



Embracing You:

Sacred Self Love and Compassion Guide

Yoga,
Meditation,
Intentional
Living, Self
Care, Ritual,
Releasing and
Making New



DAPHNE FULLER

This guide does not treat or diagnose any medical or mental conditions and is not a substitute for medical care. Please check with your doctor or therapist before practicing information listed in this guide. This text is intended as a reference only, not as a medical text. It is not intended to be a substitute for any treatment that may have been prescribed by your doctor or mental health therapist. It is given with the understanding that the publisher and writer is not engaged in rendering medical advice. If you have a medical problem, continue to seek competent medical help.

About the Author: By trade Daphne is a Yoga, Sound and Reiki Practitioner, Author, Consultant, Speaker, Trainer, Daring Way Facilitator and a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Therapist. She does not diagnosis or prescribe in this guide but shares from lived experiences and the work she has done with others over the years.

Copyright 2020 by Daphne Fuller. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any other information retrieval system, without the written permission of the publisher, except by a reviewer who may quote brief passages or reproduce illustrations in a review with the appropriate credits. Cover Photograph by Jennifer Cochran.

Daphne Fuller Publishing

PO BOX 36232

Fayetteville, NC 28303

www.blackmindsinmeditation.com

www.therapeuticandwellness.com

Preface

As we move through life we inherit and create internal dialogue. Some dialogue and experiences are positive, then there is that which has and continues to negatively impact our lives. These experiences affect the way we see ourselves, treat ourselves and how we allow others to treat us. This guide is designed to help you acknowledge and change repeated statements and beliefs that make it difficult for you to love yourself just as you are. This guide will assist you with tapping into and releasing old, unhealthy programming. It will help you compassionately connect to the amazing and worthy person you are by accepting all of you.

Developing new belief systems takes patience and effort (PRACTICE) on your part. Please remember that this is a process. Be gentle with yourself. Each day will be different. Some days you may incorporate more than others. That is fine. It happens. Do what you can and take care of you.

This guide will also provide you with information on yoga. Yoga is more than poses. It is also about our thoughts, actions, breathing, and the way we live. Keep that in mind as you move through this guide, as there will be many activities that move us beyond poses. You will embody "yoga off of the mat" as well as on the mat. You will live your yoga.

Self Love and Compassion Contract

I, _____ commit to love you daily, unconditionally and authentically.

I will honor and respect you, your desires and ideas.

I will remain true to who you are and love you through it.

I will treat you with love through words and actions.

I will remind you to breathe deeply and sit in meditation when needed.

I will reframe words in an honest yet loving way, quieting your inner critic.

I will write love letters to you and read them.

I will love you through your mistakes and remind you of your strength.

I will allow you the time you need to heal from past hurts.

I will be open to the zest of life.

I will accept you for who you are, where you are and how you are.

I will see the beauty in you and the life that you live and have yet to live.

I will allow you to live your best life and attain the goals you have set.

I love you now and through it all.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Collecting Sacred Items

Sacred means to be "connected with God, Nature, Source, Universe, Ancestors, and as I see it, yourself, as each of the ones I mentioned prior are within us. It moves you away from feeling that you have to go this alone and into a knowing and universal feeling of connectedness. Your life and the way you take care of yourself is spiritual and very important. Over the next few days, take an inventory of the items that you have around your home based on the list provided. If you feel led to purchase the additional items below please do. If not purchasing is a more compassionate act of self love, then please do not purchase them. The Ancestors made magic with what they had.

Items collected will be used to take better care of your body internally and externally, to create an atmosphere of love and compassion and a Self Love and Compassion Altar. Those needed for altar will have an (a). Those needed for you or home will have a (y).

Candles (a)(y)	Incense (a)(y)
Yoga Mat (y)	Tea Cup (y)
Mirror (a) (y)	Herbal Teas (y)
Drinking Water(a)(y)	Salt/Herbs for Baths (y)
Fruits and veggies(a)(y)	Pen (y)
Honey (y) (a)	Essential Oils (y)
Crystals (a)(y)	Shea butters/Oils (y)
Journal (y)	Loose Paper (y)
Cinnamon Sticks (y)	Florida Water (a) (y)
Cinnamon Broom (y)	Sage/Cedar/Pine/Palo Santo

Let's discuss gratitude.

In doing this work it is important to create and welcome balance. This balance will assist you in staying on track and in maintaining a high vibrational frequency. Did you know that love is the highest frequency and that we are all energy? As you continue to do this work you will be provided with additional tools to aid in this.



Life begins to change for the better when you begin to acknowledge what it is that you are grateful for. Gratitude helps you fall in love with the life you have now. Gratitude rewires the brain, it boosts self esteem, aligns you with the vibrational frequency of love, positivity and your desires, makes you emotionally stronger and so much more. Consider making your own personal gratitude list daily. See the next page for examples.

