

Nature Inspired Self-Love Reflections



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Introduction

One of the greatest gifts we can give ourselves is the gift of self-love. Yet, all too often we deny ourselves this very vital gift due to a lack of awareness about its importance. You see, we are all born with the gift of self-love, but most of us lose it in the process of growing up. We are conditioned to believe that it is selfish to love ourselves. We are indoctrinated to focus on the external for the answers and source of our love and happiness. We are not taught to honor, appreciate or nurture the very essence of our being by loving who we are.

In our culture to this day, most people are very afraid to utter the words that they love themselves, or even give themselves a genuine compliment for that matter. Our culture has conditioned us to belittle the magnificence of who we are. We commonly hear phrases like “I am not perfect” and believe ourselves to be less than whole, when all that we seek lies within.

But the good news is that the gift of self-love is a gift that everyone can have. It takes no money and no resources to obtain it. It simply requires that we take time to look within to discover what is already there, and remind ourselves about the magnificence of our being. When we do this we begin to live from the core of our truth—the core of our being. And as we step into the fullness of love with ourselves, we then begin to radiate out this love to all others, and our world.

And it is then that we also begin to understand the significance of self-love. When I have a vested interest in myself, my personal health, wellbeing and quality of life, I immediately begin to make different choices. For example in wanting the highest quality food and products, I begin to care about how these are made in our world. In wanting the cleanest air and water, I begin to take notice of the actions that lead to their pollution. In wanting harmony, peace and justice for myself, I begin to realize that I must give those as well to others. And so the domino effect goes.

When we deny ourselves the love, care and respect we so deeply deserve and require, we live in a state of disconnect between our actions and the reflected consequences we see in our world. We have a world in crisis today where human and other animals, along with plants, and all life forms are living in some of the most challenging and destructive times. Amidst political turmoil and environmental degradation, we are left wondering what the solution to our catastrophic actions may be. Many people focus on the external as we have always been taught, and blame governments, corporations and organizations for the results we have, when the answer to our challenges lies within each one of us.

There is great truth in the saying that we cannot give to another, what we do not have ourselves. When we learn how to love ourselves, we instantly connect in love with all of life on this planet.

Therefore today I invite you to take the first step of allowing love to come back into your life. As you rekindle your love for you, you open your self to the healing each of us, and our planet, are so very much in need of. It is my intention through this ebook to provide you with visual and written reflections that can awaken your sense of self-love. There is a big reason why the reflections compiled here are nature inspired, as the natural world has an amazing ability to remind us of our nature, and open our hearts to the love that we are.

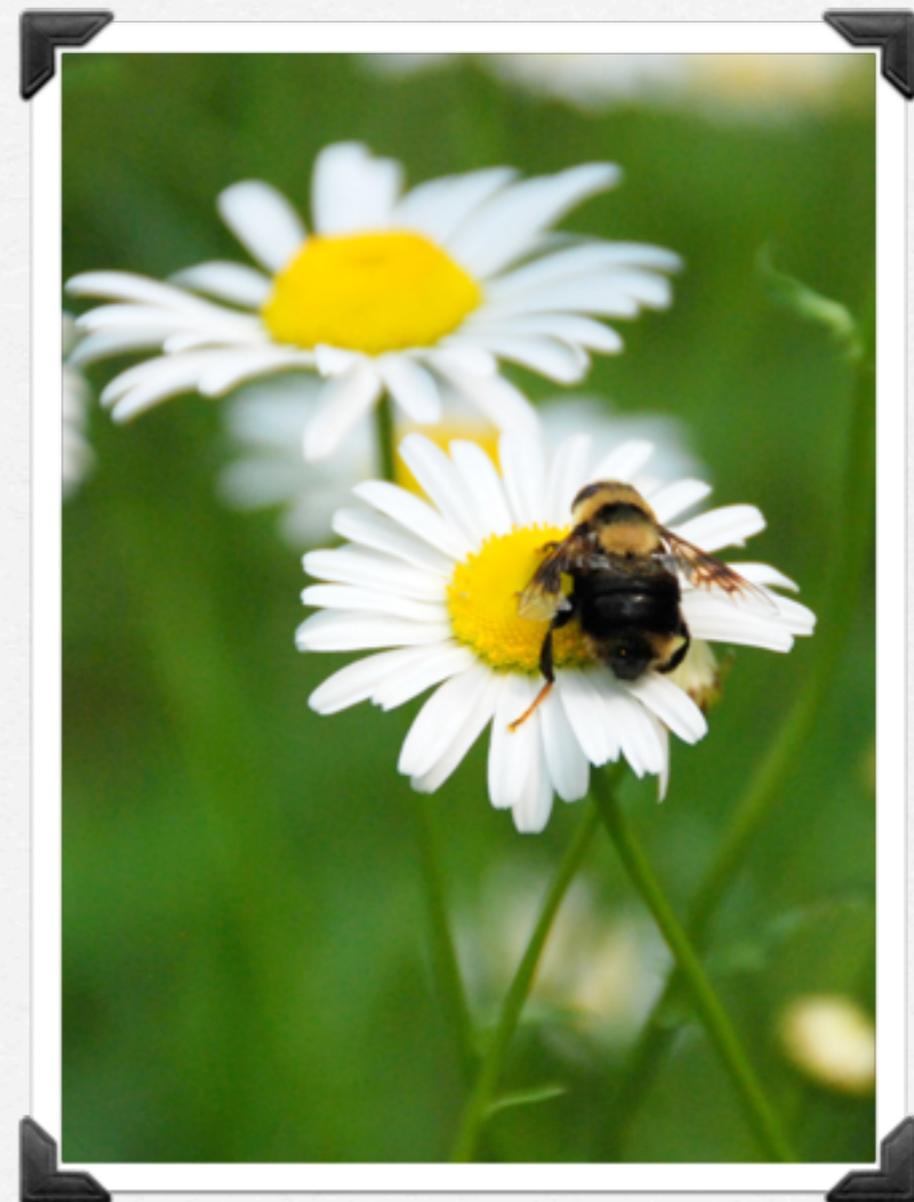
And so in this ebook you will find 16 self-love reflections. Each one is composed of one of my nature photography images, along with a short reflection and an expanded reflection write-up. At the end of every reflection there is one question, which I invite you to take some time to answer for yourself, and put into action in your own life.

Today I know both from direct personal experience and through the observation of others, that self-love is a vital component to our level of joy and inner peace, as well as health of the mind, body and spirit. And because I know how amazing life can be when we have this gift within us, it comes naturally to me to want to share it with all others, so that you too can experience the beautiful miracle that this life, our planet and YOU are.

**Wishing you a delightful journey of personal exploration, as you
reclaim the gift of self-love.**

Purpose

**The connection to
your nature,
leads to the
discovery of
your purpose.**



Every living being on this planet knows the purpose for their 'being'. It is etched in their nature. The human being is the only species that has come to feel lost and confused as to their life purpose by becoming disconnected from their true nature. The resulting sense of separation that we feel within is reflected in all of our interactions, including those with other humans, all living beings, and our natural environment.

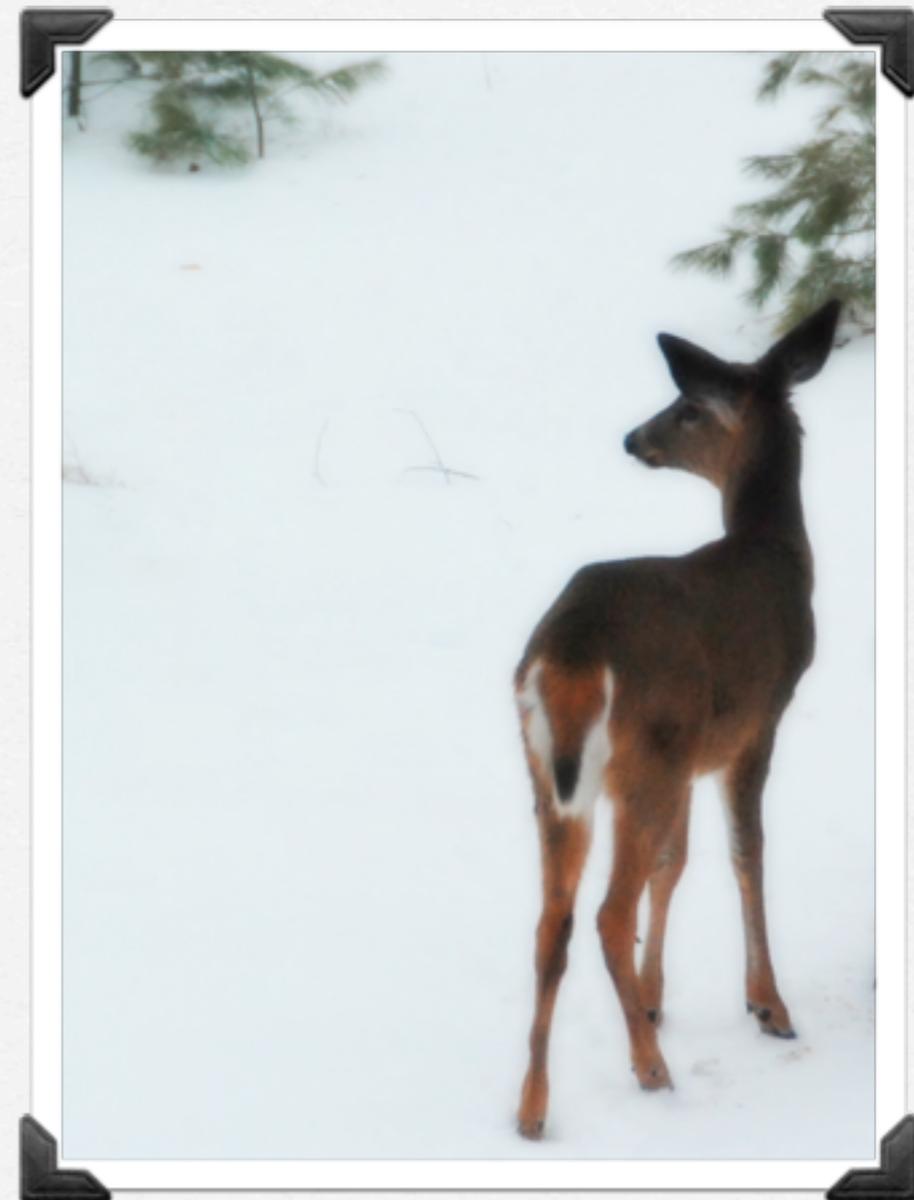
Deep-rooted, long lasting and meaningful happiness, love, joy and inner peace comes from living our purpose. When invest time into activities that promote stillness in our life, we provide for opportunities of feeling our nature. In these moments of reflection and revelation, we come back to the wholeness of our being. We love ourselves by connecting back with ourselves. In the process we cultivate our passions and experiences, discovering and living our life purpose.

