

LOVE YOUR SELF, LOVE YOUR LIFE

Finding a self-care practice that fuels you



JOANNA PLATT



Dear reader,

We hear so much about self-care. Mani-pedis. Candles. Baths. Gym time. These things might sound great, or they might feel like another thing to add to the to-do list.

Self-care can be should-y. And doesn't that contradict the notion of self-care? If it puts pressure on you, that's not self-care.

Self-care is extremely personal and will vary a lot from person to person. What is self-care for your best friend might not feel great to you, might feel more like a should or obligation.

You have to find the self-care that works for you.

This e-book will offer an easy way to do that.

To finding and creating a self-care practice that fills you up—cheers!



Love,

Joanna

Introduction to Self-Care

Simply put, self-care is anything you do that helps you build, maintain, and strengthen your relationship with yourself. Just like we need to build trust and connection with another person, we need to build trust and connection with ourselves. Self-care helps us do that and makes us feel loved by ourselves.

Let me be very clear about this upfront: self-care is not selfish. I repeat: self-care is not selfish.

SELF-CARE FILLS YOU UP SO THAT YOU CAN BE **PRESENT** FOR THE OTHER PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE AND SO THAT YOU HAVE THE ENERGY TO MAKE THE TYPE OF **IMPACT** YOU WANT TO MAKE IN THE WORLD.

Self-care fills you up so that you can be present for the other people in your life and so that you have the energy to make the type of impact you want to make in the world. Your relationship with yourself is the foundation for everything. When that is steady and solid, everything else is so much more manageable. You can give more easily and more freely to the people in your life. You can be kinder, slower to irritation and anger, more open, more loving. You have space to have big ideas, come up with solutions to problems, and the energy to implement them. That doesn't sound very selfish to me. In fact, it seems like the kind and compassionate thing to do for everyone involved.

If you had to disregard everything and everyone in your life to prioritize self-care, sure, that might be selfish. But you don't have to do that to build and maintain a solid relationship with yourself.

A self-care practice only takes a few hours a week—time that you're probably already using to relax or veg in a way that might not fill

you up. All you have to do is replace that with something where you'll get more bang for your buck.



I'm writing this e-book on my wedding anniversary. I'm sitting outside at Starbucks with a grande iced coffee typing away on my computer. I am so happy right now. The sun is shining, there's a lovely light breeze—I'm in heaven. This is the perfect example of self-care for me.

I FEEL...

- ready to take on the world,
- content,
- grounded,
- like I can give so much more of myself and be completely present with whoever else I interact with today,
- stable,
- at peace,
- like when I stand up there's going to be a little more pep in my step.

This is what self-care feels like for me. It re-fuels me. It's like that time at the office, after breakfast, when you feel like you are awake and finally ready to take on the day and do work. That's what a good self-care activity does for you.

Yesterday, I didn't have enough self-care in my day. The day was all about other people: we had two parties in the afternoon and in the morning I went to play basketball with my husband (an activity in his self-care). By the time we got to the second party, I was drained. So much so that my friend asked me if I was ok: "Are you ok? You don't seem like yourself." I was fine, but she was right. I wasn't myself. I hadn't gotten the me-time I needed that day and I wasn't able to participate in the conversation in a way I normally would. I was kind of withdrawn. I woke up this morning feeling the same way. And then I realized I didn't get enough Joanna-time yesterday and was feeling distracted and withdrawn because of it.

This morning, I cut up some watermelon, ate a few slices, put the rest in a bowl and in the fridge and then washed the knives and cutting board I used. This could be considered self-care. It felt good. But if my heart—my love-bank—is like a bucket, then cutting watermelon only put one teeny, tiny drop in it. It would take a LOT of things like that to really fill my love bank, and frankly, at some point that would have diminishing returns because those drops will be used up quicker than they can be re-filled. It exhausts me thinking about it.

Sitting here writing this is like putting the bucket in the bathtub and turning the faucet on full blast. It's filled up and overflowing so fast. And, it will take a decent amount of time for the bucket to even get to half let alone completely empty.



In the next section, I'll share a theory I have about building your relationship with yourself and give you an easy way to find self-care activities that will fill you up.

A photograph of a woman smiling and holding a bouquet of flowers. The image is partially obscured by a large, semi-transparent red rectangle that contains text. The woman is wearing a grey shirt and a watch on her left wrist.

YOUR RELATIONSHIP
WITH YOURSELF IS THE
FOUNDATION
FOR EVERYTHING.