“Be thankful for what you have; you'll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never, ever have enough.” *Oprah Winfrey*

Gratitude Examples

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES FOR YOU.

I AM grateful for my sight.

I AM grateful for soap and water. (This may sound simple but I say this regularly because it is true).

I am grateful for all of the ways the universe wants to bless me.

I am grateful for the blessings I have yet to receive!

I give thanks for my gifts.

I give thanks for the Ancestors.

I give thanks for knowledge.

I give thanks for my home.

I AM grateful for life.

I AM grateful for this guide.

I AM grateful for being open to feeling better.

I AM grateful for being able to walk barefoot.

I AM grateful for family and/or friends. (Be as specific as you want and include names if you'd like)

I AM grateful for my room or home.

I AM grateful for my body.

I AM grateful for naps.

I AM grateful for my gifts.

I AM grateful for options.

I AM grateful for time off.

I AM grateful for rest.

I AM grateful for



WHAT IS SELF LOVE?

Self love is a state of appreciation and acceptance that we have for ourselves. Self love is demonstrated by the ways in which we talk to, view and treat ourselves. It is demonstrated in how we allow others to treat us as well.

Self love means knowing that we will make mistakes, that we will not always get everything right and that it is just fine. Self love means accepting ourselves for exactly who we are, understanding how and why we are where we are and lovingly nurturing ourselves into a more accepting state of being; being open to learn along the way.

HOW DO OUR VIEWS OF SELF BECOME LESS THAN LOVING? HOW IS THIS INNER CRITIC CREATED?

Different factors that create the inner critic & affect how we view ourselves include:

1. Childhood experiences - bullying, messages we received growing up, difficult relationships with family, caregivers, teachers, peers and the expectations to be someone other than who you were.
2. Difficult life events - the end of a relationship, being in unhealthy relationships, long-term illness, the loss of someone close to you, unemployment, difficult and/or embarrassing situations.
3. Negative thinking patterns.
4. Feeling isolated or left out which may cause you to feel not good enough.
5. Being harassed, mistreated or discriminated against
6. Societal and cultural "norms", social media, job titles, degrees, governing bodies.

ALL OF THESE THINGS CAN CAUSE YOU TO BE OVERCRITICAL OF YOURSELF, SITUATIONS, AND RELATIONSHIPS. IT IS NOT FAIR TO YOU.



YOU HAVE THE POWER TO CHANGE IT!

JUST AS YOU WOULD PULL THE WEEDS FROM A GARDEN, WATER AND PREPARE THE SOIL FOR NEW PLANTS, LET'S ALSO PLANT WITHIN YOURSELF THAT IN WHICH YOU WANT TO GROW.

What's Your Love Language?

To know better is to do better.

Below is the link to the 5 Love Languages Quiz for Singles. Yes it says for singles. This doesn't mean you have to now break up with your honey or that you have to be single. I am recommending this particular one because self love is not about anyone else but you! Learning your love language can add more fulfillment to your life. The quiz will pinpoint for you what type of nurturing speaks to your soul. You may have tried to get others to understand you when you were not clear on what you truly needed or wanted yourself. So get clear on what you like and begin giving it to yourself, because right now, the only relationship this is about is you.

Here are the Five Love Languages with a Self Love Spin:

1. Words of Affirmation- Speak Love To Yourself
2. Acts of Service- Do something for self that encourages self love. Do your toes, decorate your room...
3. Gifts- Treat yourself. This does not have to cost money.
4. Quality Time- Make time for self; no matter how short. Be intentional.
5. Physical Touch- Take care to nurture your body and hair. Get or give yourself a massage. You will learn more later in the guide.

Take this time to get to know yourself better. I ask individuals to look at their top two scores from the quiz.

Link here:

<https://www.5lovelanguages.com/profile/singles/>

Please share in our FB group what your love language is once you take it. Hashtag #lovelanguage #yogaforseflove in your post.

What is Self Compassion

Treat yourself like a close friend and begin speaking to yourself the same way you would encourage them. Self-compassion according to Wikipedia “is extending compassion to one's self in instances of perceived inadequacy, failure, or general suffering. Self-compassion entails being warm towards oneself when encountering pain and personal shortcomings, rather than ignoring them or hurting oneself with self-criticism.”

Practicing self compassion gives you permission to tune in to the loving thoughts, words, and actions you need. What are some actions, words and thoughts you have yearned to hear and feel from others? Each day your job is to give them to yourself as best you can.

Increasing your level of self compassion is going to require intentional effort from you. You said you want it, so let's get it.

Kristen Neff, researcher, identifies 3 Elements of Self Compassion:

1. Self-kindness vs. Self-judgment

To be kind to self is to refrain from harsh criticism and judgment of the self.

2. Common Humanity vs. Isolation

All of us are beautifully flawed, perfectly imperfect humans that at one point in our lives have experienced pain and disappointment.

