



## CHAPTER 5

### **Loving Yourself**

*CLAIM yourself ... own yourself ... LOVE yourself ...*

**T**he eternal question is ... how do I love myself? It is so easy to walk through life trying to define our sadness or uneasiness; never allowing ourselves to recognize that we are simply not fulfilling our inward desires, our purpose. I have seen so many people blame their sadness on their spouse or partner, mother or father, brother or sister, without ever admitting that they are truly unhappy with who they are. One of the most important lessons I have learned in my life is that

no one can ever love me enough to make me love myself and I can never love anyone enough to make them love themselves. When you are able to recognize this and admit its truth then you are ready and willing to fall in love with your own heart. I know that it sounds strange, fall in love with my own heart? I remember when I first heard this concept. I thought, isn't it arrogant to be in love with myself? I eventually comprehended that falling in love with myself does not make me arrogant, it makes me aware. It does not make me self-centered, it humbles me. Could I become arrogant or self-centered? Sure. But, that means that I do not truly love who I am.

Part of loving yourself is discovering who you are, and the truth of the matter is, you will always be rediscovering who you are. With every new situation, or with every new person that enters your life, there is going to be something, somewhere, that is going to make you clarify what your beliefs about yourself and life are. What can stay constant is your attitude about life and making a choice to take on the ability you have to make this physical world something that is similar to what you would want heaven to look like. With the concepts that have been discussed so far, it is safe to say that living in the moment is part of discovering your own true colors, and if you can find the moment in every moment

then there is no need to look any further ... you will simply be conscious of what is, not what might be and not what was. One of my goals in life is to be able to look in the mirror every day and be proud of what I am looking at. If I find something that does not seem appealing regarding my body, then there is something inside myself that I need to discover and let go of. I want to look in the mirror and see beauty and be satisfied with what is before me, and the only way to make that happen is to dive into my soul and find out what it is saying to me. My father always said that if you have a burning desire in your heart, it is God talking to you. I agree. Listen to your heart and what it is telling you ... that is the Divine part of who you are, and it is perfect.

Through this discussion of learning to love ourselves, try to write down all of the lies that you have been told about who you are and the lies you have created along the way because you have not felt good enough about who you are. My lies are as follows: I am not old enough to write a book, as I do not have enough experience; I am not worthy enough to publish a book because I am not good enough; I am not worthy enough to be accepted as a writer about these specific topics because I have had poor judgment in my past; I am not smart enough; I am not pretty enough; I am not funny enough ... the

list goes on and on because the lies we tell ourselves never end. After writing your list, turn them around with affirmations. For example, I would say, I am old enough to write a book, I do have enough experience. I am worthy enough to publish a book and I am good enough... I am MORE than good enough. I am worthy enough to be accepted as a writer because it is part of my purpose. I am smart enough, I am beautiful, and I am funny! I am perfect! We have all been taught along the lines that we are imperfect and that we must deal with and accept our imperfections. If we believe we have “imperfections” then we leave no room to accept our “perfections”. We leave no room to see the divine part of who we are. So, this process is not about finding what is imperfect about you (imperfections are defined by society); it is about finding what is absolutely beautiful about who you are!

### **Finding your gifts**

Let me tell you a story. In Henderson, Kentucky, in the year of 1910, my great-great-great-grandfather was out plowing his field when something very odd happened along his route. From the sky fell a strange piece of metal. He walked over to pick it up and on it read, “The world will end in 1910.” He kept the piece of metal and went about his business.

The very next day the exact same thing happened. My great-great-great-grandfather was out plowing his field when a similar piece of metal fell from the sky and hit his plow. He went to pick up the piece of metal and again it said, “The world will end in 1910.” Puzzled, he kept the piece and finished his job for the day.

The strange thing about both of these incidents was that there was a chance that Haley’s Comet was going to hit the earth in the year 1910. But, what ended up happening was that my great-great-great-grandfather died in the year 1910, so his physical world really did end.

My family went on to give these pieces of metal to the government for testing. After being analyzed, the pieces were confirmed to have no similarity to any other metal on the face of the earth. The pieces are still kept within my family.

What does this story have to do with helping you find your gifts? Absolutely nothing; I just wanted to give you a mental break. I thought it was a pretty good family story, and I wanted to share it. Anyway, let’s get back to the matter of finding our gifts.

Look, the reality is, in order to fall in love with who you are, it is important to find what your gifts are. There is nothing more fascinating than doing what you love to do! So, the

question is, what is it that you love to do? What is it that YOU want to do? For me, sitting here and writing this book gets me in trouble because I lose track of time. However, that is a beautiful thing! When I sat down and thought long and hard about what I want to do and what I truly enjoy doing, I realized that writing is it, because of my inability to know what time it is while I'm writing. Find something for you in which you lose track of time, find something that you enjoy doing so much that you are not constantly looking at your watch. Find something that gives you an even better opportunity to live in the moment. If you can live in the moment, then you can love yourself, and if you can love yourself, then your gifts will shine. "What you love is a sign from your higher self of what you are to do" (Sanaya Roman).

