

FEBRUARY 2024

BENCO NEWSLETTER

A newsletter for Benco Staff



DURING A MONTH DEVOTED TO LOVE, HOW TO LOVE YOURSELF

Valentine's Day is a day to celebrate love. Most often we think of romantic love, but the greatest love of all is the love we can give ourselves. This issue is devoted to loving and taking care of yourself. How often have you heard it said that you must love yourself before you can truly love someone else or let them love you fully? Before you can be in a happy romantic relationship with someone else, you have to be happy with who you are. If you don't know how to have a healthy and fulfilling relationship with yourself, this can bleed into romantic relationships. Knowing your self-worth allows you to realize that you are complete whether you're single or in a relationship.

Additionally, recognizing your self-worth can bolster self-confidence, which can have positive effects on other aspects of your life. When you know who you are and are happy with yourself, it becomes easier to recognize and set boundaries, engage in healthy communication, and genuinely listen to yourself and others. When entering into relationships without knowing who they truly are, people may forget to focus on themselves and their growth. This happens to people sometimes because they become so focused on their partner and day-to-day responsibilities that getting to know and care for ourselves is put on the back burner.

To read more:

<https://www.regain.us/advice/general/the-importance-of-being-happy-with-yourself-before-dating/>

Loveisrespect.org asks the following questions to prepare you to enter into a relationship.

- Am I happy with the person I am and do I understand my own value as an individual?
- Do I know what I want from a partner and a romantic relationship? Am I looking for something casual, exclusive monogamy, or an open relationship, like polyamory? Am I choosing to be with someone, or simply choosing to be in a relationship?
- Do I have the time to be in a relationship on top of any and all other commitments I have like school, work, family, friends, hobbies, etc.?
- Do I feel strong enough to deal with rejection?
- Have I healed enough from any past trauma (child abuse, problems with family, deaths, addictions, past abusive partners, mental health concerns, car accidents, health issues, etc.) to be present and give the kind of commitment to a romantic partnership that I would like in return?
- Can I trust myself to respect the healthy boundaries of the relationship that my partner/s and I will talk about and agreed to?
- Do I know what boundaries I am comfortable with emotionally, physically, and in regards to how and how often we'll communicate, and am I able to articulate those to a (potential) partner?
- Do I have realistic expectations of what being in a romantic relationship looks like?



Self-talk: Would you say that to a friend?

Self-talk is the way you talk to yourself, or your inner voice. You might not be aware that you're doing it, but you almost certainly are. This inner voice combines conscious thoughts with unconscious beliefs and biases to create an internal monologue throughout the day.

Self-talk is important because it has a big impact on how you feel and what you do. It can be supportive and beneficial, motivating you, or it can be negative, undermining your confidence. Your self-talk can affect your mental health and your relationships with others.

If you mainly think negatively about yourself, you will feel bad most of the time. Negative self-talk is often experienced by people who have depression or anxiety. The constant negative chatter can be overwhelming and difficult to break out of. Negative self-talk can become repetitive and overwhelming and often feels like it's true. To break out of that cycle try these tips:

- Be aware of what you're saying to yourself. Just the act of stopping and recognizing negative thoughts for what they are, is the first step to working through the problem. Ask yourself, would you talk like this to someone else?
- Challenge your thoughts. Ask yourself – is it true? (often it's not). Remember that many things you worry about don't happen. Much negative self-talk is exaggerated.
- Put your thoughts into perspective (so what?). Try and look at things from a different perspective. Perhaps from a different person's perspective. Ask yourself will this matter in a few year's time?
- Stop the thought. You can do this 'thought stopping' technique visually – by imagining the thought being stopped or squashed etc – or by having a little ritual.
- Replace the thought with a neutral or positive thought. Ask yourself – what is a more helpful thought?

It can take some time to recognize your negative thoughts – remember they have been part of you for a long time and it can take up to 3 months to change old habits. Over time though you can replace the unhealthy negative thoughts with more positive ones. Practice makes it easier.