It is important to acknowledge that you are not the only one. It may not take away the pain to acknowledge this, however over time it

What is Self Compassion

does reduce the possibility of an ongoing cycle of self pity and sinking into a depressive or self sabotaging state. It does not take away your experience. Feeling that you are alone in this and that no one understands can be a really hard place to be in. Although my situations may not have been your situations and your situations have not been my situations, there have been times where I felt totally isolated and alone. If needed, begin therapy.

3. Mindfulness vs. Over-identification. The activities that you have and will complete throughout this guide facilitate mindfulness. Mindfulness requires that we are present in our lives yet, nonjudgmental of ourselves and situations. Over-identification according to Oxford Living Dictionaries is defined as, "The action of identifying oneself to an excessive degree with someone or something else, especially to the detriment of one's individuality or objectivity." Sounds like comparison to me and we know how comparing oneself to others feels. It is a fast way to tear yourself and others down. Less judgment and more acceptance. Let me be clear. I have had my moments, honestly years of over-identification and comparison; and I get it.

Affirmations for Self Compassion

Affirmations are used to rewire our brain and to support us in believing certain positive and high vibrational things about ourselves and the world around us. Affirmations are also used to help us create the reality we want.

Self-affirmations can decrease stress, increase well being, improve how we perform and facilitate one being more open to changing behaviors. Here are some examples of affirmations:

I treat myself with the same love I treat others.

I am doing my best.

I have what I need within me.

I am worthy of being celebrated.

I am patient with myself.

I give myself permission to not be perfect.

I give myself the time I need on my journey, no matter how long it takes.

I embrace all that I am.

Being who I am brings me peace.

Now it is time to create your own. Make a copy for your altar that you will create and leave a copy in your journal. As you are rewriting your affirmations, read them, feel them and see yourself in them. Rewriting and restating things makes them more powerful and rewires your brain.

Vulnerability



Being vulnerable was a cornerstone in my breakthrough and since that time has been an ever evolving practice of small acknowledgements of past shame, disappointment, and guilt that over time I have been able to share. This is not always pretty or comfortable for me but it is important in my evolution. As you understand what it is to be vulnerable you are able to move away from the facades that keep you trapped. It is then that you are able to move through and out of a place of suffering. The pity party ends. It is important to recognize your patterns and what is holding you where you no longer want to be emotionally. I was tired of being imprisoned to what I did not want. Forgiving myself, and doing the work to recognize when I was being less than loving to me was imperative. There are levels to this and it is important to know your limits, to have a good stress management plan in place and/or a coach or therapist if you need it. Know what you are ready to share and acknowledge and what may require assistance. This guide provides tools to manage stress.

So, can I be vulnerable with you for a moment?

For as long as I can remember I did not like how I looked, avoided taking photos and had issues with colorism. Being the darker, melanated little girl with 4c hair and big lips amongst peers and adopted cousins (in the black community someone could be your cousin, even if they weren't blood related) did not make me easily chosen when it was time to play house or other games. I remember clearly being left out, tormented, or being chosen last.

My feelings were often hurt and I found myself wanting to look like someone other than myself- someone prettier. Looking back I see so much more clearly. I did not like being with them nor could I trust them. I had no idea that this Eurocentric society would set the stage for how I viewed myself, romantic relationships and even friendships. It affected who I allowed in my life, how I allowed them to treat me and the dialogue I had with self. Although it did not feel right, I thought that this was just how it was.

I unknowingly placed how much I valued myself on how much the man in my life treated me. What I've learned over the years is that no one can or will love me like me. I did not feel pretty, and although I yearned so much to feel that way I wasn't sure that it would ever happen. I mean, I was stuck in this body.

Some would say get over it. I have, but only because I was able to recognize that it helped set the stage for the relationship I had with myself. It was then that I could introspectively do the work.

Give It Up, Turn It Loose

Next we are going to IDENTIFY the thoughts and beliefs that are present in your vibration and that continually rear its not so nice head. The inner critic. Those thoughts and beliefs that cause you to judge yourself harshly, that make you feel less than lovable or not good enough. If you know these thoughts are too difficult to face, please do not complete this exercise without the support of a mental health therapist and instead move to the next page. You can also choose a thought or belief that is less stressful

WRITE THEM DOWN. I know that many schools of thought do not agree with acknowledging the negative and definitely do not agree with writing them down. What I have learned personally is that when I pretend a thing is not present and choose to never deal with it, it shows up over and over again. I can only tell you what has worked for me and has worked for those I have worked with. I see it as a weed that will continue growing unless we pluck the root from the earth and nurture soil in a way that the weed no longer grows there and if it shows up we know how to rid of it.

GIVE IT UP. TURN IT LOOSE. It is time to release these unhealthy narratives that have played like a record in your life.

