and mindset. He knew that people could work to be better with what they had.^[4] So how can we practice self-love?

Add These 5 Verses to Your Daily Thoughts.

Why do men hate themselves—they don't see their beauty. While the world gives people a low number at the auction, Scripture values mankind at a high price. Although there are many psychological and self-help books that encourage self-love (some of them do help), the Bible is the BEST book on the shelf. Read and study these five verses so that you can begin to love yourself more:

Psalm 139:14: Talk good to yourself and about yourself. The Psalmist is speaking about himself! Positive

self-talk is always a good thing (Proverbs 15:23; 25:11). Do this in the mirror at the beginning of the day or immediately after a negative criticism. We cannot forget the description that came with our bodies and souls (Ecclesiastes 3:11). If we find ourselves berating ourselves, let us practice acceptance, seeing we cannot change anything (Matthew 6:27).^[5] One man said, One said "I ain't very much, but I'se all I got."^[6]

Ephesians 5:28-29: Self-love is natural. Seneca said, "I confess that there is implanted in us the love of our own body." Satan was hinted as a natural action when he said "all that a man hath will he give for his life" (Job 2:4). God made man to be his own caretaker (Genesis 1:28-29). To fail at this job is against the natural order. Leroy Brownlow wrote, "The Creator expects man to help himself. The lower creatures are largely finished by nature, but man is different—he must finish himself."^[7] When we fail to love ourselves, we do that which is against nature.

Matthew 22:39: Jesus commanded self-love by implication. There is an implied command among the two greatest commands in Scripture—that is self-love. This implied thought is seen all through the Scriptures (Leviticus 19:18, 34; Matthew 19:19; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27; Romans 13:9; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8). The golden rule is just as applicable to how we treat ourselves as how we treat others (Matthew 7:12).

2 Timothy 3:2: Self-love is not the same as pride. The principle of Biblical self-love is not pridefulness or narcissism. The Bible teaches man to love self, but it doesn't instruct man to love himself above all things. The Greek word in 2 Timothy 3:2 (φιλαυτος) is not "loving one's self, but loving it unduly, just as the love of possessions."^[8] Thayer says it means "loving oneself; too intent on one's own interests, selfish." This is a love that looks down upon others, degrades others, and only seeks one's own interests. While it is good to love ourselves, life is not all about pleasing ourselves (Romans 15:1-3; 1 Corinthians 10:24; 13:5 Philippians 2:3-4). Benjamin Whichcote said, "None are so empty as those who are full of themselves."

1 John 4:19: Self-love is dependent upon how much you recognize God's love. No person can truly love another without first loving himself and no person can

truly love himself without first seeing how much he is loved by others.^[9] We have no room to hate ourselves; God loves us too much. Someone observed that we need to see ourselves through Heaven's eyes.^[10] The Bible is filled with numerous declarations of God's love for humanity—in fact that is the main premise of the book!

If we want to truly love ourselves—we will comfort ourselves with what the Word of God says about us.

Subtract These 5 Distortions from Your Mind.

Cognitive distortions are mind patterns that are harmful and often illogical. These patterns vary and they cause us to believe things about ourselves that are not true. These distortions may be examples of self-hatred. Foundationally and explicitly they are against love (Romans 13:10). What are some distortions we might think about ourselves that are harmful to self-love?

"I must carry all the bags inside." This distortion says that you must do all the work. This will hurt our effort and labor because it places responsibilities that we were never meant to carry alone. Sometimes this demands saying no to others. If you take all the bags inside yourself in one trip, you will not just hurt yourself, but everyone else, seeing you dropped all the food!^[11] God expects us to do something, but not everything. J.S. Excell said, "Good men should not kill themselves by excess of work even in the service of God." Don't carry all the bags else you wear out—God still needs you on this side of eternity.^[12]

"I must be like him or her." Comparing oneself to others is not self-love as it seeks to determine worthiness by the successes of others. We can go crazy by comparing our lives or appearances by others because once we become their "equal," we will find something else that we want and find ourselves in the same hole. Theodore Roosevelt said, "Comparison is the thief of joy." Paul told the Corinthians that he did not compare himself with the Judaizing teachers (2 Corinthians 10:12). Since humans are faulty, try seeking to model yourself after Christ—He will never fail you (Philippians 2:5; 1 John 2:6). One lady said, "The happiest day of my life was the day I decided that I could never win a beauty contest."^[13]

You cannot do yourself any better by surrounding yourself around Christians who want to walk with you to Heaven.

Do good to others (Acts 20:35). If you want to love yourself then serve someone else. Biologically, doing good to others releases a hormone called oxytocin, which is a bonding hormone. Doing good actually helps our own physical body.^[1] If you want to love yourself, then help other people love themselves.

Sit with others during their distress, cry with the hurting (Romans 12:15), help the needy, visit the orphans and widows (James 1:27), and give gifts to people. You will do yourself a big favor by doing good to others.

God wants us to love ourselves. He wants us to see how valuable we are. When we don't, we must think His precious gift is worthless! You are important to God, important to your family, important to your friends... now work on being important to yourself. Give yourself a hug—you deserve it!

Endnotes

[1]James Dobson, *What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About Women* (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1975), p. 35 from <https://www.christianstudylibrary.org/files/pub/articles/20170009%20-%20Joe%20James%20-%20The%20Bible%20and%20Self%20Love.pdf>

[2]<https://ministry127.com/resources/illustration/madalyn-murray-o-hair>

[3]Eric Owens, Sermon from Polishing the Pulpit
[4]Ibid.

[5]Leroy Brownlow, *Better than Medicine*, Brownlow Publishing Company, INC., 1967,

[6]Ibid. 19.

[7]Ibid 19.

[8]Aristotle

[9]<https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/ctf/matthew-22.html>

[10]AI.

[11]<https://psychcentral.com/health/what-is-self-love-and-why-is-it-so-important#definition> [12]<https://theplaceofpraise.com/do-not-wear-your-self-out/>

[14]Brownlow, 19.

[15]Some of paragraph comes from <https://youtu.be/Ky05oROnJNk>

[16]This point is taken from the following sites:
<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/self-love> and

<https://www.verywellmind.com/ways-to-practice-self-love-5667417>

[17]<https://wohbm.org/forgiveness-getting-it-from-god-showing-it-to-others/>

[18]<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/self-love>

[19]<https://lifeforwardcounseling.org/neuropsychological-benefits-serving-others-science-altruism/>