"To find out what one is fitted to do, and to secure an opportunity to do it, is the key to happiness" (John Dewey). A friend of mine once told me that I already knew deep inside what it is that lights a fire inside me. Since I was a little girl, I have known that writing books that will help people lead a more peaceful life and that standing up in front of crowded rooms speaking about these books would be a part of my life. I am just starting out, but the journey right now is beautiful. My expertise has been in the field of disability and counseling, but it is experiences

gained in this particular field that have brought me to this moment ... sitting at this desk, writing this book. I do not know what is to come, but I am not afraid; rather, excited. In order to secure an opportunity to go on and do what I am really fitted to do, it is important that I first try it and see what manifests from my efforts. If I am wrong about my purpose, I have only spent some time gaining another valuable experience ... but, if I am right about my purpose, then I have got something going here that is worth paying attention to.

Some people say that they are not creative, and that they do not have any special talents. You might be one of those people, but remember that there is no definition for creativity. You may think that since you cannot draw a picture or match your clothes accordingly that you do not have a creative bone in your body. It is all a matter of perception. If you think you are not creative, then guess what, you are not creative. Try to think of creativity as *your* self-expression rather than that of someone else. Your creativity is part of you ... and remember, you are beautiful! So, if you want to express yourself by writing codes for a website, bagging groceries at a grocery store, or standing up for your clients as a lawyer, then you are creative. We are all creative ... you just have to believe that you are creative, interesting, loving, and worthy

of being loved. We are always, and I am guilty of this, waiting for other people to tell us what we are good at. When we do this, we are allowing people to tell our story for us.

Don Miguel Ruiz has said, “We humans have no idea what we really are, but we know what we are not. We create an image of perfection, a story about what we should be, and we begin to search for a false image. The image is a lie, but we invest our faith in that lie. Then we build a whole structure of lies to support it.” So, if someone tells you that you would make a great basketball coach and you listen, saying, “Hey, I would make a great basketball coach.” Then years into your coaching career you realize that, although you are making a good salary, something just seems out of balance. You begin to question your career and if you want to continue doing what you do. You decide to express your concerns to your closest friends and family, and they then say, you can’t quit because you are such a great coach! You believe them. A few years later, you still have that haunting feeling that your purpose is not being fulfilled...and the cycle continues. The point is, we allow others to tell us who to be and we forget to look inside ourselves to find our own gifts. If you are that basketball coach and you have always wanted to be a photographer, then I would say, perhaps you should give it a shot (no pun intended). Or if you are an author and you really want

to be a professor, then why not try? Finding our passion gives us a chance to express ourselves as artists, as creators, as individuals seeking to better the world because our light is shining.

### **The divine part of you**

“That I feed the hungry, forgive an insult, and love my enemy—these are great virtues. But what if I should discover that the poorest of the beggars and most impudent of offenders are all within me, and that I stand in need of the alms of my own kindness; that I myself am the enemy who must be loved—what then?” (C.G. Jung). Falling in love with who we are is not an easy task. In fact, establishing what is holding us back from peace, joy, and happiness is an ongoing challenge throughout life. Sometimes we allow difficulties to take over our outer expressions and we forget to look in the mirror and see the beauty that we possess as individuals. Finding the divine part of ourselves may seem distant, but is right here, right now within our own selves. Our divinity is not defined by other people, nor is it defined by a culture or a society ... it is right inside our own hearts waiting to be given a chance to fly, to experience freedom. If we can free ourselves by expressing our Divine selves, then we are allowing others to experience freedom as well. Be a creator of your own Divine expression.

By living in the moment, letting go of the past and the future, and finding our passion in life, we can begin to experience our heaven on earth. In our world, many of us are provoked to believe in a higher being that is somewhere in the far-off distance, in the clouds or in the stars. This misconception does not allow us to see the perfection within ourselves. You may say, I am not divine, only God is divine and I am not worthy of divinity. Again, this is another lie ... you are telling yourself that you were not created for a purpose and that you do not have any meaning on this earth. It is my belief that this God, Higher Power, Creator, omnipotent being, however you want to call it, is within each of us, screaming for a chance to shine! PLEASE LET ME OUT! There is no right and no wrong expression of your own personal creations. Whether your greatest excitement is centered around having children and being a stay-at-home mom or dad, or if it is traveling the world to interview specific people, it is your heaven that no one can take away from you unless you allow them to.

Finding what is divine about you and accepting the divine part of you are two separate actions. Although you may have established what you love to do and what you want to do, it is different to actually doing it. Full acceptance of your divine gifts involves you putting those gifts into full

expression ... being unafraid of what was and of what will be. You may think that you have to wear a purple robe to be considered Divine, but the beauty of Divinity is its inherent quality of eternity. This gives added meaning to the concept of self-love. Through being divine in origin, it is ours for all eternity. If you choose to be conscious of every moment then falling in love with yourself will come naturally and discovering this overwhelming love for others will forever be imbedded in your everyday life. When you can love for absolutely no reason then you know you have reached a point of clarity ... where it seems that the world is connected to you and that you are a divine part of its existence.

In other words, you are a divine expression on this earth. You are perfect. You are here for a purpose and your heart knows what your purpose is. Let go of the past and the future, and focus on this present moment so that you may find and accept your divinity. Establish the lies you have been told about yourself and let go of what you know is false about you. You are the creator of your life, you are the artist that gets to paint on your own canvas. The world is waiting to be encouraged by your light ... you are worthy of experiencing heaven on earth! "Work while you have light. You are responsible for the talent that has been entrusted to you" (Henri Frederick Amiel).