Say and write this statement in front of each of the statements you wrote. "I free myself of..." I am (insert positive). For example if a narrative for you is "I am not good enough." Your new statement will read, "I free myself of believing that I am not good enough." "I am good enough". Do this for each of the unhealthy narratives. Now take the sheet that you wrote this information on and rip it to shreds as you say, "I free myself of these thoughts, I free myself of these thoughts, I free myself of these thoughts, I free myself of these thoughts, I free myself of these thoughts." Burn it.

This is a process, so if and when these thoughts show up again remind yourself that you have freed yourself of these thoughts and state it.

Mirror Me

By now you have created your self compassion and affirmation list so let's take it a step further. One of the items you were asked to gather was a mirror, which you will use for this exercise. Please be sure you clean it before you begin. This mirror is going to become your friend, if it is not already. It is going to help you get better acquainted with yourself, even if it is for one minute each day. It is important that you begin to see yourself with grace, love, kindness and compassion. It may feel awkward at first, maybe not. Hopefully it provides you with awareness of your strengths, what thoughts and patterns that are present and would benefit from being changed, an understanding and map for your continued evolution and a place for you to affirm yourself. Remember, you are a masterpiece. Use your list of affirmations, read one, then speak it to yourself as you look into your eyes in the mirror.



Read another and do the same until you have read them all.
Do this for the next 21 days.

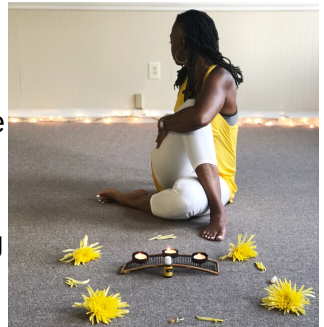
Yoga/Meditation

In western culture we have been taught to most often rely on our thoughts to get us through life; because of this many have a limited concept of the mind, body, spirit connection. Yoga supports this concept. It supports moving on a more intuitive level, honoring yourself. Yoga creates oneness of body, mind and spirit. It prepares us to physically and mentally face challenges of life with more awareness, purpose and ease.

Yoga consists of a number of principles as discussed in the Yoga Sutras, one of them being ahimsa. Ahimsa refers to the practice of non-violence and non-harming. It means to operate from a space of kindness and love. This can be practiced through forgiving yourself and practicing restraint by not engaging in unhealthy habits and thoughts.

As you are practicing yoga and sitting for meditation consider diffusing essential oils, placing your crystal(s) next to you, burn incense or candles, have flowers, petals or plants nearby, or anything that creates peace for you. Each meditation and yoga sequence has been recorded for you.

Remember to access them with the Dropbox link sent to you. Upcoming pages also provide you with photos of the yoga postures and script of the meditations. You can also choose to hold the poses for longer periods of time using the diagrams to follow. Practice both sequences and listen to the meditations each day when possible. Some is better than none at all.



Chakra (Aritus) Work

At the most basic level we and everything around is energy. Chakras, also known as aritus in Kemetic Science, are energy centers within the body. There are over a hundred identified chakras, seven which are considered the main ones. The seven chakras are the root, sacral, solar plexus, heart, throat, 3rd eye (referred to as the first eye by some) and crown. Chakras will not be found if you were cut open. They are energy fields.

I learned through this work that I was blocked energetically and the blockages were filled with scabs that had covered, unhealed wounds. This is me speaking metaphorically. I had never really done the work. I was in autopilot and on a road of consistent chaos and hurt. I was just going through the motions.

At any given time a chakra can be in alignment, excessive or deficient. In this case, mine were on both ends. The chakras connect to your mental, spiritual, emotional and physical well-being. Understanding the chakra system and allowing it to guide you along your journey of transformation can provide great insight into what is happening, why it is happening and ways to live a more harmonious existence.

The chakras we will focus on in this guide are the solar plexus and heart chakra. The yoga sequences you will practice, as well as the meditation exercises, will specifically target the heart and solar plexus, while also working in some way on all of your seven major chakras.

Chakras (Aritus) Work

The solar plexus is identified as the third main chakra. It is also referred to as the self love chakra and is located between the navel and sternum. An open and aligned solar plexus will manifest as personal power, authenticity, personal identity, a healthy relationship with self, and the ability to recognize your contributions to the world. The solar plexus is a place of transformation and will.

The solar plexus is where unexpressed fears of being judged or rejected reside. All of those feelings about not being 'enough' or 'too much' have the potential of building up in the area around your abdomen, which may result in a number of concerns. You may notice that you carry more weight there.

An individual with a blocked solar plexus may lose sight of who they are, experience difficulty relaxing, dismiss the feelings of others, have poor boundaries or take other people's challenges and drama on as their own. Blockages in this area may also show up as overthinking, negative self talk, nervousness, compulsive behavior, shame, anger, sleep issues, rage, digestion issues, stomach ulcers, addictive tendencies, fatigue, having difficulties saying no, feeling like you don't deserve good things, and/or being timid. Having congestion in the solar plexus limits an individual's ability to open their heart. Do you relate to any of these?

