

The quality and hierarchy of questions you ask yourself will affect every area of your life. They also form part of your mind chatter and can often be unhelpful and disempowering. On the other hand asking yourself quality questions provides real understanding and can, for example, be the catalyst for taking action to move from self-loathing to self-love. If this resonates with you, take a moment to imagine how that could change your life.

You genuinely have to want to take this journey though as it's not easy, however your future self will thank you if you do.

If you're really want to know, rather than just having the theories and concepts, what it takes to break free from past stories or events in your life that still disempower you now, then this is for you. It's about understanding the things that hold you back. This could be procrastination, excuses, a lack of self-worth, belief or value. What it isn't is education, as for most of us we have access to resources that answer everything.

If at the heart of it all you don't think you are enough, and you don't deal with this, then nothing will ever be enough, no amount of solutions, money, praise from others or education.

This raises the question of "If you move away from the negative self-talk, criticism, self-doubt, fear and anxiety where do you end up?" The answer, self-love. Do not hear this as being "perfect", whatever that may mean to you. Trust me no-one, and I mean no-one, has it all together and sorted. Everyone has their negative voice. Some people though have learnt how to master it, not get rid of it, and do the things, and lead the life, they want to.

### **So what does self-love look like?**

Here are a few general examples, however please also take time to consider and identify ones that are meaningful to you.

- ❖ You keep the promises you make with yourself
- ❖ You trust yourself
- ❖ You follow through on what you say
- ❖ You say what you mean and mean what you will say
- ❖ You honour commitments to others easily and effortlessly, it's not even a thing it's not an obligation it's just part of love
- ❖ You work with and through others and compliment them
- ❖ You don't diminish anybody or any situation, in fact you expand them

Real self-love doesn't include indulgence in the negative self-talk, self-sabotaging or constant worrying whilst smiling and pretending everything is "awesome", hiding at home keeping it small and safe, blaming everyone else or the constant justification of why things are as they are. Instead it gives genuine internal certainty. You know the good, the bad and the ugly of yourself and you are still willing to genuinely acknowledge, accept and love every aspect so you can break free from what has been holding you back.

Self-love is also forgiving yourself and others. For many this can be a lot to turn around in order to live their truth. But many have done it. So, are you willing to take responsibility for your responses, your emotions, your thoughts, for pausing before you feed the drama and for what you articulate?

You've got to be courageous to fall in love with yourself, to give up on the drama and instead to invest in having an extraordinary life. The bravest and most heroic thing anyone of us can do is invest in being our fullest potential.

This does not happen overnight, it takes time and effort to undo the damage we've already done.

Maybe you have a really good reason to be aggrieved, hurt and wounded. Perhaps you were a victim and have real evidence for this. Be compassionate and kind with yourself. Also, remember you do not have to take responsibility for other people's behaviour. It lacks humanity to think you attracted horrific things into your life, you are not responsible for everything. I truly believe that bad things happen to good people and good things happen to bad people. These events need subtlety, compassion and love when being dealt with.

This is especially true when you don't have a say, eg as a child, and you are under the rules of adults. You are not responsible. What you are responsible for is how you respond and what you do with it once you are an adult. You didn't choose what happened to you as a child. However the moment you become an adult, and you continue with the role of the child, you need to do some work.

This is great news as it means you have the power to shift the frame, the references, the way you are perceiving, to learn the skills to accept it, to still love yourself and to move on. All the reasons and blame in the world are not going to make you feel awesome and fall in love with yourself. I know you've tried and I know it hasn't worked.

You now know there is a better way, however how much do you want self-love? Remember you can know better and not do better.

A reminder that a compassionate, non-judgemental approach combined with a sense of humour are key as you learn to manage your mind and ask great questions of yourself.

First though you need to take;

❖ **Responsibility**

Make and commit to the decision to take this journey. Ask yourself the questions;

- *“Am I willing to move out of my current space?”*
- *“Am I done with blaming others?”*
- *“Am I ready to own what I want?”*
- *“Is what I’m currently doing working? If not then it’s time for me to change”*
- *“Am I prepared to do the work to create the transformation I want?”*
- *“Am I willing to face the consequences of the worst happening?”*

Next;

❖ **Acknowledge**

Unload all the rubbish you carry around with you. All that hidden and toxic shame which every person and family has. Those things which take so much energy to cover up and hide. Perhaps this could be;

- feelings of not being loved enough as a child or
- not being given enough attention or
- being made to feel insignificant or
- having a sense of shame or
- of abandonment or
- of neglect or
- being overly critical of others or
- aggressive or
- dramatic or
- catastrophizing everything
- feelings of not being smart enough or
- not worth enough or
- being fearful of embarrassment
- or of being ridiculed

Know that these things can make you sick, anxious and sometimes depressed, even if you don’t know the reasons why they are with you.

If you think they aren’t there, but equally you are not experiencing the life or results or abundance you say you want, then they really are.

❖ **Learn to love it all**

Are you, or is anyone else, perfect? No, everyone has flaws, they really are just different aspects of being human. If you only love the bits that look good you are still in toxicity. Learn to embrace and accept that sometimes you need reassurance, or that you can be dark and sad. Learn not to be indulgent or dramatic, instead learn to touch and acknowledge your feelings.

