



There is no Path without Self-Love

Loving oneself is the prerequisite for our psychological and spiritual sanity. We have been created to honor and love our existence. This is the deepest reason behind the instinct of survival among all living things. However, as we evolve, so does the concept of self-love. There is lower self-love and higher self-love; there is distorted self-love and there is conscious, intelligent and awakened self-love. In order to love oneself, one needs to know oneself and become intimate with the subtle dimensions of one's existence. That self that we are born to love is not static; it is constantly changing. The very reason for its existence is evolution into the actualization of its pure nature. Only when we have truly met our higher being can self-love be fulfilled.

Nowadays the concept of positive thinking and creating a more accepting and loving connection to oneself is becoming more common. The problem is that it is confined to our lower self, our personality. Personality is the mask of the false self. The false self does not really have a face of its own so it has become the masks that it wears – its image *is* its face. There is something ugly in the way personality is cultivating a positive self-image. It is trying to love itself but for the wrong reasons; it is desperately trying to find a way to live with itself, with its self-hate, and avoid self-destruction. There is nothing loving about personality because it does not have a face or real eyes that you can look into. It does not have soul. It is fake and deceptive.

The movement of love towards oneself originates in the intention to create a deeper and more intimate relationship with our inner existence. That love which slowly awakens inside needs the proper environment to grow – the space of silence and purity, the sense of being, sensitivity and gentleness. These qualities must emerge from a deeper place within, the place that carries the energy of our soul. Self-love is not ego trying to be good to itself by comforting itself with positive emotions. Self-love is the movement of love towards our inner being, towards our soul. It is a movement of seeking our true empowerment – love unto itself. Only through becoming love unto oneself can we finally be free from our constant inner lack, emotional emptiness and dependency.

Personality is empty. It has nothing. In order to have an illusion of worthiness, it must cultivate a positive self-image. But clinging to one's self-image is not self-love. On the contrary, it is the very absence of love to oneself. When a parent is good to a child only when it satisfies his or her parental pride, this is not love. Such a parent sees the child as an extension of their own self-image, of their own ego. To love is to love that which constitutes the substance of our existence and the existence of all beings – the light of I

am. If we cannot see this light in ourselves, how can we see it in others? If we do not see it in others, how can we love them? Who are we actually loving? There is no love without knowing oneself. Instead, there is its emotional substitute, which is neediness for acceptance and affection, that futile attempt to fill up the empty hole in our heart. But that hole can never be filled unless our heart awakens to herself and begins to honor her own light.

Many traditions that speak about the heart see her not for what she is but as an instrument that produces the emotion of love. They are trying to manipulate that love, condition it and stimulate it through artificial means, brainwashing others with fanciful ideas of love, devotion or compassion. But what about the heart alone in herself? Is our heart merely an apparatus through which we can experience love? Whose heart is it? What is the relationship of our heart with her own being? The heart wants to love, but does she love herself? By manipulating our heart, wanting to train her capacity to love, we give away the true power of our heart; we leak her light away from herself. Those who try so hard to love others or even the whole of existence are desperate because they do not love their own self – they are empty of self-love.

The journey into awakening and the journey into self-love are no different. We need to awaken, to actualize our potential, to open the space within, to meet our inner being. Why? Because we have love for who we are. By falling in love with our inner self, we allow our soul to awaken so that as we become one with our existence, that love can finally become complete.

Those who make great sacrifices in the name of spiritual practice and growth, and yet do not do so from the place of self-love, are missing the very meaning of walking the inner path; they practice for the wrong reasons. Some such seekers negate their own self and, through a misguided concept of liberation, seek to experientially realize their non-existence. This is not self-love. It is self-denial, denial of one's own individuality, self-negation and a form of brutality against one's own self. Alternatively, there are those who want to love god or merge with the supreme reality, but they have not established the foundation of the correct relationship with their very own identity. How can you love god if you do not love yourself? You can only love god through *who you are*. Not loving yourself, you refuse to love the god in you.

There is no way that one can succeed on the spiritual path without entering it from the place of self-love. It is this very love that makes awakening into our sacred self possible. It is this love that opens all the doors and makes us available to the intelligence of grace. It is through this love that we begin to be seen by the creator. When you truly love yourself, the creator is in your heart, the divine becomes aware of your existence and looks through your eyes into you.

Before love can become whole, the inner lover and the beloved need to meet and awaken their relationship of love. In the process of growing into the state of love, which is the natural state of our higher self, there are two movements of love that constitute



the positive duality of our evolution. One is the movement of devotion and surrender of me into I am; the second is the movement of surrender from the soul into the universal light of creation.

The relationship between me and I am can only begin when I am has been awakened. Prior to that, me can only relate to itself. Me's relationship with itself should also be based on the energy of self-love, but it cannot go very deep due to the absence of the soul. The love from me to I am needs time to grow and mature in accordance with how much me can surrender and realize I am as its own higher identity. For me, it is a process of dying, letting go and sacrificing its own separate sense of self to begin living a higher life from within the consciousness of the soul. When there is true understanding, me awakens the passion to dissolve into I am; it becomes the lover of its higher self. It is this love that bridges the duality between me and I am, allowing them to merge into one self – our soul. Self-love transforms into selflove, the unity of the lover and the beloved.

After the soul is awakened and embodied as love, she begins to grow into relationship with the divine; she becomes the lover of the supreme reality. The direction of her love is to merge with the source of her existence and reach samadhi in god, which is the state of love. Her life from now on is a life of surrender, of letting go of herself into the inner realm. Although that process is complex and takes many internal steps, it is also very simple and natural. Its essence is love and it is this love that bridges and gradually dissolves the duality between the soul and her creator. On the lower level, self-love represents the enlightened relationship of love between me and I am. On the higher level, self-love is the complete surrender of the soul into her universal self that manifests the universal state of love – samadhi in love.

There is no such thing as meditation without self-love. Those who speak about the path of meditation and the path of love as being different have no understanding of either one. One can call sitting and watching the mind or other tiresome activities 'meditation', but true meditation needs to be in love with itself, love that is directed towards the heart of our inner being. For meditation to happen, there has to be a depth of intimacy with oneself, the gentleness of the soul and devotion to one's very light – put simply, self-love. Self-love brings life into meditation; it illuminates it with the divine quality. The soul enters the house of meditation and the sky of our inner self lights up with her brilliance and magic. Only then is this meditation, is this love.

Blessings,

Anadi

For a glossary of the terminology used in this teaching and for further resources, you may visit our website www.anaditeaching.com