Next you will find additional information on the solar plexus and ways to begin doing the work, to bring it into a more harmonious state. Remember to download the guided meditation and yoga sequence also.

SOLAR PLEXUS

Self Love Chakra

Located between your navel and sternum.

Meditate. Meditate. Meditate. Also refer to guided meditation audio.

This meditation focuses on transforming your view of self. Find a comfortable seat. Begin by connecting to your breath. Notice the sounds in the room around you, becoming one as you settle in. On each inhale visualize a yellow fire circulating near your navel. On your next inhale your fire grows larger. Imagine your fire burning away the old messages, negative self talk and anything else that is no longer needed and that is damaging. Connect to your internal fire and strength. On each exhale embrace the release, allowing the ashes to disintegrate. Do this for 10 full breaths. Now allow the fire to fade out. On each inhale allow cleansing loving white light into your entire body. Continue this for 7 breaths or as many as needed. Once returning to your normal flow of breath, sit in the space for 5 minutes or longer. Grab your journal and free write, jotting down what comes to your mind.

INCORPORATE ITEMS IN YOUR LIFE THAT NURTURE YOUR SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA.

1. Before getting out of bed make a list of things you are grateful for. Do not overthink it. Remember, if you can only come up with one thing that is fine. If you can not come up with any here are some for you. "Today I am grateful for taking out the time to get better. I am grateful for the process. I am grateful for another chance. I am grateful for my bed, home, water, shower...."
2. Mediate using the one listed in this section, sit quietly or chant Ah-Ram which is the mantra for your solar plexus.
3. Have your favorite beverage. Chamomile tea is great for stimulating your solar plexus.
4. Use your favorite soap, body wash, and essential oils to get your day started. Oils you can use for the solar plexus are, but not limited to chamomile, rosemary and lemongrass and my Peaceful Meditation blend..
5. To balance this chakra incorporate yellow fruits and vegetables, yellow clothing, yellow roses or sunflowers, and crystals (Citrine, Topaz, Bloodstone, Clear Quartz or Mookite).

SOLAR PLEXUS YOGA POSTURES

Inhale as you open you body and exhale as you contract.

Focus on your solar plexus. Remember your fire.



Chakras (Aritus) Work

The heart chakra is referred to as the fourth chakra and follows the solar plexus. The color of the heart chakra is green, it is located at your heart center. It is the element of air. The purpose of the heart chakra is love and balance. This chakra is the bridge between your three lower chakras and three higher chakras.

The heart chakra focuses on self-love, relationships, love, and intimacy and seeks to bond. When aligned, one experiences compassion, self love, peace, generosity, love for others and an appreciation for life. When not aligned one may experience issues with codependency, isolation, poor boundaries, feelings of abandonment, difficulty being vulnerable, extreme criticism of self and others, narcissism, lack of empathy, and fear of intimacy. Do you relate to any of these? If so, get clear over time of where this comes from. Start by creating an affirmation to change that narrative.

Deep breathing helps to release heavy feelings from the heart chakra. Make sure to breathe during your yoga practice, as this gets the prana (breath/life force) moving within your body, and serves as a cleansing tool. Think of each inhale as giving life to you and breaking up any unwanted baggage and your exhale symbolizing the release of those things. Wearing the color green or pink, painting your nails, taking care of your physical being, incorporating crystals, yoga, meditation, journaling, coaching, counseling, Reiki, volunteering, hiking, and things to get your heart active are all ways to work on aligning your heart chakra. Next you will find additional information on the heart chakra.

HEART CHAKRA

Located in the heart region.

MEDITATE. MEDITATE. MEDITATE

Also refer to guided meditation audio.

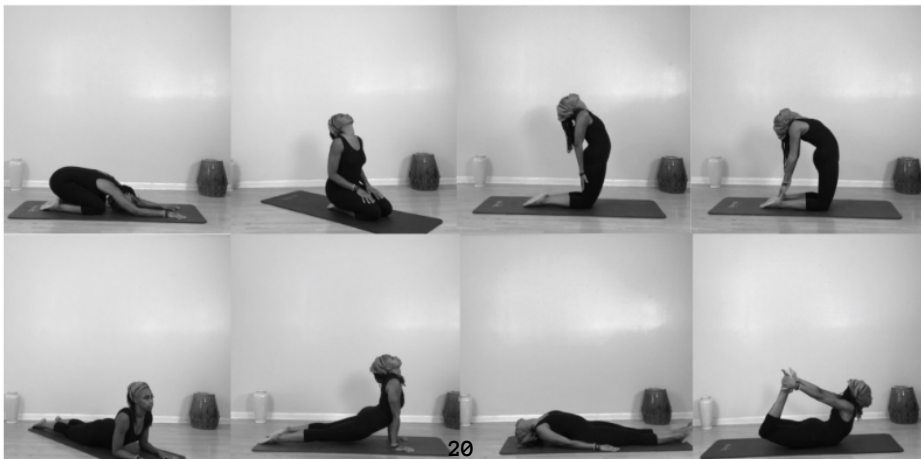
There is beautiful life force energy circulating around you. Find a comfortable seat. Connect to your breath. Notice the sounds around you, becoming one as you settle in. Place your left hand over your heart center and your right hand over your left. On each inhale and exhale feel your breath become one with the beat of your heart as they work in unison. Soften your face and share a gentle smile with the universe as you exhale. If you feel comfortable close your eyes or keep them open and lower your gaze. On your next inhale notice a gleaming green light opening from your heart center, creating a field of green around your entire body. On your exhale feel the comfort of your beautiful auric field. Continue this exercise for 10 full breaths or as long as need. Once returning to your normal flow of breath, sit in the space for 5 minutes or longer.

