

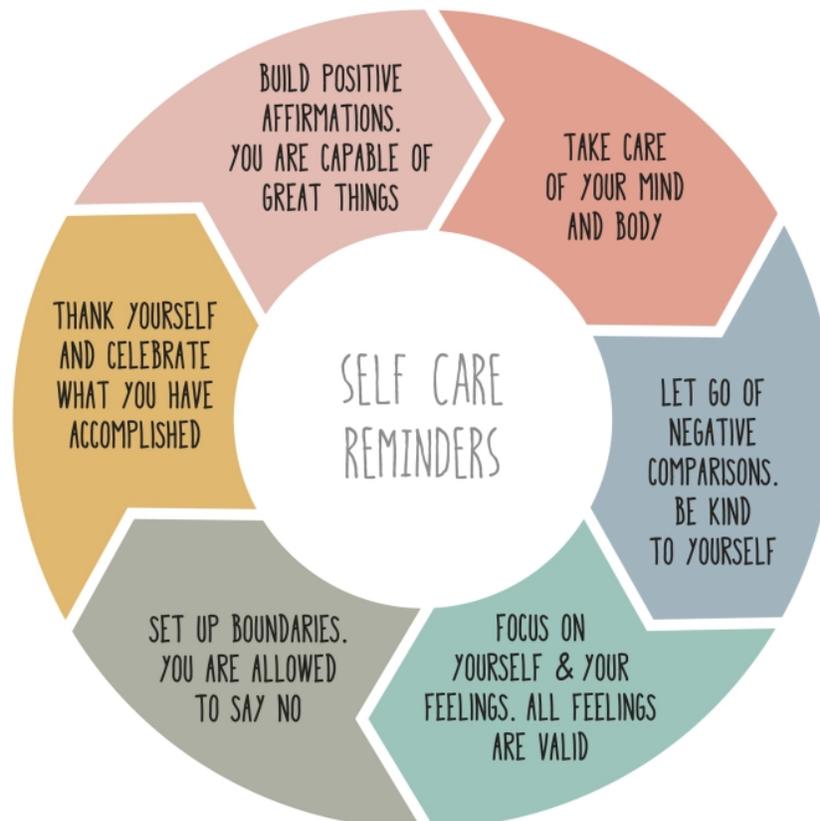
Hello Mindfulness Community.

Included here for you is the Cycle of Self-Love as well as the poems I shared during our half-day retreat of Love.

Please use these to remind yourselves of the importance of heart – both inside and out.

Love, Cassie

CYCLE OF **SELF-LOVE**



Belonging by Rosemary Wahtola Trommer

And if it's true we are alone,
we are alone together,
the way blades of grass
are alone, but exist as a field.
Sometimes I feel it,
the green fuse that ignites us,
the wild thrum that unites us,
an inner hum that reminds us
of our shared humanity.
Just as thirty-five trillion
red blood cells join in one body
to become one blood.
Just as one hundred thirty-six thousand
notes make up one symphony.
Alone as we are, our small voices
weave into the one big conversation.
Our actions are essential
to the one infinite story of what it is
to be alive. When we feel alone,
we belong to the grand communion
of those who sometimes feel alone—
we are the dust, the dust that hopes,
a rising of dust, a thrill of dust,
the dust that dances in the light
with all other dust, the dust
that makes the world.

Today by Mary Oliver

Today I'm flying low and I'm
not saying a word
I'm letting all the voodooes of ambition sleep.

The world goes on as it must,
the bees in the garden rumbling a little,
the fish leaping, the gnats getting eaten.
And so forth.

But I'm taking the day off.
Quiet as a feather.
I hardly move though really I'm traveling
a terrific distance.

Stillness. One of the doors
into the temple.

Instructions by Rudy Francisco

gather
your mistakes,

rinse them with
honesty and self
reflection,

let dry until you
can see every choice
and the regret
becomes brittle

cover the
entire surface
in forgiveness.

remind yourself that
you are human

and this too
is a gift

Priceless Gifts by Anna Swir

An empty day without events.
And that is why
it grew immense
as space. And suddenly
happiness of being
entered me.

I heard
in my heartbeat
the birth of time
and each instant of life
one after the other
came rushing in
like priceless gifts.

Hold Out Your Hand by Julia Fehrenbacher

Let's forget the world for a while

fall back and back
into the hush and holy
of now

are you listening? This breath
invites you
to write the first word

of your new story

your new story begins with this:

You matter.

You are needed — empty

and naked

willing to say yes

and yes and yes.

Do you see

the sun shines, day after day

whether you have faith

or not

the sparrows continue

to sing their song

even when you forget to sing

yours

stop asking: Am I good enough?

Ask only: Am I showing up with love?

Life is not a straight line

it's a downpour of gifts, so please —

hold out your hand

How to Open Your Heart by Jeff Foster

Do not *try* to open your heart.

That would be a subtle movement of aggression toward your immediate embodied experience. Never tell a closed heart to open; it will shut more tightly to protect itself, feeling your resistance and disapproval. A heart unfurls only when conditions are right; your demand for openness invites closure. This is the supreme intelligence of the heart.

Instead, bow to the heart in its current state. If it's closed, let it be closed; sanctify the closure. Make it safe; safe even to feel unsafe.

Trust that when the heart is ready, and not a moment before, it will open, like a flower in the warmth of the sun. There is no rush for the heart.

Trust the opening and the closing, too, the expansion and contraction; this is the heart's way of breathing: *safe, unsafe, safe, unsafe*; the beautiful fragility of being human, and all held in the most perfect love.

Small Kindnesses by Danish Lameris

I've been thinking about the way, when you walk down a crowded aisle, people pull in their legs to let you by. Or how strangers still say "bless you" when someone sneezes, a leftover from the Bubonic plague. "Don't die," we are saying. And sometimes, when you spill lemons from your grocery bag, someone else will help you pick them up. Mostly, we don't want to harm each other.

We want to be handed our cup of coffee hot, and to say thank you to the person handing it. To smile at them and for them to smile back. For the waitress to call us honey when she sets down the bowl of clam chowder, and for the driver in the red pick-up truck to let us pass.

We have so little of each other, now. So far from tribe and fire. Only these brief moments of exchange.

What if they are the true dwelling of the holy, these fleeting temples we make together when we say, "Here, have my seat," "Go ahead—you first," "I like your hat."

There is a Quiet Light by John O'Donohue

There is a quiet light that shines in every heart.
It draws no attention to itself, though it is always
secretly there.

It is what illuminates our minds to see beauty,
our desire to seek possibility, and our hearts to love
life.

Without this subtle quickening, our days would be
empty
and wearisome, and no horizon would ever awaken
our longing.

Our passion for life is quietly sustained from
somewhere in us
that is welded to the energy and excitement of life.
This shy inner light is what enables us to recognize
and receive
our very presence here as blessing.

We enter the world as strangers who all at once
become heirs to a harvest of memory, spirit, and
dream that has
long preceded us and will now enfold, nourish, and
sustain us.

The gift of the world is our first blessing.

A Blessing by John O'Donohue

May you awaken to the mystery of being here and enter the quiet immensity of your own presence.
May you have joy and peace in the temple of your senses.

May you receive great encouragement when new frontiers beckon.

May you respond to the call of your gift and find the courage to follow its path.

May the flame of anger free you from falsity.

May warmth of heart keep your presence aflame and may anxiety never linger about you.

May your outer dignity mirror an inner dignity of soul.

May you take time to celebrate the quiet miracles that seek no attention.

May you be consoled in the secret symmetry of your soul.

May you experience each day as a sacred gift woven around the heart of wonder.