My Theory on Self-Care

Have you heard of the 5 Love Languages? Developed by Gary Chapman, the theory behind the Love Languages is that we each give and receive love differently and our “love banks” get filled in different ways. We typically give love in the way we receive love. However, our significant other might not have the same Love Language as us and give and receive love differently. If they do, and we’re giving love in a way that they don’t receive love, there can be a mismatch and problems can arise. When you’re aware of your partner’s Love Language and you start giving love in the way they receive love, the relationship quickly strengthens and the people in the couple feel more loved.

HERE ARE THE FIVE LOVE LANGUAGES:

Quality Time—you feel love when you spend time with a person

Physical Touch—you feel love when a person touches you

Acts of Service—you feel love when a person does something for you

Words of Affirmation—you feel love when a person says something nice about you

Receiving Gifts—you feel love when a person gives you a gift

My theory is that the Love Languages also work on your relationship with yourself. Given that, you can then use your Love Language to figure out what self-care looks like for you.

If you don't know what your Love Language is, [head over to the Love Languages website and find out.](#)

Got it?

Great. Now let's talk about how to use the Love Languages to create your own self-care routine and build and strengthen your relationship with yourself in the process.

BELOW ARE THE LOVE LANGUAGES AGAIN WITH THEIR DEFINITIONS REWORKED TOWARD THE SELF.

Quality Time—you will feel loved when you have me-time.

Physical Touch—you will feel loved when you move your body and pay kind attention to your body.

Acts of Service—you will feel loved when you do things for yourself, take care of things for yourself.

Words of Affirmation—you will feel loved when you acknowledge your gifts and accomplishments.

Receiving Gifts—you will feel loved when you give yourself things.

SELF-CARE IS **NOT** SELFISH.

How the Love Languages play out for me

My top two Love Languages are quality time and physical touch. That's why me sitting outside at Starbucks writing this e-book is so powerful for me. It's quality time with myself and my thoughts and my creativity. It fuels me. This particular day, it also has a physical touch aspect because it's warm and sunny and there's an awesome breeze I can feel on my arms as I sit here.

Joanna-time is critical for my happiness. It re-centers me and makes me feel grounded. I make sure I get some time by myself every single day. This is usually time by myself in the morning. I sit on the couch with a cup of coffee (also satisfies physical touch) and watch a show or read. A couple weeks before this writing I added morning pages to my morning routine and that has been a game changer. Morning pages is a daily ritual where each morning you write three stream of consciousness pages. Morning pages is great for quality time and for a sub-section of quality time which is quality conversation. This is great time, great conversation with myself.

The easiest way for me to meet my physical touch needs is through workouts or walks. If I do these things alone, they are a double whammy for me because it's also quality time with myself. At lunch I'll go over to the gym and walk on the treadmill or pedal away on the elliptical. Movement just feels so good for me and really clears my head.

SOME OF MY OTHER FAVORITES INCLUDE:

- Getting my hair done at Dry Bar (*PT & QT*)
- Reading a book at lunch (*QT*) if I can go outside, add *PT*
- Naps! (*PT & QT*)
- Laying in bed and looking out the window (*PT & QT*)
- Going to the library to write (*QT*)

Other acts of self-care are good, like the watermelon example mentioned in the opening section, but they don't fill me up in the

same way as the things listed above. As another example, I recently went to the mall to buy a dress for a wedding more than a month away. In addition to a dress, I got two necklaces on the trip so I'm set for three weddings I've got coming up. This shopping trip could be acts of service and receiving gifts. While I'm grateful to myself for doing that so future Joanna doesn't get stressed out about what to wear to the wedding and the necklaces and dress are pretty, this doesn't feel like a deep expression of love to me. It doesn't fill up my love bank, doesn't make me feel loved like quality time does.

So you can see, you don't have to do *all the things*. You just have to find the activities that will fill *you* up in a really meaningful way.



In the next section, you'll use your love language to identify self-care activities for yourself. I'll give you a few ideas and then give you a worksheet to come up with some of your own.

A photograph of a woman in athletic wear (a pink top and dark leggings) running on a bridge. The image is partially obscured by a large, semi-transparent pink rectangular overlay that contains white text.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO
ALL THE THINGS. YOU JUST
HAVE TO FIND THE ACTIVITIES
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REALLY MEANINGFUL WAY.

Putting your Love Language to work

Here are examples of things you can do to speak your Love Language to yourself.