INCORPORATE ITEMS IN YOUR LIFE THAT NURTURE YOUR HEART CHAKRA.

1. Before getting into bed make a list of your intentions for the next day using "I will" and "I am" statements. Do not overthink it.
2. Mediate using the one listed in this section, sit quietly or chant the mantra Yam, the mantra for this chakra.
3. Have your favorite beverage. Hibiscus tea is great for balancing your heart chakra.
4. Use your favorite soap, body wash, and essential oils to settle into for the evening. Oils you can use for the heart chakra are, but not limited to Rose, Ylang Ylang, Jasmine and Vetiver.
5. Incorporate green into your life through plants, green foods, green clothing, green clothing, nail polish, and crystals (Jade, Emerald, Bloodstone , Aventurine or Rose Quartz).
6. Get fresh air. Get outdoors.. Ride with the window down. Breathe.

HEART CHAKRA YOGA POSTURES

Inhale as you open you body and exhale as you contract.
Tune into the beautiful light beaming from your heart.



Spiritual Connections

What are you tuned into?

Do you have spiritual connections? Whether you practice universal spirituality, religion, ancestral practices, or are not sure, being spiritually connected is important in the work of self love and self compassion. We are all spiritual beings. At times one may feel disconnected or may feel as if they were never connected. Spiritual practices encourage personal growth and self worth. It provides support, connection, peace and so much more. We are our spiritual practices.

A study conducted found that spirituality is essential to the psychological well being of black women (Reid and Neville). In 2014 the American Psychological Association (APA) reported that people who have a spiritual practice are more likely to:

- Live longer
- Report higher levels of happiness;
- Experience more commitment to their romantic partners;
- Promote healthy development of their children;
- Cope better with the transition of a loved one;
- Have a lower risk of depression and suicide".

Spirituality helps with the reduction of stress. It also serves as a constant reminder to give yourself the love and compassion you seek from the outside world. Give yourself permission to move into the spiritual being that you are. If you have already embraced this part of yourself then you are well on your way in this journey. Put forward the same effort to connect to and respecting yourself as you do your other practices. Self love and compassion is a spiritual act and requires that you live it with intention.

Live With Intention

"Faith without works is dead."

What is intentional living as it relates to self love and compassion? If you have implemented any of the things mentioned in this guide then you are already on your way to living with intention and spirituality! Intentional living means CHOOSING to live in a way that is in alignment with your purpose and desires in life. Living with intention moves you beyond the phase of wanting and talking about things, to doing, allowing, receiving, and BEING that which you have intended.

By living with intention, you incorporate things into your life that help you thrive; things that help you feel alive. Intentional living means being present. It means being right here and now. Being present has many benefits. It helps you to be mindful, aware and grounded. It takes you into a space of gratitude. Living intentional also brings you into a space of accepting you for you; for who you are right now. It allows you to walk to your own beat, absent of the expectations of others.

Now let's identify what you want in your life as it relates to self love and self compassion. Take a moment and write down in your journal what you envision self love and compassion looking like for you. Write it in statement form. For example: "I accept myself for all that I am and embrace all parts of me. I recognize that I am ever evolving and that I am wonderfully made. I speak kindly to myself and set forth each day to do the best that I can knowing that is enough. I am beautiful and sexy." I am a magnificent catch. I am a Goddess." Read the statements you have written aloud and add to them as desired.

Live With Intention- Rituals and Routines

Throughout this journey it is important that you care for your home and physical body as well. They are connected with your emotional, mental and spiritual health.

Maakye (Good morning in Twi) Goddess

Establishing a feel good morning routine is essential to a peaceful life. It will help to ground you. Now, I am sure that many of you already have a morning routine, be it productive or counterproductive. Out of the two which would you prefer? I'll go with productive. This may require a change in your already established habits, but so what. Who does not want to be at their best? Adopting a morning routine does require trying different things to see what works. This actually does not sound bad to me, considering this gives you a pass to indulge in "feel good" practices, to determine what works for you.

