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Ana Rosario: “I Believe in Self-Love”

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I Believe in Self-Love

by Ana Rosario

Self-love is a concept that is relatively new to me. While self-love is something that exists in all human beings, it is not something we are often taught to prioritize. Mainly out of fear of being perceived as arrogant or conceited. Although, I feel the concept of self-love is far from either of those things. Personally, in this modern world, I believe self-love is a crucial part of survival and self-preservation.

Self-love is a concept that I have recently begun to prioritize. I first started to notice this concept through things that other people have told me. Statements like “do it for yourself, not because society wants you to” and other phrases of this nature. These statements came from classmates, family members, and especially the media. In the last four to five years, I’ve seen this concept become more and more popular through social media.

For example, on Instagram, I’ve seen models, influencers, other celebrities, writers, doctors, financial specialists, and more, speak on the topic of self-love. Sometimes this comes in the form of an aesthetically pleasing post, a motivational video, or simply a few words. And as someone with a relatively young mind, you can’t help but ask: why is self-love so important? My answer to this is that, in this world, self-love is not only an act of survival, but also one of rebellion against the many lies that society has led us to believe.

As a child, I was bullied quite frequently through the first few years of elementary school. Specifically, due to my weight. I felt terrible and sometimes pretended to be sick so that I would be sent home. However, it was not long before my mother found out I was pretending. Instead of being angry, she told me that I had no reason to not speak up, and most importantly, to feel bad about myself. She taught me that, oftentimes, people wish to make others feel bad because they, themselves, do too.

In addition, she has always taught me to always have pride in myself. Not because I am the best person ever, but because everyone is unique in their own specific way. That diversity, itself, is extremely valuable. As cliché as it may sound, through experiences like this, I’ve learned about self-love.

I've also learned that while the media can teach you many things, it can also feed you subtle doses of poison. So subtle, you have no idea you've even consumed it. Our global society, with help of the media, has painted a picture of how the average person should live, look like, be, and so forth. However, that picture becomes more and more outdated with every passing day. If there is a single thing that I've constantly learned throughout my life, is that it is always a good idea to do what is best for you. Doing what you are expected to do, or what you've been taught, is not always what works best. As times change, so must we.

Self-love, to me, is that grace, hope, and perseverance that allows us to adapt to that change. It's the idea that says you don't have to be or look like anyone else, and it is beyond skin deep. From my experience, self-love works in all areas of life and only improves them. However, it is a daily practice that requires patience and acceptance. It most certainly isn't always easy to practice, as there will always be flaws and imperfections to point out.

And, of course, it is a practice that continues throughout one's lifespan. Although, practicing self-love can be simple, especially on those difficult days. I practice this by cooking myself a warm nutritious meal, going out for a walk to decompress, doing my makeup, or simply just taking a break from daily responsibilities. Sometimes, self-love can even be getting out of bed, or running errands that have been put off for a while. Self-love is a beautifully rebellious act of self-preservation and survival. This I believe.

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