



How to Show up for Yourself

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If you want to live a good life, then you need to practice self-love, self-acceptance, and self-respect. These are often misunderstood terms. When you love yourself, you do what is best for you. And sometimes what is best for you is not easy. In the book, “The 5 love languages”, the author Gary Chapman talks about having a partner who is abusive. And he says (this is not a direct quote) more or less the following. To be with someone who is abusive is not an act of love, it is an act of treason (treason is his word which I agree with). Love means, I love you too much to allow you to behave so badly. It is not good for you or me that you are abusive. When we talk about self-love we are not talking about self-indulgence or spoiling all the time. We are talking about showing up for yourself. Which often is hard. Below are some points you want to check yourself against.

- If you show up for yourself then you live authentically. Which means you live in a way that is true for you. If you are not living in a way that is true for you, then you cannot love yourself and you are not accepting yourself. You are taking someone else’s version of love and acceptance and making yourself fit their idea of who you should be.
- If you show up for yourself you act with integrity, which means you do what you say you will do. You don’t expect others to do things you do not do. You cannot love yourself if you are not self-disciplined and conscious and deliberate about your words and actions.
- If you show up for yourself, it means you treat yourself with kindness and compassion. You do want to have standards, but you also need to treat yourself with kindness and compassion. It is human to make mistakes. It is difficult to change habits. You are going to do better at life, and be better for other people as well as yourself, if you meet yourself with kindness and compassion.
- When you show up for yourself you protect yourself. Unfortunately, we live in a world where not everyone is kind and decent. There are people who for whatever reason (usually fear, and often greed, underlies most toxic behaviour), will say and do things to hurt you and damage you, including committing criminal acts. If you stand up for yourself then you protect yourself. It is naïve to not do so. You can still be a great human being while protecting yourself. And you need to do it, because the world has a lot of crime and violence present.

- If you show up for yourself, then you honour your body. Listen to what your body is telling you. When you need to take a rest then do so. When your mind is not in a good place do something to heal or find someone to help you. It is incredibly difficult to show up for yourself if your health is poor.
- Showing up for yourself means taking responsibility for your life. This is something we battle with. We love to blame, and we love to justify why we acted in a certain way. However, not taking responsibility makes you a victim. It means you make others responsible for what happens to you. Sometimes they are, but you are responsible for your responses. The more you take responsibility for your actions, including not taking action, the better the quality of life you will have.
- Showing up for yourself means listening to feedback, evaluating it, and learning from it. People who don't love, accept, and respect themselves have a very difficult time accepting feedback or accepting they may have done something wrong. This is another reason why self-esteem is so important. With high self-esteem you have a strong enough sense of worth that you can deal with feedback, even negative and very uncomfortable feedback, and learn from it. If you want to show up for yourself you need to be okay with having the uncomfortable conversations that move you forward. It is usually only with good self-esteem that we can deal with our mistakes and misunderstandings and wrongs, and correct them.
- Showing up for yourself means allowing yourself to feel what you feel. Quite often we grow up being told not to have certain feelings. What you feel is what you feel. You wouldn't say to someone who says they feel hungry, that no, that is not what they are feeling. In the same way all other feelings are real. You don't want to act inappropriately, and allowing yourself to feel what you feel, usually makes it more likely that you won't behave inappropriately. It is denying your feelings that causes them to spill out all over the place.
- When you show up for yourself you realise that your dreams matter and you pursue them. You are who you are, and you do what you know you need to do. If other people don't like your dreams, or don't think you should have those dreams, then that's fine. They don't have to have those dreams. If you do have dreams though, honour yourself by going after them.

Showing up for yourself is not being selfish. It is not making everything about me, me, me. It is being true to yourself. In order to do this you need to know yourself, so the greater your levels of self-awareness the more you can show up for yourself. In fact, showing up for yourself can be a gift to others as well as you. When you show up for yourself, you demonstrate to other people that they can also show up for themselves.