Meditate

Prayer is the act of speaking to Spirit. Meditation is the act of centering oneself and also aids in listening to God. Although there is more than one way to hear Spirit/God, meditation is certainly one. Spend time with yourself, Spirit/God and the Ancestors. Incorporating meditation and mindfulness into your morning routine can yield positive changes in your professional and personal life. Sitting in meditation for some is challenging. If it is challenging for you, start off by meditating for 5 minutes and gradually increase it by 5 minutes. Meditation is not one size fits all. You can try candle gazing, sound meditation, moving meditation, breathing meditation and others.

Live With Intention- Rituals and Routines

Body

As a part of beginning and closing out your day, cleanse your body with natural soaps and water. Natural black soap with no other additives is my favorite. Imagine all thoughts not serving your highest good being washed away and released down the drain. Allow fresh water to come upon you, speaking the positive beliefs that you are now adopting for yourself.

Anoint your body with Florida Water, and/or essential oils, swiping up, calling in self love, peace, joy and self-compassion. Nourish your face and body with natural butters and oils. Anoint your head and body with your favorite fragrances or those listed in this guide. Clothe your body with clothing that makes you feel like the amazing being you are! Put on lipstick, shadow, or your favorite lipgloss. Put on your favorite earrings. Adorn yourself. Do what helps you feel good. There are days I love boots, pumps, sandals and pretty dresses and days I love yoga pants and my favorite tees. It is great to intentionally make days that you doll yourself up.

Live With Intention- Rituals and Routines

Home

Make your bed! If you have not already, get in the habit of making your bed after departing from it each day. Humans thrive on productivity. It is the small feats that lead to larger ones.

Now, let's make sure that your space is clean and smells of aromas pleasing to you. Do not get caught up in what you do not have. Bask in the things that you do have. Many of your ancestors often used what they had and made it magical. I want you to do the same.

You can create your own floor wash to mop your floor. Your wash can consist of anything from water you have blessed, new moon water, herbs from your kitchen like bay leaves, cinnamon, rosemary, basil and more. You can also put in essential oils and herbs recommended in this guide to boost the energy of self love and compassion, along with Florida Water. Your cinnamon broom can be placed at or over top of your doorway to usher in good vibrations, self love and blessings. You can find them at Food Lion, AC Moore, and Trader Joes, to name a few. Incense, herbs and resins cleanse the air, aid in connecting to Spirit and aid in the creation of your sacred space.

Live With Intention- Rituals and Routines

Kitchen Magician

Pour love into your food. Have you ever eaten someone's food and had a feeling of pure bliss time and time again? It is likely that they put intention and love into each action they take when preparing the food. This requires that you are in the moment.

Bless and give thanks for your food. What you put into your body is a form of self love. As you bless your food, place your hands above it, visualizing and speaking health, nourishment, appreciation and love into it. Your hands are gifts, not only to create tangible items but to bless all things, including yourself.



Live With Intention- Rituals and Routines

Pour It Up

Indulge in a healthy morning drink. I enjoy my first drink of the day being room temperature spring (alkaline) water, with or without lime, followed by herbal tea and/or a yummy fruit and vegetable smoothie. Keep a glass or bottle of water by your bed to make it easily accessible in the morning. Incorporating one of these can boost your morning mood and set the tone for a more peaceful and productive day. Here are a few of my favorite smoothie and water recipes.

Dates
Water
Spirulina
Chia Seeds
Mango (frozen)
Banana (frozen)
Coconut (frozen)
Pineapple (frozen)
Blueberries (frozen)
Pomegrante (frozen)

Dates
Water
Spinach
Cucumber
Chia Seeds
Mango (frozen)
Banana (frozen)
Dragonfruit (frozen)
Strawberries (frozen)

Dates
Water
Spinach
Avocado
Chia Seeds
Mango (frozen)
Banana (frozen)
Pineapple (frozen)

Dates
Water
Cucumber
Hemp Seeds
Mango (frozen)
Banana (frozen)
Pineapple (frozen)
Dragonfruit (frozen)

Live With Intention- Rituals and Routines

Pour It Up

Dates	Raspberries (frozen)
Water	Strawberries (frozen)
Spinach	Banana (frozen)
Avocado	Mango (frozen)
Chia Seeds	Hemp Seeds
Banana (frozen)	Cucumber
Blueberries (frozen)	Avocado
Raspberries (frozen)	Spinach
	Water
	Dates
Dates	Dragonfruit (frozen)
Water	Pineapple (frozen)
Avocado	Banana (frozen)
Spring Mix	Mango (frozen)
Chia Seeds	Hemp Seeds
Mango (frozen)	Spring Mix
Banana (frozen)	Water
Pineapple (frozen)	Dates
Water	Water
Mint	Mint
Cucumbers	Pineapple

Create a Self Love and Compassion Altar Location and Prep

"A home without an altar is ungrounded" - Sobonfu Some

A Self Love and Compassion Altar is an altar built with the intention of healing the relationship with the self. Your altar will be a space of spiritual power and support. Choose a space in your home that can be just yours. This can be a nightstand, a bookshelf, a table, floor, the top of a dresser, box, in the closet, shoebox, a drawer.... Cleanse yourself, then your altar and items to remove any unwanted energy (negative, stagnant..) You can use a smoke cleanse, Florida Water, and/or essential oils of your choice. For a smoke cleanse you can use Pine, Cedar, Frankincense, and homegrown or responsibly harvested Sage and Palo Santo. Your intention is everything.