Remember you may have the wrong meaning of what being perfect is, it's actually being human. You are already perfect, which includes all of your flaws. If you are waiting for all the flaws to go away before you act, you'll never act.

Accept and embrace what is, what will be and what was.

So here are some techniques to master that unhelpful and disempowering self-talk. Firstly;

- ❖ **Recognise** that you have this going on. Then ask yourself the questions *"If your best friend spoke to you the way you do, would you keep them as a friend?"*
- ❖ **Articulate the positive** when you are being disempowering say *"I am amazing", "I am the best" or "I am awesome"*. Have your phrase everywhere, so you can always see it and come across it.

You will start arguing with your disempowering self when you say your phrase. When this happens try changing the disempowering voice eg give it a comedy accent. Your voice of reason on the other hand has command, control, compassion and certainty. You could also picture each as a character and have one on each shoulder as they argue with each other.

Just imagine the following conversation;

Commanding voice : *"I'm going to eat healthily"*  
Squeaky voice : *"You really think you can eat healthy?"*  
Commanding voice : *"Well I don't know. Maybe I will and maybe I won't, nevertheless I'm willing to give it a go, but thank you for keeping me safe. I am amazing!"*

- ❖ **Take small sweet steps** towards what you can do next. These need to be things that don't generate overwhelming disempowering thoughts eg replace *"I'm going to be thin in two months time"* with *"I'm going to release 150g of body fat this week"*.

Creep up on that disempowering part of yourself by surrounding yourself with things that are important to you. This could be love, family, moving in the direction of your dreams, self-care or being who you admire. Have notes, messages and images around your home, in the books you read, the doors you open and where you sit.

Manage your external environment, as well as your internal environment, to support your decision to move away from what you no longer want to be about. Set yourself up for success rather than sabotage.

Honour your life, on your terms, purposefully with what gives it wonderful meaning to you, everyday.

Your brain, and physiology, responds to the questions you ask yourself. Think about that for a moment and what you are feeding yourself with. Perhaps you are asking;

**Horrible questions** such as;

- ❖ *“Why me?”*
- ❖ *“Why does this always happen to me?”*
- ❖ *“Why aren’t I good enough?”*
- ❖ *“What if they judge me?”*
- ❖ *“Why am I the size I am?”*
- ❖ *“Why don’t I do what I say I’m going to do?”*
- ❖ *“What’s my excuse?”*
- ❖ *“Why don’t I do what I need to do?”*
- ❖ *“Why don’t I break free?”*

The quality of questions determines the quality of your life. You will answer yourself, however you may not always like the responses. However the more you listen to the answer the more you are serving your higher self, your true self, your future self, the self you are going to fall in love with.

Always start with the **little questions** as these create a solid foundation. Take care of the little things first, if you don’t it is a very graceful and beautiful way to fill yourself up with more toxic rubbish.

Instead ask yourself;

- ❖ *“Shall I eat healthily today?”*
- ❖ *“Shall I read a book that nurtures my soul today?”*
- ❖ *“Shall I do appropriate exercise today?”*
- ❖ *“Shall I have a positive conversation today?”*

When you are good at this, and I mean really good at this, it is then time to move onto the **higher questions**. You have to have earned these questions though as they really matter. If you ask too early you may come up with wonderful and beautiful answers, but not act on them. Then you start feeling really bad, you stay on the couch, all the excuses happen again and you don’t do anything that empowers you.

If you ask the big questions of yourself you **MUST** act on the answer. Examples could include;

- ❖ *“What would my higher-self want for me right now?”*
- ❖ *“What would love do right now?”*
- ❖ *“If I didn’t have to succeed, and the learning was enough, what would I do?”*
- ❖ *“If it was OK to feel uncertain and still do it, what would I do?”*

If you get a *“I don’t know”*, relax, mindfully stretch and yawn and ask yourself the question *“But if I did know, what would the answer be?”*. Please know that it is often fear of finding the answer that can make it illusive.

You may feel that at this stage you don't have the words for the answers. If this is true for you then have a nourishing book, sayings, quotes or cards with you when you ask the question. Then open the book etc and your answer is what you read. Which you then need to take action on.

Consider for a moment what your life is going to be like if you continue to turn up with yesterday's baggage, and you continue to do things the way you have been. Perhaps forever hoping and wishing or feeling frustrated and disappointed. Remember you get who you are. What do I mean by that? Your life is a reflection of who you are being. You get the life you want. What is outside of you is a match for what is inside of you. This is challenging, your ego will not like this message.

My intent here is not to offend you by saying this. So, put your ego to the side and think about this for a moment without any drama or justification. Think about all those big and little decisions you've made in the past which have brought you to where you are now. Have you ever taken the easy option so as not to upset someone else? That moment when you didn't say "No" to what you were tolerating. Have you ever decided not to do something because it felt too hard to do? Let these questions and answers sit and settle with you without blame, shame, guilt, justification or judgement.

Now consider the alternative of having a life by design, created with purpose, consciously and with thought. A life-time of discovering new layers of who you are and your potential.

We are the privileged, we are so fortunate with all of the resources and opportunities around us. Once we get on the path to self-discovery, and to responsibility and accountability, we then take action and you keep on that path. We are relentless in finding the answers, the skill, the strategies, the people, the knowledge, the tactics and the timelines. Which way would you choose?