

A.M.D.G.

Love of Self Reflection of Consciousness SCRIPT

"Loving yourself...does not mean being self-absorbed, it means welcoming yourself as the most honored guest in your own heart." —Margo Anand

Our ability to love and be loved is all that really matters. We are born into the arms of loving parents and we hope to die with our loved ones around us. We feel that Love is the ultimate building block.

Hence, self-love is the ultimate way to becoming a fully healed and integrated person. **Only by loving yourself first can you love another person unconditionally.**

It has nothing to do with arrogance or narcissism. A self-loving person is conscientious of their "shadow side" and does not turn a blind eye on destructive patterns of behaviour. Margo Anand says, *"Loving yourself...does not mean being self-absorbed, it means welcoming yourself as the most honored guest in your own heart."*

Ironically, the quickest way to find and accept your true self is to do nothing at all, to simply allow yourself to BE. Yet practising contemplative silence is also one of the hardest things to do in our modern world that is full of distractions. However, do not underestimate the power of habit, because what you do everyday will change who you are. Creating healthy, positive, daily habits and doing them is fundamental to becoming a whole and integrated person. One such habit is this Examen of Self-Love.

Now become still, in mind and in movement. Turn down the volume on random thoughts and preoccupations. Allow yourself to just BE. Become aware of your breathing. Feel your in-breath. Feel your out-breath. Let your breath flow. Now open your mind and your heart to this Examen asking God to reveal, in any special way, ALL the qualities that make you truly you; allowing yourself to look honestly and openly of who you are with all your strength and weaknesses.

Knowing that you are a beloved child of God.

Begin with silently asking,
"God, how do you see me right now?"

Relish this insight for a while, observe it carefully. Whatever shows up, stay in prayerful imagination, allowing all feelings to dwell up within.

Now watch as more attributes start to float by and try to feel thankful for, like my ability to organise – "thank you, God"; my impatience – "thank you, God"; the love I feel for my family – "thank you, God"; ...

You have given thanks to God for so many things that make you uniquely you, your bright sides and your "shadows". Look closer into yourself. Allow anything that bothers yourself to appear and then ask for help: "God can you help me with what really bothers me about myself?"

Whatever shows up, stay accepting and prayerful.

Finally, ask God to help you with building one daily habit that allows you to just BE (the beloved child of God). It could be a quiet, digital free moment; a prayer or loving-kindnes meditation; a walk in nature or run in the park, etc.

One such habit is finding a quiet moment, placing one hand over your heart and repeating the following mantra three times: "I am beautiful. I am made in the image of God." x3

To close this Examen practice we

- a) pray the Our Father OR
- b) place our hands in prayer on our forehead and then our heart. "Amen".

By Elisabeth Clarke