[HTTPS://WWW.HEALTHDIRECT.GOV.AU/SELF-TALK](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/self-talk)

13 Habits of self-love



Stop comparing yourself to others

Don't worry about others' opinions

Allow yourself to make mistakes

Remember your value doesn't lie in how your body looks

Don't be afraid to let go of toxic people

Process your fears

Trust yourself to make good decisions for yourself

Take every opportunity life presents, or create your own

Put yourself first

Exercise boldness in public

See beauty in the simple things

Be kind to yourself

Feel pain and joy as fully as you can: Allow yourself to feel things fully. Lean into pain, revel in your joy, and don't put limitations on your feelings. Like fear, pain and joy are emotions that will help you understand yourself and ultimately realize that you are not your feelings.

<https://www.healthline.com/health/13-self-love-habits-every-woman-needs-to-have#12.-See-beauty-in-the-simple-things>

Bite Sized Self-Care

One way to make self-care part of your daily life is to begin looking for ways you can do self-care in bite-sized (manageable!) shorter bits of time. Let's take a look at how bite-sized self-care can bring a little ease into your life.

One of the best things you can do for your mental health is to develop a self care routine that works for you. This might include things like exercise, healthy eating, journaling, spending time in nature, or anything else that makes you feel good. Self care is about meeting your own needs in a way that feels good to you. It's not about doing things that you think you “should” do – it's about listening to your own body and mind and giving yourself what you need.

Examples of self-care in small doses:

1. Drawing or Coloring
2. Reading a novel
3. Journaling
4. Eating a meal outside
5. Taking a walk, stretching, or doing some form of exercise that doesn't require you to change your clothes or take a shower after
6. Choosing your favorite: Sitting in your favorite chair, using your favorite mug, plate or bowl, choosing your favorite ice cream – allowing yourself to have a preference in a time when you've been catering to everyone else.
7. Noticing and enjoying silence when it happens.
8. Listening to music: take time for one song
9. Thanking someone who made a positive impact on you in a big or small way – and be detailed in your thanks.
10. Yoga: there are plenty of 5 minute stretches
11. Meditating

A date with yourself

Don't have a date for Valentine's Day? Here are some ways to enjoy some solo time!

Watch or listen to stand-up comedy.

Watch your favorite movie.

Burn a candle that smells divine to you.

Take yourself to a restaurant.

Take a bath.

Make a new recipe for one:
<https://onedishkitchen.com/cooking-for-one-recipes/>

<https://www.delish.com/cooking/recipe-ideas/g40232285/dinners-for-one/>



Dates to remember

It was brought to my attention that some special celebrations were missed in the last newsletter, so here is a more complete January shout outs! My sincere apologies to those I missed.



January 2nd Marcus A.
January 4th John B.
January 12th Meraina B
January 14th Emilia D
January 24th Cindy E
January 9th Chevelle G
January 18th Alyssa G
January 18th Andrea H
January 17th Jennifer H
January 12th Tyler J
January 10th Diana L
January 31st Dakota L
January 29th Angie L
January 3rd Rachel L
January 29th Molly M
January 7 Michael M

January 4th Kaitlyn D
January 18 Estefani R
January 30 Jacob S
January 29th Angie L
January 27th Scott W
January 5 Devon W
January 23rd Michele

Happy Anniversary

Kaitlyn D. 6th Benco-versary
Sarah H. 11th Benco-versary
Angie L. 9th Benco-versary
Heather R. 26th Benco-versary
Estefani R. 1 year Benco-versary
David R. 16th Benco-versary
Tylor S. 1 year Benco-versary
Laura's 7th Benco-versary
Bryn's 16th Benco-versary
Jodi H's 5th Benco-versary

Dates to remember February



February 10th
Cameron
February 12th
Shelley
February 21st
Brittany
February 21st
Annette
February 28th
Peyton
February 9th
Andrew
February 23rd
Kevin

*Happy
Anniversary*

Kayla M. 2nd year
Benco-versary
Deborah S. 1 year
Benco-versary
Mike S. 33rd Benco-versary
Kevin W. 24th Benco-versary

Cheer for our team!

Polar Plunge! Saturday,
February 17, 2024
Willamette Boat Landing
@ Crystal Lake Sports
Fields
<https://support.soor.org/event/2024-corvallis-polar-plunge/e505679>