Loving yourself means taking time to discover yourself. When we connect with our inner being, which is the source of our wisdom and truth, we allow for the emergence of our life purpose.

What will you do to reconnect with your nature?

Awareness

**Look to see;
listen to hear;
feel to understand.**



Daily, we are bombarded with unprecedented amounts of information through words, images, conversations and our mind chatter. We look, but we don't see. We listen, but we don't hear. Overloaded with information, we travel through the landscape of our life often numb to all that is around us. In the process we diminish our awareness of our internal being, and our environment.

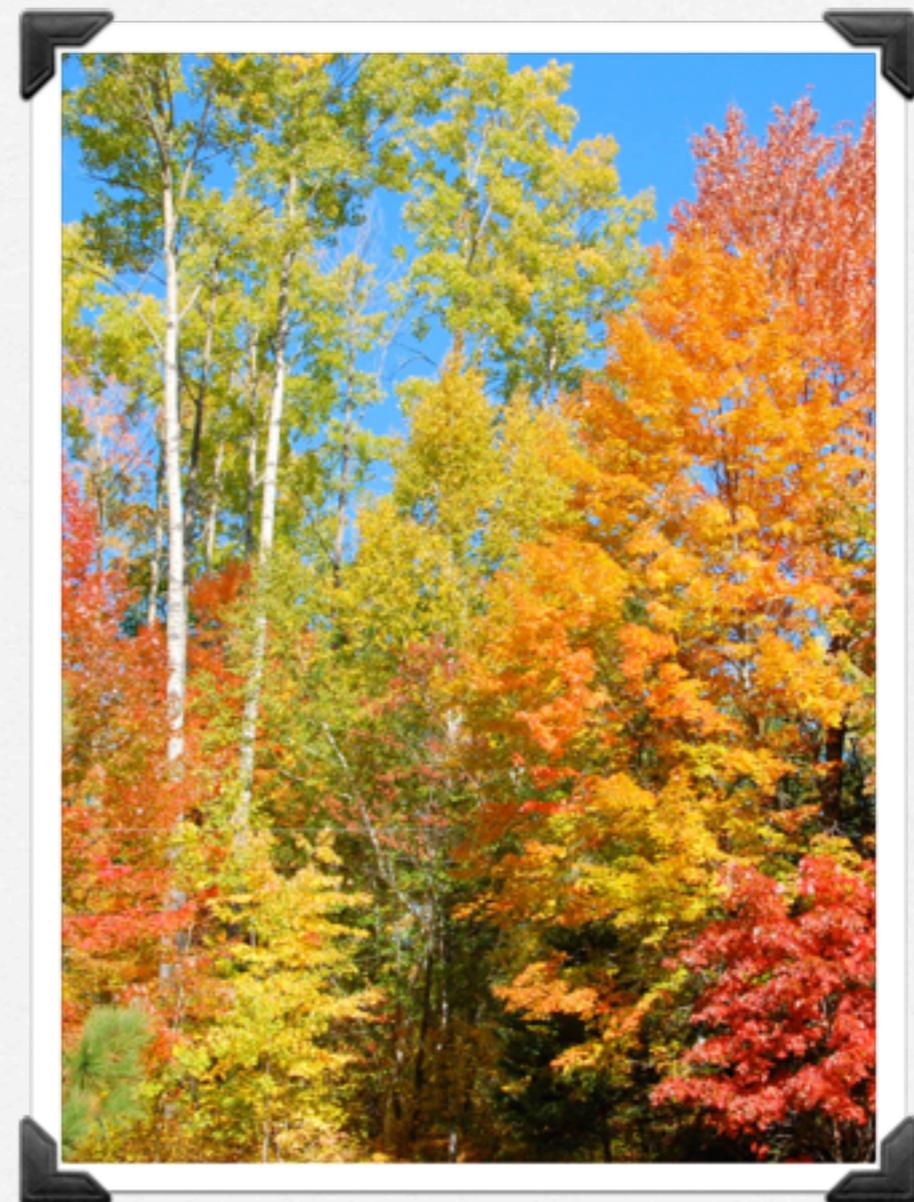
Deep-rooted, long lasting and meaningful happiness, love, joy and inner peace comes through living from a state of awareness. We tap into the space of personal empowerment when we look, listen, think and feel from a state of awareness. We place ourselves in a position from which we are most capable of responding to our environment in favorable ways. We are capable of creating our lives consciously from such a state, rather than thinking that life happens to us.

Loving yourself means enhancing your state of awareness, which opens up the doors of perception for you. From this expanded view, you are able to make the most loving choices for yourself, which in turn also benefit those around you.

How can you enhance your awareness?

Impermanence

**What is, will pass,
what will be is
change.**



Our materially oriented society tries to give us the illusion of permanency each day. Most of our energies are spent on trying to avoid the “new “or “different” in our life. We quickly become bound by habits and routines, seeking comfort in the status quo. We try not to stir things up, we try to immobilize things to stay as they are. But things stir and mobilize either way. Nothing is permanent. Change is the most natural part of life, and every act of our resistance to it results in suffering on some level. Many of us live in a constant state of struggle, pain and hardship, not realizing that we are responsible for the challenges before us by trying to fight against the natural order of things.

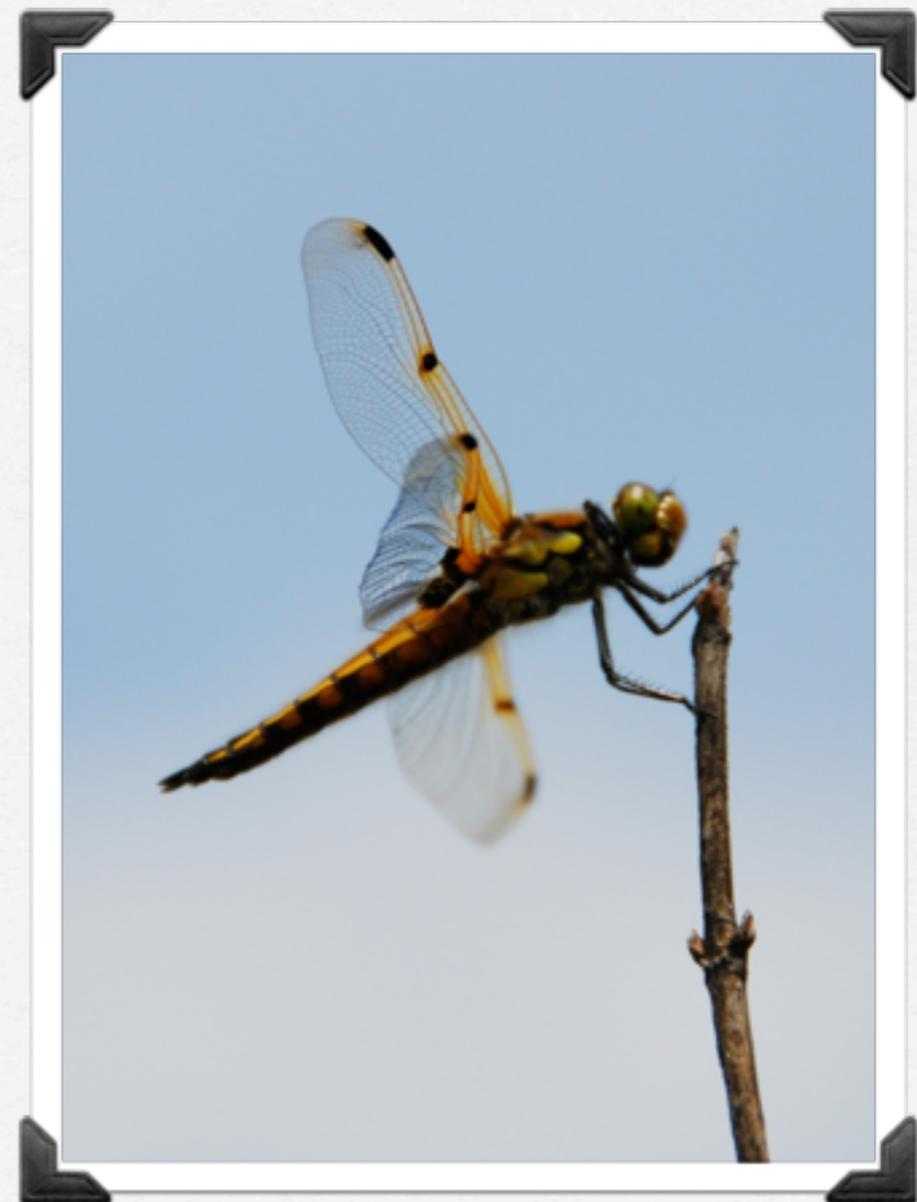
Deep-rooted, long lasting and meaningful happiness, love, joy and inner peace come from living in alignment with change. The stronger we try to hold onto something, the more we suffer for it. Appreciate, love, honor and enjoy what you have today—in this moment, and release it with grace when change knocks at your door.