QUALITY TIME—DO SOMETHING BY YOURSELF REGULARLY

- Morning pages, the practice of writing three stream of consciousness pages each morning. This is especially good if you fall in the “quality conversation” sub-section of quality time
- Naps
- An hour in the morning to relax, read, have coffee, watch TV before going to work
- Go to the movies by yourself
- Go for a walk
- Read a book you love
- Watch your favorite TV show

PHYSICAL TOUCH—DO SOMETHING WITH YOUR BODY OR FOR YOUR BODY

- Manicures/pedicures
- Blowouts—I love getting my hair blown out at Dry Bar or a place similar. It feels like such a treat.
- Workouts
- Yoga class
- Long walk
- Shower
- Nice long bath with candles
- Masturbate—solo sexy time
- Hold a hot mug of tea or coffee

- Spend time outside to feel a nice breeze or the sun on your skin
- Do a face mask

ACTS OF SERVICE—DO SOMETHING FOR YOURSELF

- Errands—grocery shopping, take your clothes to the drycleaner
- Chores—laundry, cleaning your room, changing the sheets
- Book travel ahead of time
- Buy yourself a dress a month before a wedding or event you have to attend so you don't have to worry about it.
- Do laundry
- Make your bed every morning
- De-clutter your space. Get rid of the things that you don't love anymore.
- Pack your lunch (*maybe even the night before*)
- Hire someone to do any of the things listed above for you
- That thing you've been meaning to take care of forever—do that!

WORDS OF AFFIRMATION—DO SOMETHING TO ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR STRENGTHS AND BEAUTY, WHAT MAKES YOU YOU

- Share your successes with someone close to you
- Write your successes down, try a "win" list
- Keep a gratitude journal
- In her book *Money: A Love Story*, Kate Northrup recommends an exercise that every day for 21 days you write things down that you love about yourself. You can't repeat.

- Have a dialogue with your inner critic and/or intuition
- Repeat a mantra. Example: inhale strong, exhale stable
- Make a list of compliments and positive feedback people have given you or keep a “praise” folder in your email. Review regularly.

RECEIVING GIFTS—GIVE SOMETHING TO YOURSELF, BUY SOMETHING FOR YOURSELF

- Buy things for yourself
- Get yourself flowers once a week
- Treat yourself to a new book or journal
- Buy yourself a nice cup of coffee or tea every morning
- Take leftovers home from dinner out, from parties, etc
- Get a pack of pens you really like
- Give yourself permission to buy the nicer bottle of wine you like
- Knit yourself a scarf
- Splurge on that one pair of just-out-of-your-normal budget shoes or one bag that you really want

Choose 2-3 ideas from each of your top two Love Languages from the list above or come up with your own using the worksheet on the page that follows. Incorporate those into your life for two weeks.

This might be harder than it seems. You might feel resistance when you do this; it might feel selfish. Two thoughts on that:

1. **Resistance is very normal when you take steps toward something that will be good for you.** And you know what they say about resistance? That the level of resistance is proportional to how good the action you’re resisting will be to your development and growth. If something will be really beneficial for you, you will resist it like crazy. Like treating yourself really well and prioritizing your relationship with yourself.

2. While it might feel selfish on the surface because you're paying so much attention to yourself and giving-giving-giving to yourself, this is actually the least selfish thing you can do. Like I said earlier, your relationship with yourself is the foundation for your life. When you prioritize your relationship with yourself, you'll start to show up as the best version of yourself. And when you do that, everyone in your life wins.

Write to me to tell me how it's going: joanna@joanna-platt.com. I'd love to hear from you. Tell me what your Love Languages are, what you've chosen to include in your self-care routine and how it's impacting you.

If this feels really hard to you, let's talk about it. I coach women who want to build a solid relationship with themselves. In weekly sessions over six weeks, we'll have deep conversations about who you are, what you want out of life, and how you can take care of yourself in a way that feels real and meaningful to you. We'll talk about your shoulds: rules that guide what you do and don't do ranging from what you eat for breakfast and how often you call your mom to what type of career you want and when and if you should start a family. We'll give these a good, hard look and then re-write them if necessary so you can decrease the amount of guilt you feel and increase your sense of peace, joy, and satisfaction.

The first step in my coaching process is the Calm Your Inner Critic Process. It's a 20-minute online assessment followed by a deep dive conversation with me where we'll talk about your results and what you can focus on to quiet the voice in your head that says over and over again "you're not good enough."

Learn more and book now at joanna-platt.com.



WORKSHEET

Rules here: don't think too hard, just write. A lot of times, the first thing that comes to mind is the right thing.

I feel so good when... _____

Imagine you have a Saturday morning to yourself, no plans, no shoulds, what would be really satisfying to do... _____

I wish I had more time/energy/resources for... _____

Pick an idea from the list under your Love Language. Using that as a baseline, come up with 3-4 more ideas. Repeat with your second Love Language and/or another idea from the list.

Go through and circle the things that would feel really good for you to have or do, the things that would make you go "ahhhhhh." (Ahhhhh in the omg-this-feels-sooo-good way.)

Joanna-Platt
COACHING

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