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Coming Home to Yourself: How Presence Builds Self-Love

We spend so much of our lives elsewhere.

In tomorrow's to-do list. In yesterday's conversations. In the version of ourselves we think we *should* be by now. Even when we're technically "here," our minds are often running ahead, replaying, fixing, striving.

But self-love doesn't live in the future.

It doesn't show up once everything is perfect.

Self-love begins the moment you return to your own life.

It begins with presence.

What presence really means

Presence isn't about meditating for an hour or achieving some serene, unshakeable calm. It's much simpler—and much more radical—than that.

Presence is noticing that you're tired and choosing not to push anyway. It's feeling joy without immediately reaching for your phone to document it. It's catching yourself in self-criticism and pausing instead of piling on.

Presence is the act of being *with* yourself as you are, not as a project to be fixed. It's acknowledging that you are perfect just as you are.

And that's where self-love quietly takes root.

Why we avoid being present

Many of us were never taught how to stay with ourselves. We learned to perform, to achieve, to be useful, to be “easy.” Being fully present can feel uncomfortable because it brings us face-to-face with emotions we've been outrunning: grief, longing, anger, tenderness.

So we distract. We overwork. We scroll. We stay busy.

But here's the truth: avoiding presence doesn't protect us—it disconnects us. And you can't build a loving relationship with someone you're never actually with. Including yourself.

Presence as an act of self-respect

When you practice presence, you send yourself a powerful message: *I am worth paying attention to.*

You start to notice your inner signals sooner—hunger, exhaustion, excitement, resistance. You begin responding instead of overriding. Over time, trust builds. And trust is the foundation of self-love.

Self-love isn't loud. It doesn't always look like confidence or affirmations in the mirror. Often, it looks like listening. Like choosing rest. Like telling the truth about what you need—even when it's inconvenient. It's about admitting that everything is not always perfect. And that's perfectly ok.

Small ways to build presence in everyday life

You don't need to change your whole life to be more present. Start small and human:

- **End self-deprecating talk.** We all do it; curse the mirror, comment on our stupidity. Make it your main goal to stop and apologize to yourself when you do this. You wouldn't say it to anyone else, so why do you say those things to yourself? It's just being as kind to yourself as you are to others.
- **Pause before reacting.** One breath can create space between stimulus and response. Take it. Take two. Breathing is known to create physiological changes. At the end of great stress, we sigh heavily. That sigh indicates to the Vagus nerve that danger has passed. Taking a deep breath and exhaling for longer than the breath tells your body you are safe. It allows relaxation and clears panic-based responses.
- **Name what you're feeling.** "I feel overwhelmed" or "I feel content" anchors you in the now. Be sure to say it as a feeling, not a being. Feelings pass. When you say "I am," our brains and bodies internalize it as part of who we are, not just a temporary thing we are going through.
- **Set Boundaries.** Saying no is the ultimate form of self-respect. Be true to yourself so that you can be more true to others at the right times.
- **Check in with your body.** Ask, "What do I need right now?" and listen without judgment. Sometimes, we truly do need to just rest. Or, to get some exercise. Tune in and listen. Be as good a listener to yourself as you are to your loved ones.
- **Let moments be enough.** Not everything needs to be productive or optimized. And not all days are perfect. Recognize and acknowledge even the moments that are peaceful, joyful, and loving.

Presence is a practice, not a personality trait. Some days it will feel natural. Other days it will feel impossible. Both are okay.

The quiet transformation

As presence becomes more familiar, something shifts. You stop abandoning yourself in moments of discomfort. You become a steadier companion to your own experience. You don't need constant external validation because you are already *with* yourself.

This is where self-love stops being an idea and starts being lived.

Not because you finally earned it.

Not because you fixed yourself.

But because you stayed.

And in staying, you remembered:

You were always worthy of your own attention.

With warmth and belief in you,

Theresa Leiser & Colleen Dupont

Learning Self-Love

Loving yourself can feel odd. We're raised to love others and give all of ourselves to others. Changing that mindset to prioritize yourself isn't optional, isn't essential! Science shows that people who practice self-love are actually happier. Self-love increases dopamine levels, the "Happy" chemical in our brains. When we are happy, we create a happier environment around us. It's self-perpetuating. This month, we'll explore the basics of deeply loving ourselves.

February is all about Self-Love & Presence

February arrives with a need to listen inwardly.

Listening Inward

Self-Trust

Acknowledging yourself

The world is telling us look elsewhere, to concentrate on everyone and everything else.

At *Perspective Ed*, we believe something different.

This month, we take time for ourselves.

Schedule self-care.

Spend time in solitude.

Before you can take care of everyone else, take time to refill your tank, create love for and presence for yourself.

February is for YOU.

[Check out our YouTube short video about taking care of yourself.](#)

Who Loves You, Baby?

When February rolls around, hearts show up everywhere. Pink and red designs in storefronts. Heart-shaped balloons in coffee shops. Backgrounds on phone apps. Just because someone, somewhere, decided that we should all celebrate love in the middle of February.