Loving yourself means being present to what is, and allowing the process of change to take its natural course. Whether it is a living being, or an inanimate, physical object, love it and honor it by releasing it when it chooses to move on as part of the impermanent nature of the Universe.

What areas of your life are you resisting change in?

Possessions

**Only hold onto that,
which supports
your journey at
any given time.**



We live in a society that rewards consumption and consumerism, assigning great value to physical possessions. From a young age we are taught that shopping is not only a way to pass time, but an activity that can provide objects with which we are rewarded for being “good”. We take this notion into our adult years and consider buying ourselves physical items as a way of treating, loving or being good to ourselves.

Deep-rooted, long lasting and meaningful happiness, love, joy and inner peace do not come from physical things. As beautiful or special a physical object may be, it never has and never will replace what we may be missing within the essence of our being. Thus, many of us find ourselves compulsively caught up in the act of acquiring, only to have our quality of life decreased by the increased responsibility and decreased lack of freedom that comes from the ownership of physical things.

Loving yourself can mean acquiring something physical, but it can also mean releasing something. Take loving steps today to release physical objects from your life, which no longer serve who you are, or how you wish to experience and express yourself.

What can you release today?

Patience

**Every manifestation
comes into the
fullness of its glory
within its own time.**



Our time and productivity obsessed society pushes at every chance it gets for faster results. In turn our own lives often carry with them the frequencies of chaotic and impatient energies. We create stress for ourselves numerous times each day trying to fight against the natural cycles of time. Every thought, word and action requires its own unique time to manifest. Every manifestation requires trust and patience on our end that it is coming at the most perfect time for us, and the natural cycle of life.

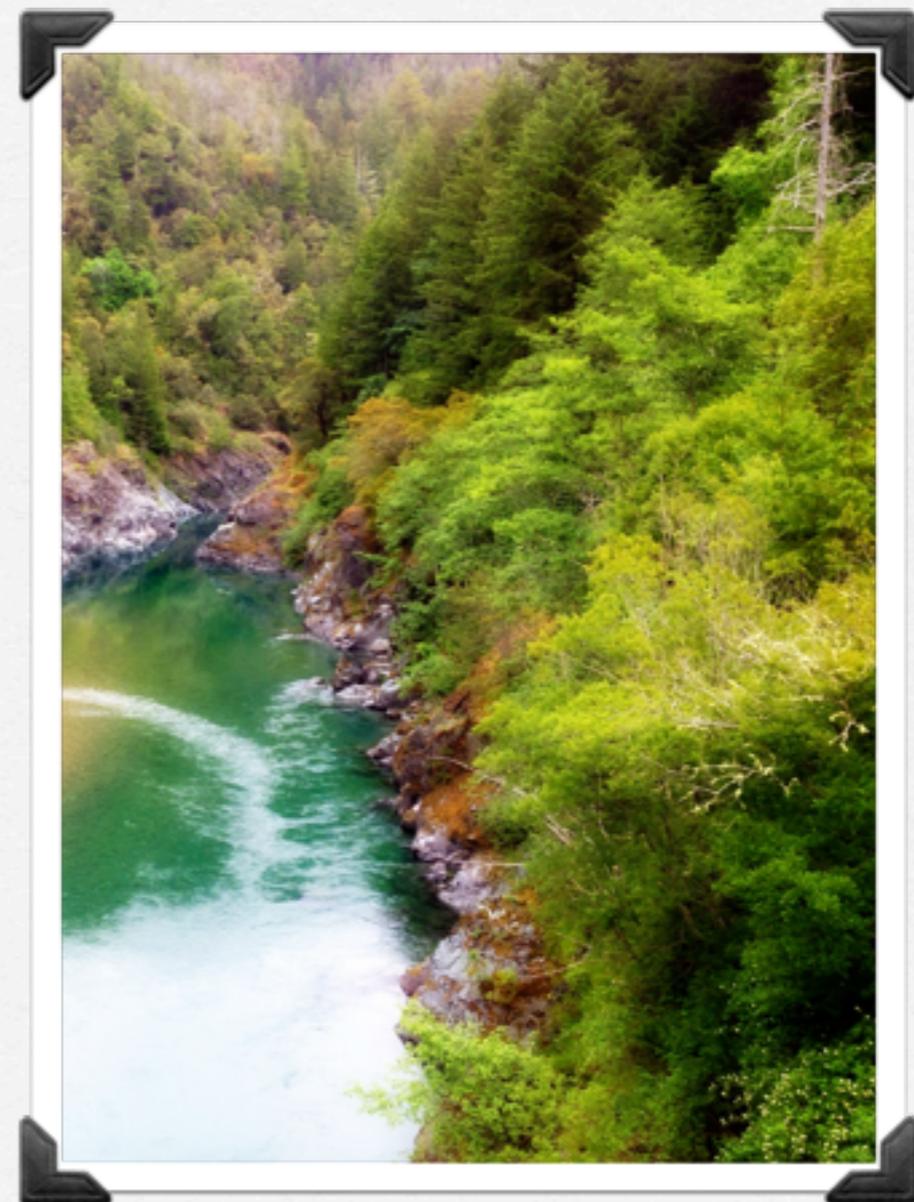
Deep-rooted, long lasting and meaningful happiness, love, joy and inner peace do not come from forcing to make things happen. The journey is more important than the destination, and while you may arrive with force, the quality of the end result will depend on the quality of the journey. When we cultivate patience, we cultivate trust. When we trust, we relax our being knowing that all in the Universe always operates at the pace of divine perfection, and in our best interest.

Loving yourself means being patient with yourself. Your journey is unique and as you take steps to create within your life the new outcomes that you desire, may you not rush the process required.

What areas of your life are most in need of patience?

Envy

**Be green in your actions
toward the Earth,
but not green with envy
toward others.**



We live on a planet that we share with billions of other humans. Each one of us is special and unique with our own set of talents and gifts. Yet all too often instead of appreciating the talents and gifts of others, we covet them and use them to diminish our own abilities. Competition and comparison plagues our thoughts and actions, and strains our relationships with others.

