



Become Your Own Valentine With Healthy Selfishness

Twice a week I have a “standard” (in coaching that means my “yes” list) that I have someone to my home for a meal or cup of tea. It is my opportunity to try a new recipe, and, more important, having a warm conversation over good food nurtures my soul. Relationships with others (especially at the dining room table) are the true oxygen of my life. I had invited a friend for a Monday morning tea party and later realized it was at the same time as my new cardio-kick boxing class. What to do? I was **SELF**ish and rescheduled the tea party and went to the kick boxing class.

I grew up hearing that it was not ok to be selfish. It was a big, scary word. Now I believe healthy **SELF**ishness is one of the most important ingredients for a rich, satisfying, purposeful life. Let me tell you why!

Healthy **SELF**ishness is taking time for you and nurturing yourself unconditionally. I have found it allows me to be even more generous of my time and support with others I care about. Notice the word **SELF** in the word **SELF**ishness. It is about **SELF** care. It is about taking care of yourself even when it feels self-indulgent and uncomfortable. The more you love yourself first the more energy you have to give to your work and family responsibilities.

SELF care means getting your personal needs met. (My coaching clients have identified their needs.) Opposite of self care are self deniers. Self deniers find it impossible to get their needs met because they have denied themselves for so long. They try to please others. They worry about what people think of them. They try to do everything perfect. People pleasing perfectionists are “never done,” and worry more about others and end up living stress-filled lives with no time for themselves.

The “cost” of self-denying is expensive and unhealthy. You assume people you work with and live with will help you get your needs met because you give so much to them. Doesn’t happen! You rationalize they are just too busy. But do they really even know what you need or want? Have you ever told them? Taking care of others before yourself leads to a busy, exhausted and stress-filled life. Medically, this stress leads to higher levels of the hormones cortisol and insulin, which lead to more stored fat and a higher risk for you to have a stroke, heart attack or cancer.

I want for you to have more healthy **SELF**ishness. Where to start? Start small. The following are real life **SELF** care examples from my coaching clients. Schedule 15 minutes of “me” time every single day. (Washing your face and brushing your teeth doesn’t count!) Schedule nothing on Wednesday evening or Saturday morning. Say “no” to guilt based invites. Use your caller ID on your phone or just don’t answer it. Schedule nap time every Sunday. Take time to write 2 gratitudes every morning before you start your day.

Since I have practiced healthy **SELF**ishness I have more enthusiasm to jump out of bed in the morning. I’ve attracted amazing people and business opportunities because my soul is energized. What are you waiting for to be number one on your to do list? If not today, when?