

HOW TO LOVE YOURSELF

Why this matters for artists:

- Your body, mind, and creative expression are *you*; they are yours to love or hate.
- When we are at war with ourselves, we wind up creatively blocked, unable to take action in the direction of our dreams.
- Perfectionism, shame, and discipline get short-term results, but long-term can lead to burnout.
- Loving yourself is the key to overcoming criticism.
- It is central to finding healthy, happy relationships.
- You can't pour from an empty cup.
- You can't create sustainably and joyfully with hatred or disdain for yourself.

Keep reading for 3 tips, including 3 tasks to try today.

Listen to Episode No. 22 (Season 2) of Artists for Joy Podcast for more on this topic.

*Sign up for a FREE coaching discovery session today:
artistsforjoy.org/coaching*

May these tools lead to creative joy!

1. PURSUE YOUR INNER ARTIST

Ask your inner artist, like you would a spouse or loved one:

What makes you feel loved?

Remember what it feels like to be pursued, to have someone track you down or go out of their way to make sure they spend time with you. Ask your inner artist,

Have you felt pursued lately?

How well am I taking care of you?

Task:

As Julia Cameron suggests in "The Artist's Way": take your inner artist on a date this week. (She calls this the "Artist's Date.")

Take a few hours out of an afternoon and pursue your inner artist, make time for whatever makes them feel loved.

2. CELEBRATE & GRIEVE

Rituals of both joy and grief help us cultivate self love.

They are concrete actions that remind us that ***our work is not our worth.***

By intentionally enjoying our accomplishments or grieving our losses, we separate ourselves from the outcomes of our creative work and focus on our process instead.

We recognize and validate all of our feelings about being an artist.

We rush in with love in the face of whatever criticism or lack of response (which can be just as painful) that we may experience.

Task: *Celebrate or grieve with one of the following rituals or create ones that feel meaningful to you:*

- *Take a trip*
- *Go out to dinner*
- *Light a candle*
- *Reflect on what you are grateful for*
- *Enjoy your favorite snack or beverage*
- *Light the rejection letters on fire in your backyard (safely!)*

3. FORGIVE YOURSELF

"Forgiveness is key. I can't write the book I want to write, but I can and will write the book I am capable of writing. Again and again throughout the course of my life I will forgive myself."

--Ann Patchett "The Getaway Car" (a must-read for creatives, IMO)

Task: *Make two columns in your journal. On the right side of the page write down all the things that sting in your creative life. After you finish that list, to the left of each item, write: I forgive you for....*

Column 1 (write second)

I forgive you for...
I forgive you for...
I forgive you for...

Column 2 (write first)

- Not winning that audition
- Failing to seize that opportunity
- Not being able to please this or that person

Read them aloud to yourself.

If they do not seem true today, keep coming back to them until they do.

Remember: Forgiveness is different than condoning or forgetting. It simply means you are no longer letting the pain from the wrong turn into bitterness and hatred.

Loving ourselves takes work.

Remember: your performance or reception are not tools used to measure your worthiness.

You are loved and lovable. That is a non-negotiable.

May these tools help you believe it!