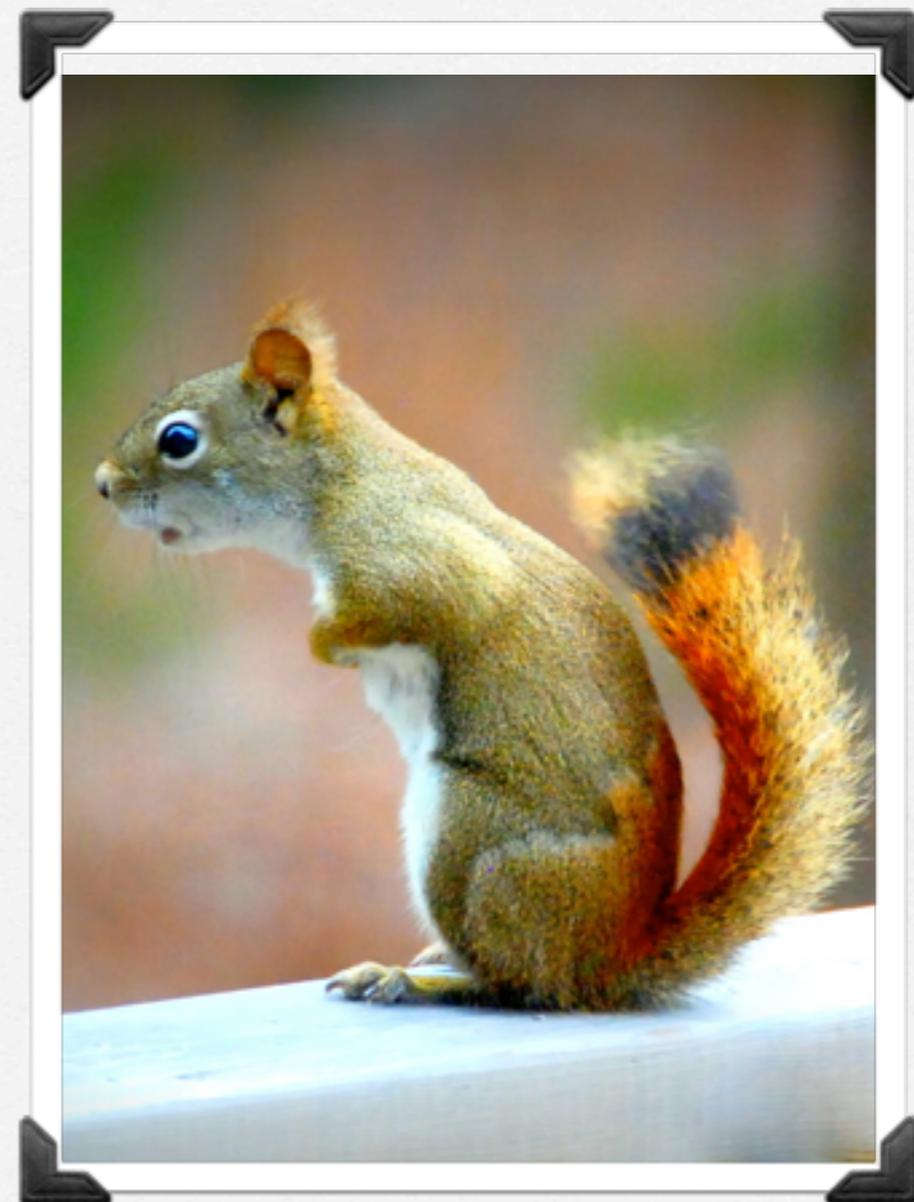
Deep-rooted, long lasting and meaningful happiness, love, joy and inner peace do not come from being like others. Each of us has been endowed with unique abilities and it is up to each one of us to discover and cultivate them. Marvel at the amazing being you are, and can be by exploring your infinite creative potential. May the attributes of others inspire you to create and treasure your own, appreciating all that you are and can be.

Loving yourself means looking at who you are with conscious presence. It means putting time and effort into your own interests and passions, to develop your unique abilities. It means taking action and responsibility to create the life you wish to experience, and that is most suited to your personal needs and desires.

What do you love most about yourself?

Body Changes

**Allow your body to do
what it needs to,
as you support it in
ways that you need to.**



Your body is the physical vessel with which you are able to traverse the landscape of this physical reality and experience all that it has to offer. Within the frame of time, our bodies are constantly changing. Each day old cells die as new ones take their place, modifying the structures of our tissues and organs, and the efficiency with which they work. When we support our body with loving thoughts, nourishing foods and favorable lifestyle habits, our body's changes are most in alignment with the natural cycles of time. When we reject our bodies through toxic thoughts, foods and lifestyle habits, we experience harsh changes that cause us much disharmony.

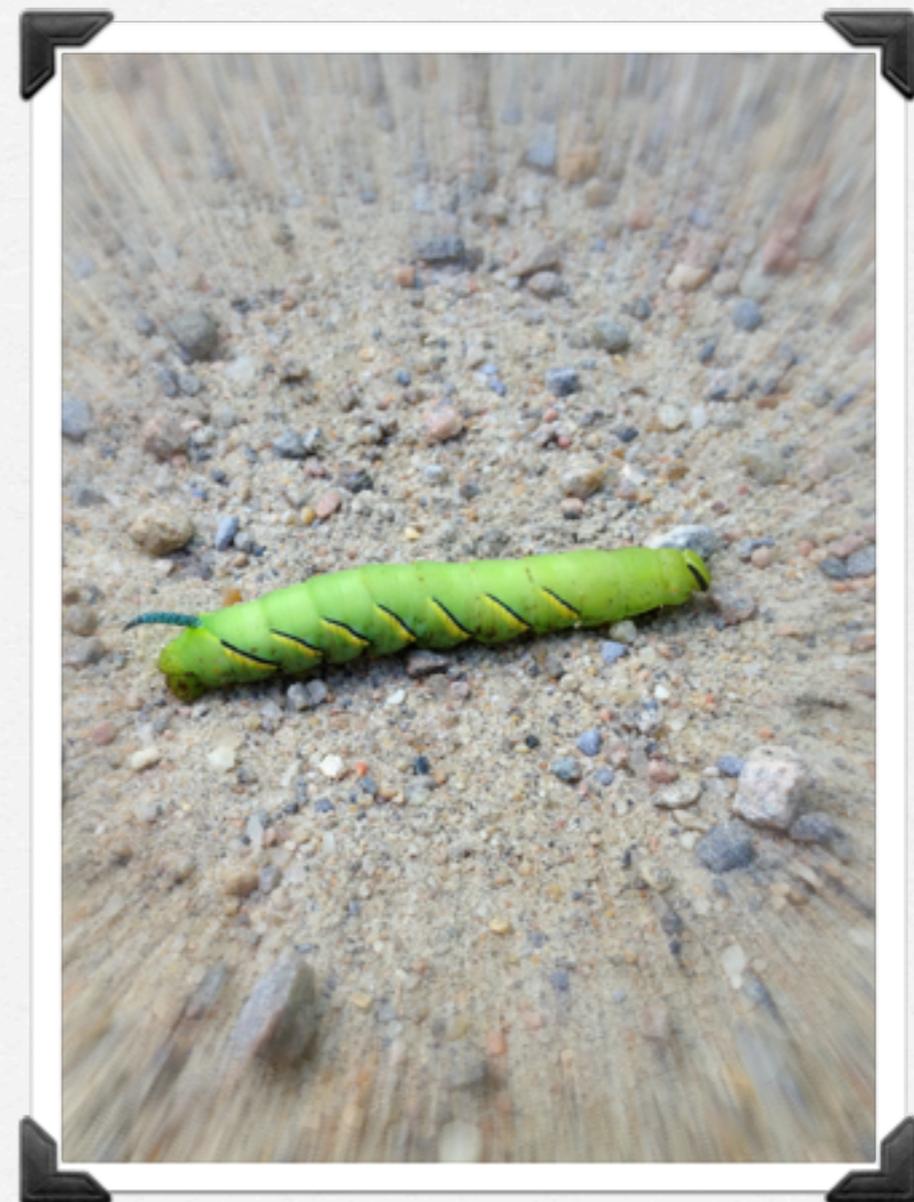
Deep-rooted, long lasting and meaningful happiness, love, joy and inner peace come from loving and respecting the body you have. It is a work of art that you are creating each day through the choices you make. Our bodies will change, and supporting those changes, and accepting them with grace are a large part of living with self-love and inner peace.

Loving yourself means taking care of your body by honoring it with the necessary nutrients, movement and optimal environments for it. It means being supportive of its unique needs at different times in your life and gracefully honoring the changes.

How can you be more supportive of your body's changing needs?

Presence

**Don't miss
what is present,
by focusing on
what is absent.**



Our Western culture is one that lives from the past, as it runs for the future. In the process it misses and denies the presence of what is, creating an unconscious stream of cascading consequences. We unknowingly fall into this mindset of living too, as we dwell on past events, while we look to the future with a sense of unease. Anxiety and worry plague so many of us, and are seen as a “normal” part of life. They are not. We can be free to enjoy the gifts of the present, but only when we make the conscious choice to be present.