Next speak your intentions for your altar. In this case it is to assist you in bringing forth and nurturing self love and self compassion. Feel the vibrations of what self love and self compassion feels like to you. Recall the statements you have already written as you begin to set up your altar. State your intentions as if it is so. You will spend time here breathing, praying, meditating, and just being. How often can you commit to this?



Create a Self Love and Compassion Altar

Elements and Items

The elements to include on your altar are earth, air, water, spirit (ether), and fire. Create it as you are led. Do not overthink it. Use your intuition, items that make you feel loved and compassionate, and suggestions from this guide. Implement at least one of each element.

Spirit- sacred symbol, scripture, mantra, ankh, cross, Goddess Oshun/Het Heru (if you have developed a relationship with her)

Fire- Candle. Lamp. (*Use some form of light) Regarding candle use, you can use yellow which embodies attraction. This is also the color of Goddess Oshun and the solar plexus. You can also use pink or green. Green, yellow and pink are the colors of Goddess Het Heru. The heart chakra's colors are green or pink. You can also use a white candle which is all purpose. Keep watch of candles to prevent fire.

Earth- Flowers (Roses or petals). I prefer yellow roses and sunflowers for this altar. Plant/Herbs- (Chamomile, Rosemary, Lemongrass, Rose, Ylang Ylang, Jasmine, Frankincense, Lavendar) Crystals- (Clear Quartz is universal. Bloodstone, Jade, Aventurine, Rose Quartz, Citrine, Topaz, Mookite).

Create a Self Love and Compassion Altar Elements and Items

Air-Incense. Sage/Pine/Palo Santo/Cedar. Feather (Have you noticed feathers in your path? Those are your angels. Pay attention.) Essential Oil Diffuser (Rose, Cinnamon, Vanilla, Lavendar, Chammmomile, Rosemary, Lemongrass, Jasmine, Vetiver, Ylang Ylang), Perfume, Florida Water (you can make your own)

Water- This can be placed in a bowl or glass. Seashells.

Additonal Items: Honey (taste it first) and oranges, tangerines, cinammon as offerings for Goddess Oshun, small handheld mirror, affirmations and love notes.

Build your altar. Plan to spend time at your altar a few days out of the week or each day. Additional items will be added as you feel led.

Self Love Altar Time

Light your candle, start your air element (diffuser, light sage, etc), make sure the water is fresh, and that the altar and all items are clean.

Take this moment to be one with the day and practice pranayama (breathing). Fully experience your breath in this moment. Take 5 full, slow, deep breaths in and out of your nose. Visualize the words SELF LOVE and COMPASSION, one letter at a time. Soften your face and allow this to wash over your entire body, from the crown of your head to the soles of your feet.

Next, give thanks for those that have come before you, that love you, and want the best for you. Give thanks for all that is for your highest good both known and unknown. Next place your right hand over your heart center and your left hand over your solar plexus (belly) and read aloud each affirmation of self love and compassion and after each one state: "I give thanks."

Finally, pick up your mirror, state your name, then repeat these affirmations into the mirror, after each one stating, "Ase".

Take a moment to write out anything that comes up for you during this time in your journal.

Live With Intention Bingo

They say, "If you stay ready, you don't have to get ready." I wholeheartedly believe this and know from experience. Staying ready means implementing and practicing strategies that will assist you in having a more peaceful day when things are going well and when things have gone left. Having healthy self care and coping strategies support your emotional wellness. The list below serves as a reminder with some additions. Use this as a reference of ideas to implement into your daily life.

Rest	Breathe deeply	Eat mindfully	Plant or care for a plant	Practice non-judgement
Express gratitude	Create a self love altar	Set a daily intention	Chant Bija mantra Yam	Live purposefully
Get dressed/Get cut	Listen to Binuaral Beats	FREE SPACE	Chant Bija mantra Ram	Take a break from technology
Set boundaries	Take time each day to reflect	Pause between action	Create a Self Love Playlist	Engage in mindful movement
Sit in meditation	Hug yourself tight	Read your affirmations	Be in the moment	Attentively moisturize your skin

You can connect with me at
blackmindsinmeditation@gmail.com
www.blackmindsinmeditation.com
IG at Black Minds In Meditation
FB at Black Minds In Meditation



Peace, blessings and balance to you.