

The “Three D’s of Loving Yourself” by Lisa Perrecone, CPC

Three weeks ago a friend invited me to be on his radio show in Chicago. The topic was so appropriate for Valentine’s Day that I thought I’d share it. The topic was, “The fine art of appreciating YOU.” If I asked you how many times throughout your day you stopped to bask in the greatness and wonder of your magnificence, you’d probably think I was crazy. I would venture to say that by societies standards you would be afraid of being labeled an egocentric, self absorbed &%\$#(!! Here’s the good news...it’s not your fault. We have all been conditioned to think that appreciating and loving oneself is wrong. We are unconsciously taught that to put our needs first is selfish and when we do, we end up feeling guilty. Well this Valentine’s Day I am going to invite you to let that go and practice the 3’Ds of loving yourself.

DECIDE: to put yourself first and stop being last in line.

In my practice I see so much resentment from parents and kids that has built up over the years regarding what I call the “shoulds” in their lives. Everyone is “shoulding” all over each other, and everyone loses. I invite you to rise up against all those conversations subconsciously carried inside of your head. You know the ones about not being worth it or good enough and decide that it’s okay to put yourself first. Learn to receive. It takes a true giver to know that learning to receive is the counter part and the true essence of giving. Once we learn how to receive graciously from ourselves & others, then & only then can we be true givers. If we become depleted of our energy then we cannot be a source of light, joy & love for those around us. I’ll use the analogy of a bean sprout. If the sprout doesn’t have the environment of fertile soil, sunlight or water in which to grow, then it will slowly wither and die and not become a source of food or energy for anything else. This is similar to us. In order to be a role model and source of joy to those around you, I suggest creating an environment that nurtures that growth in you. Take out a piece of paper and write at the top: “Starting today I give myself permission to put myself first.”

DEFINE: take inventory of your life and delete the energy drains.

Going back to that conversation in our heads that I mentioned earlier. You know the one that always makes us feel small and insignificant. Yep that one...most of us over compensate for that conversation by doing things for others for their approval and acceptance. We seek this approval and look outward for our self worth and acceptance rather than inward. We have a hard time saying “no” to things we don’t find joy in and that leads to a calendar of “shoulds” and “have tos” and that’s not healthy. That’s STRESS in capital letters. So now on that same piece of paper I invite you to write: “Things that drain my energy.” Number from 1-10. Start defining areas in your life to let go of or stop doing. Now give yourself permission to start eliminating them. If elimination is impossible, for instance, if it’s your teenager that’s sucking your energy, then it’s time to develop a strategy for managing yourself when around him until he moves out or grows some neurons.

DEVELOP: a set of self care practices and commit to them.

Now turn over that same piece of paper and write at the top, “Things that energize me” and number from 1 to 10. These will become your new daily habits. Some ideas are: daily affirmations, self acknowledgement & acknowledgement of others, prayer, meditation, yoga, taking a nap, taking vitamins, reading, journaling, watching the sunset, taking a walk or other form of exercise, a bubble bath, reading, listening to music. Once you have your list, write them in your day planner. Schedule them first before anything else. This will be your nurturing environment and the fertile soil in which to grow.

Have a wonderful Valentine’s Day. You truly are magnificent!

Lisa Perrecone, Certified Performance Coach

~your partner in possibility...

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