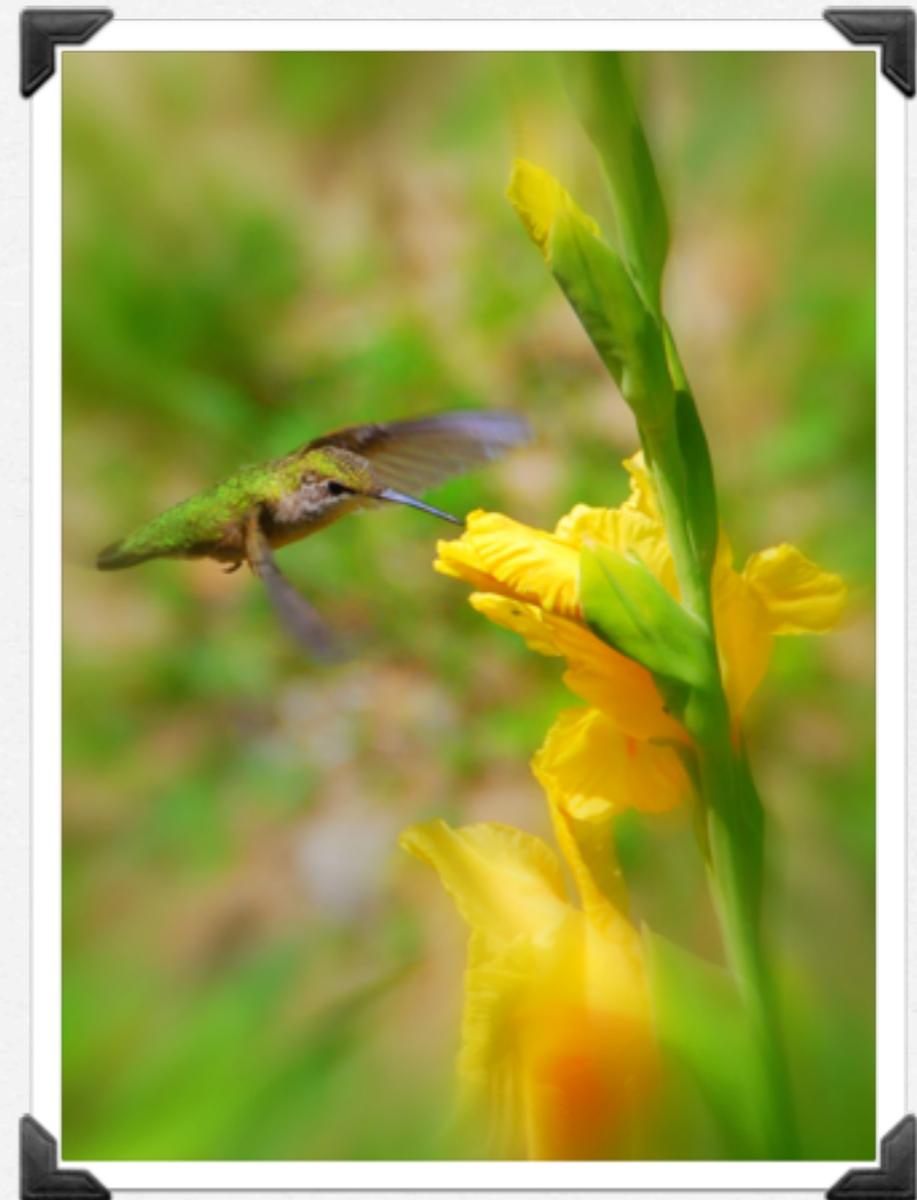
Deep-rooted, long lasting and meaningful happiness, love, joy and inner peace come from living in the moment of what is. What was and what will be are illusions that we cannot control. In this state it is not that we deny what was or may be, but are fully capable of seeing it and taking the most favorable steps to create the experiences that are most in alignment with our personal journey of evolution.

Loving yourself means allowing yourself to be present. When we make the choice to be present, we dissolve worry and anxiety. This is a loving choice to make as it releases our mind and body from great amounts of unnecessary suffering.

How can you enhance your state of presence?

Motivation

**When we find the right
motivation,
our actions
follow with ease.**



Do you ever notice how easy it is to engage in some things, but not others? What is the difference and where does it come from? Our motivation. We have no problem eating a delicious meal, because we are motivated by the opportunity to experience pleasant flavors. We have no problem watching our favorite programming, because we are motivated by the pleasure of being entertained. The same can apply to every area of your life. Whenever we find the right motivation to drive us to do something, things stop being chores or forced actions, and become enjoyable interactions.

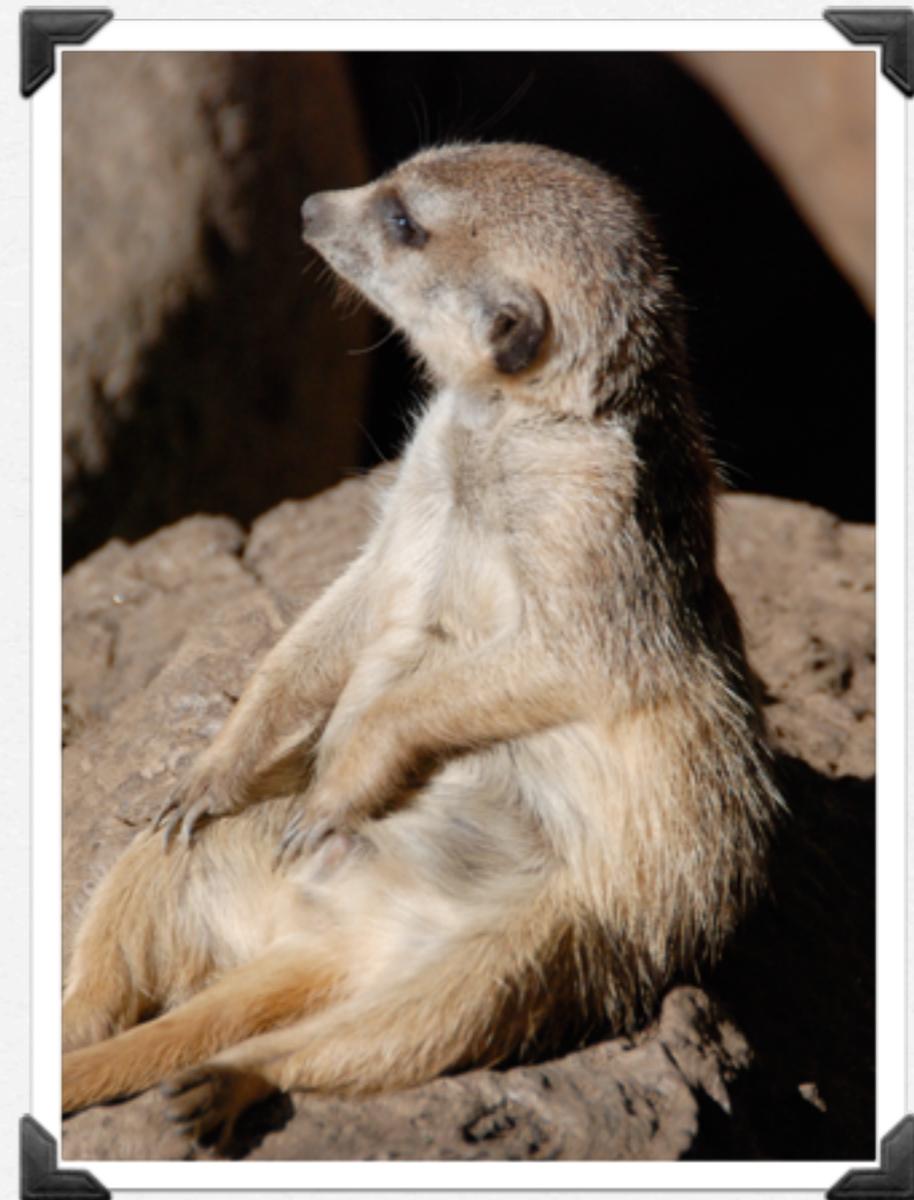
Deep-rooted, long lasting and meaningful happiness, love, joy and inner peace do not come from forcing ourselves to do things. Whether it is losing weight, or cleaning your house, or looking for a new job or partner, you will know you are on the right track when your motivation propels you forward with ease. As we explore who we are and what we really wish to experience, we begin to find the necessary motivation to guide our choices in every area of our life.

Loving yourself means allowing your motivation to guide you naturally to all that which is in alignment with your joy and wellbeing.

What areas of your life are lacking the right motivation?

Stillness

**In the space of
stillness,
we find the truth of
our essence.**



In our industrialized world, productivity is limited by time, where time is money, and money means profit. This constant pressure to be something and do something impacts humans on both an individual and collective level. It seems we are always busy, always running to get something done and never have enough time. But in the midst of this madness we are sacrificing the truth of our essence and connection to the nature of who we truly are. In its hectic flux, the physical and material world dismiss the spiritual and energetic dimensions of our being. This causes us a sense of disharmony, confusion and various states of dis_ease.