But what is that love wasn't a high pressure to find someone special or to put on public displays and prove our love to someone? Or worse, expect and demand that they prove their love to us!

What if it were a reminder to love ourselves a little more? I don't mean in a selfish or narcissistic way. And I'm not bashing romantic love. I am a big fan of romance. Just not the superficial, made-for-TV movie kind of romance that February seems to call for.

One thing that I know for sure, as water seeks its own level, how others love you is relative to how you love yourself. Genuine love seeks its own level. Your partner will respect you to your own level of self-respect. They will honor you to your own level of self-honoring.

Yes, it's possible to feel like someone loves you more than you deserve. Yes, others may see your potential as bigger than you can see it yourself. And sometimes you just need someone to believe in you. But it's happened more than once that relationships where someone feels the need to rescue or (over) protect their partner don't end well.

If you're looking to find a partner to share a happily ever after life with, or to re-ignite passion with the one you have, start with yourself. Be the person that this amazing partner deserves. Not to please or trick them, but find the love and appreciation for things in yourself that you want them to see.

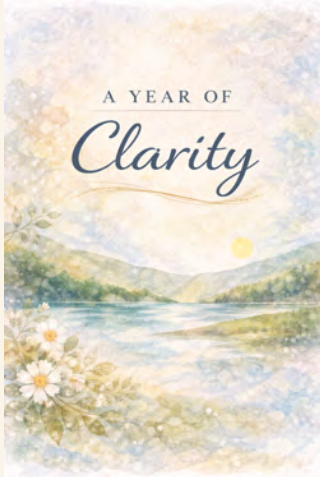
The more you know your own worth, the more your partner will value you. And that's love worth pursuing, in February or any time of year.

Simple Practices to build Presence and Self-Love

- **Journaling** - Write your wins and losses, being sure to be kind to yourself in both circumstances.
- **Meditation** - Meditating calms the mind. Don't worry about perfect meditation. If your mind wanders, just remind yourself to come back to center. Concentrate on your heart and the peace in it.
- **Practice Deep Breathing**. In for 3, hold for four, out for five. Reset your calm!
- **Dedicate time to joy** - Schedule time every week to do something that brings you joy. A little painting, some exercise, a walk in the woods, or a conversation with an old friend. You decide, but give yourself moments of joy.
- **Be Present** - Be fully involved in what you are doing. Eliminate distractions (like cell phones) for a bit of time every day. Experience moments fully, not while thinking of ten other things.

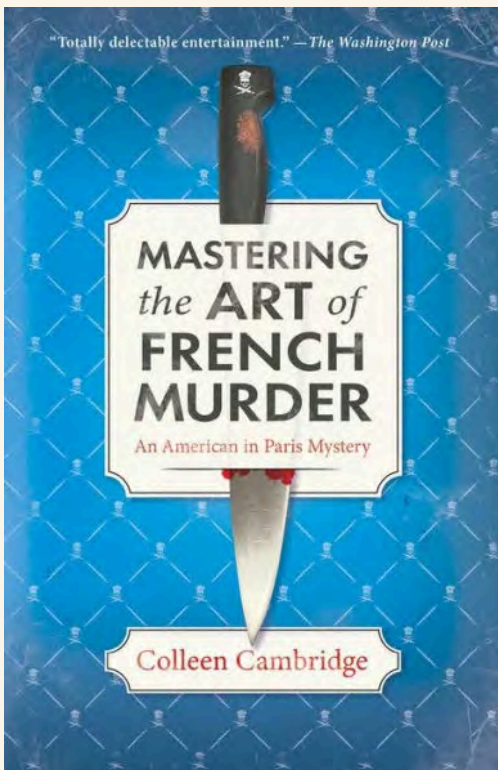
This is where self-love begins.

The 2026 Clarity Workbook



Spend the year with us! Our 2026 Clarity Workbook is here! Each month, explore a different aspect of gaining Clarity. Take some time to reflect and review. For a deeper dive, join our monthly Clarity Sessions to discuss each topic in a live, virtual group.

[Get the Clarity Workbook](#)



February Book Club is here. Our virtual meeting will be on February 22nd! The Ladies of Les Frenchies are diving into a little culinary murder while reading Mastering The Art of French Murder. Join us online for virtual meet-ups on 2/22, see all the details at Les Frenchies Female Traveler on FaceBook.

[Buy the book here](#)

Things We Love

We've curated lists of services and products we love and think you will, too!



Looking for some excellent tours? Walks and Devour Tours believe you can savor much more than just a meal. You can devour stories, art, and culture. We tend to agree!

[Reserve your Tour](#)



Since February is all about self-love, why not indulge in some of the best lotion we have ever found? You won't be disappointed in anything Nuxe, but this lotion really rocks!

[Find it Here](#)

Coming in March: During March, we'll discuss the new-you that is emerging and the continued new growth of self-discovery.

Don't miss another newsletter; email theresa@thatperspective to join our mailing list!

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