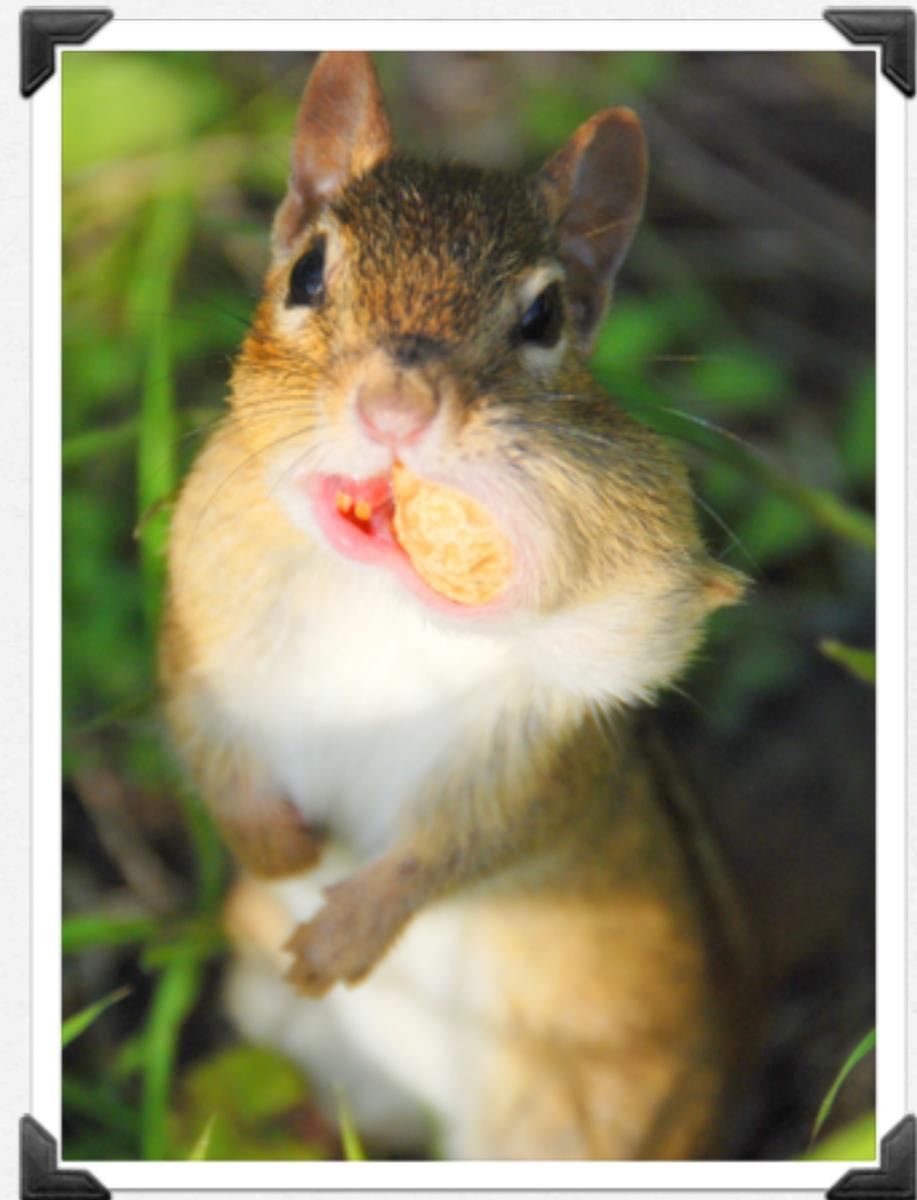
Deep_rooted, long lasting and meaningful happiness, love, joy and inner peace come from having enough moments of stillness in our lives. When we balance doing with being, we come into the fullness of our potential. We are more relaxed, more confident and more empowered. Our lives take on a more harmonious flow, as we move from one moment to the next. Moments of stillness provide us with the very much needed times of silence and reflection where we can connect with our inner being and know the true nature of our existence.

Loving yourself means taking time for conscious moments of stillness. Whether it be some form of meditation, yoga or simply spending time in nature, it is the loving choice as it replenishes us on a spiritual and energetic level, which are core parts of who we truly are.

How can you cultivate more stillness in your life?

Abundance

**How much or how
little we have,
is all based on a
matter of perspective.**



How abundant we feel has little to do with what we have, and a lot to do with how we think. There are those amongst us who have many material possessions and still feel empty inside. There are those amongst us who have few material possessions, yet enjoy a rich inner core. Abundance in our lives is very subjective and changes as our perspective changes. It is malleable, not fixed. It is a state of mind, not a tally of things.

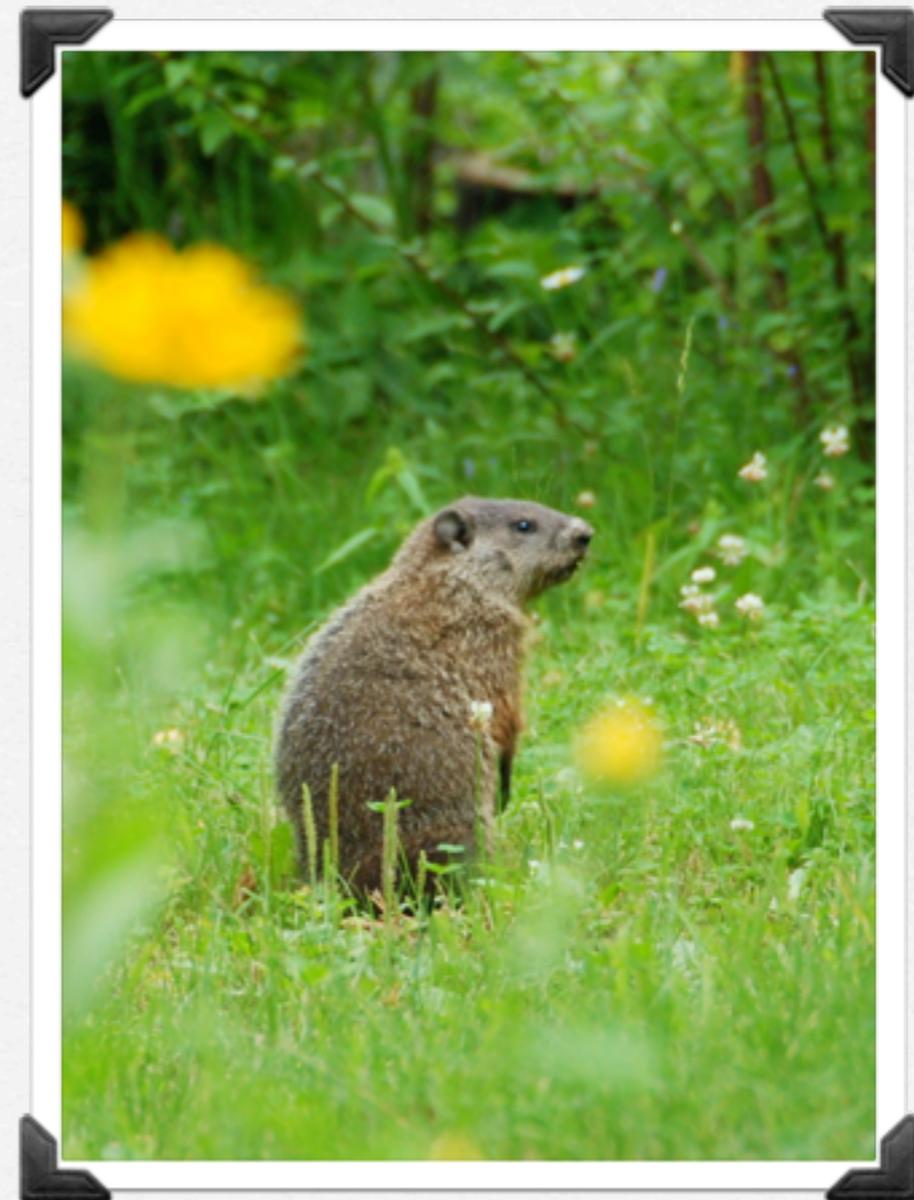
Deep-rooted, long lasting and meaningful happiness, love, joy and inner peace do not come from having lots of things. Rather, they have from cultivating a richness within, where we are able to see the abundance of gifts that life provides on our path each day, and the abundance of gifts that we already possess within. Having an abundance of resilience for example, is much more valuable than an abundance of money. The money may come and go, but the gift of resilience is ours forever and can get us through any situation.

Loving yourself means understanding that abundance is a state of mind that we are responsible for cultivating on our path as we go. An act of self-love includes living from a space of internal abundance, rather than lack.

How will you transform your life from a state of lack into abundance?

Contemplation

**The quickest path
to regret,
is to act from an
uninformed mind.**



In the current age of information, we are bombarded daily with an overwhelming amount of noise. Most of us live day to day from habitual and conditioned mind patterns. We apply beliefs and ideas that we were brought up with or that we have picked up along the way, which we never took the chance to fully analyze for ourselves to see if they even make sense to us. We depend on external structures to give us the answers and usually suffer in various ways when those answers or institutions we depended on, let us down in some way.

Deep-rooted, long lasting and meaningful happiness, love, joy and inner peace do not come from living on autopilot and simply being a reactive force in the world. The more we take time to learn and assimilate in conscious ways, the more we can make informed decisions for our life from the inner core of our wisdom. Before we make decisions or choices, no matter how big or small, it is in our best interest to contemplate them from various angles and perspectives to know what may be the best course of action for a particular situation.

Loving yourself means making choices from an informed state of consciousness. Take loving steps today to increase the amount of time you spend in moments of contemplation.

What choices are in need of your contemplation right now?

Flexibility

**The more rigid we are,
the less opportunities
we get to experience.**



When we observe the plants and animals in nature, we quickly come to know that rigidity has to include a certain degree of flexibility. Otherwise the living being is limited by the range of its experience, and may often even face harm or destruction. Young, soft branches sway with the winds, while the old, dried ones break and fall away. In a similar way we can look at areas of our life and see that where there is a degree of flexibility, there is a more harmonious outcome. Where there is rigidity, whether of the mind, body or spirit, there are challenges and hardships.

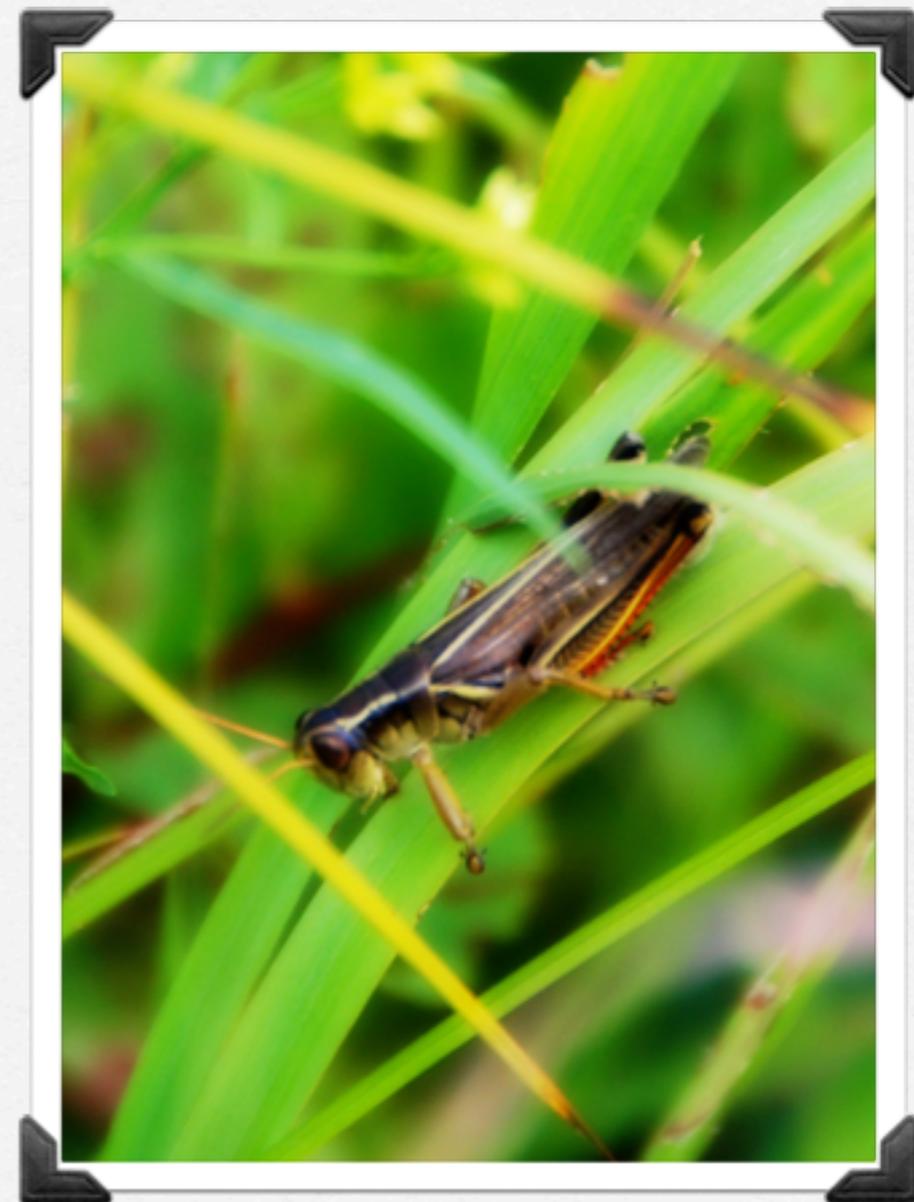
Deep-rooted, long lasting and meaningful happiness, love, joy and inner peace come from living with a natural sense of flexibility. Physical, mental and spiritual flexibility are all equally important to consider. Enhance your physical flexibility through exercises like daily stretching, yoga or pilates. Enhance your mental flexibility by becoming more open minded as to what you know or think is possible. Enhance your spiritual flexibility by questioning what you believe and expanding the limits of what you know to be reality.

Loving yourself means supporting your mind, body and spirit in ways that enhance each of their roles. Take loving steps today to bring more flexibility into your life and enjoy life from an expanded state of being.

What areas of your life can benefit from increased flexibility?

Curiosity

**When we shut the
door to curiosity,
we shut out the
inner child within.**



When we are children, it seems everything in our world is a source of awe and wonder. We are curious about how things work, why and when. The natural world holds an especially rich plethora of experiences for us where every step births within us a new sense of curiosity. As we grow up and become adults, we are taught to dim our natural curiosity. We are often warned about its dangers and encouraged instead to focus on “grown-up” things. In the process we lose our connection with the inner child within, who thrives on curiosity, creativity and play.

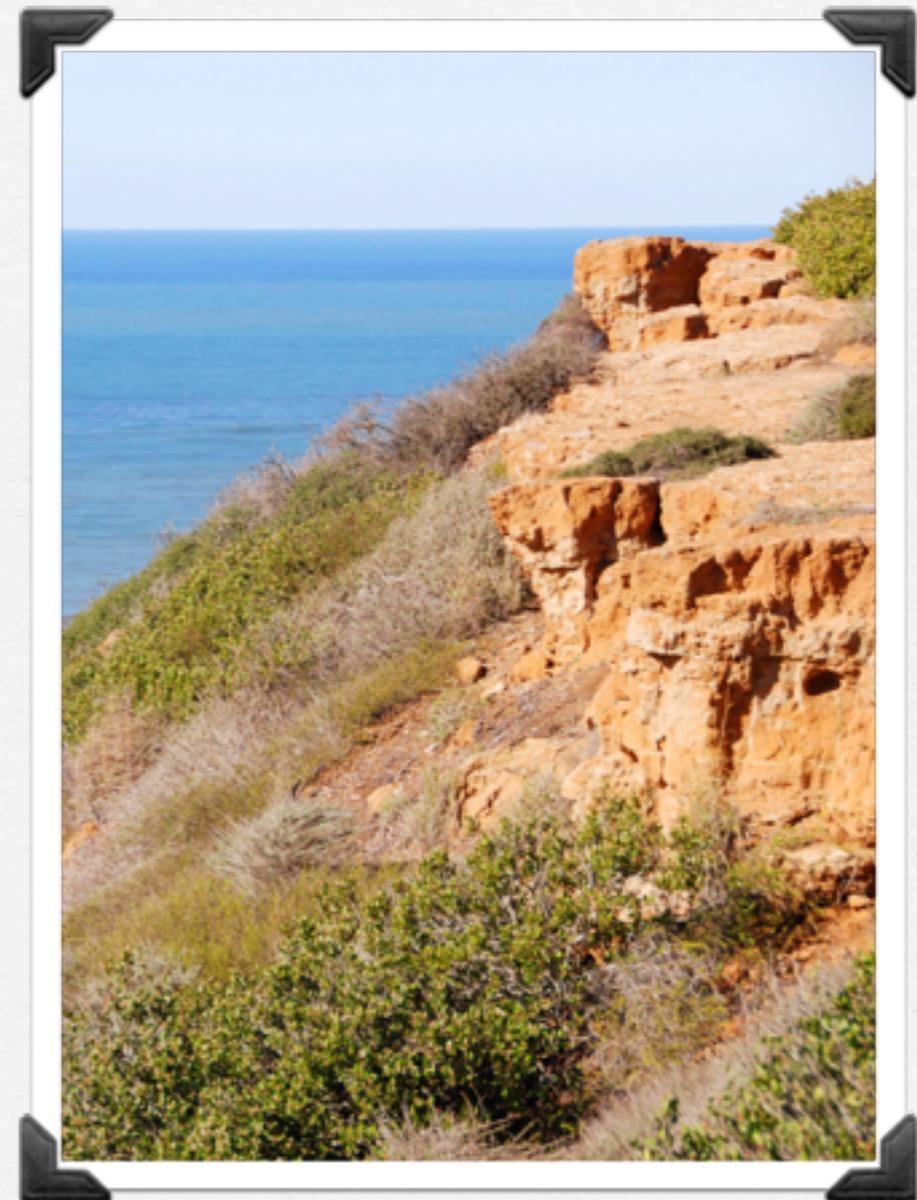
Deep-rooted, long lasting and meaningful happiness, love, joy and inner peace come from working with our curious nature. When we make a commitment to ourselves to ignite the spark of curiosity, we give ourselves the permission to explore our inner and outer worlds. We connect back with our inner child and life takes on a marvelous sense of buoyancy.

Loving yourself means allowing yourself to be curious, and to explore. Take loving steps today to nurture the inner child within you by re-introducing it to the miraculous nature of life.

What awakens and enlivens your curiosity?

Boundaries

**If the waters did not
have the land,
each would miss
the opportunity to
know itself deeper.**



Aside from self-love, another aspect that is missing from many of our lives is the presence of healthy boundaries. The source of so much of our suffering and anguish comes from allowing ourselves to be subjected to people, situations and substances that are not in resonance with who we are, what we value or wish to experience. We are taught to have compassion and be nice to others, but it goes against logic to not apply this to ourselves. We can never truly benefit another when we hurt ourselves in the process.

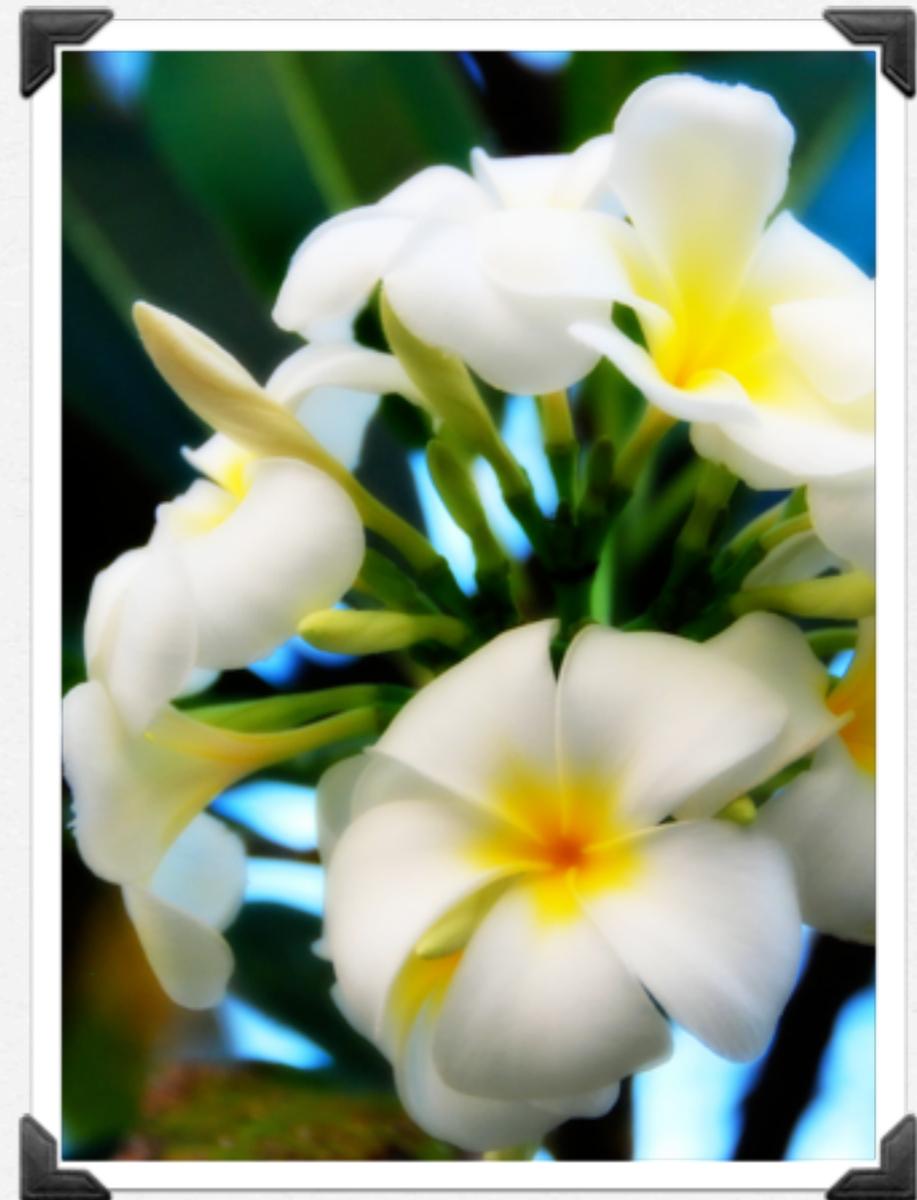
Deep-rooted, long lasting and meaningful happiness, love, joy and inner peace come from living with healthy boundaries. This means having enough room to let people and experiences in to enrich your life, but not too much room where you lose yourself in the process of living for those people and experiences. To create healthy boundaries we need to invest time in stillness and contemplation to first decide who it is that we are, and what it is that we stand for. It is only then that we can proceed to create effective boundaries that are harmonious and loving for all those involved.

Loving yourself means creating and honoring personal boundaries. Take loving steps today to establish healthy boundaries in your life when it comes to who you are, and what you choose to experience.

What boundaries in your life are in need of your attention?

Appreciation

**That which is
appreciated,
flourishes;
that which is
neglected,
wITHERS.**



We often think that the grass is greener on the other side, but in the process of focusing on the other's "grass", we are neglecting to care for our own "grass". Is it any wonder that we feel something is missing? All things that are cared for, nurtured and appreciated thrive. All things that are neglected, overlooked, or diminished depreciate. This relates to both physical things as much as it does to our health, relationships and other states within our life. In the process of appreciation, there is a life giving affirmation.

Deep-rooted, long lasting and meaningful happiness, love, joy and inner peace come from living in a state of appreciation. From the time we wake up in the morning, to the time we fall asleep at night, we are given ample opportunities to participate in the energies of appreciation. There is in fact no faster way to uplift our spirit or enhance our well-being than by appreciating what we are and what we have through gratitude, care and focused presence.

Loving yourself means appreciating who and how you are, and what you have. Take loving steps today to practice appreciation for all aspects of your mind, body and spirit. It is through this practice that we can cultivate the most generous amount of self-love.

What aspects of your self and your life are in need of your appreciation?

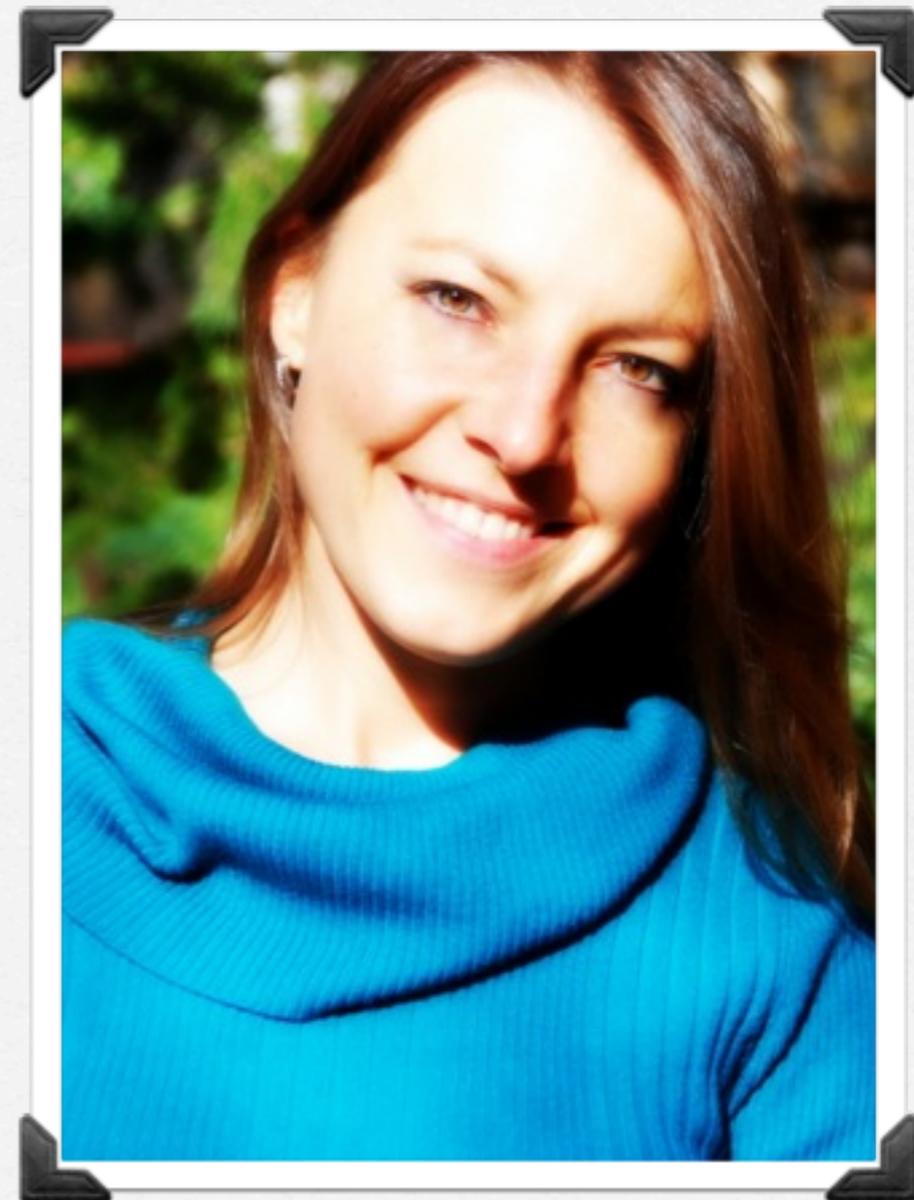
About the Author

Evita Ochel is a consciousness expansion teacher whose work covers numerous areas of her expertise and passions, and includes being a writer, speaker, holistic nutritionist, web TV host, and author of the book “Healing & Prevention Through Nutrition”.

Her health oriented teaching focuses on natural, whole, plant-based and organic nutrition for optimal health and longevity. Her spirituality oriented teaching focuses on consciousness expansion and heart-centered living for optimal joy and inner peace.

Evita is also the creator of 5 online publications, and founder of Healthytarian—a lifestyle for the well-being of the mind, body and spirit.

To learn more about her work, visit: EvitaOchel.com



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