

# A HIGHER PERSPECTIVE ON LIVING

## “BEYOND BUBBLE BATHS”

BY ROYCE MORALES

Does self-care mean bubble baths, bonbons and binging? Is it a euphemism for self-indulgence, an excuse for selfishness or laziness, feeding the ego? Perhaps it goes deeper.

The term *self-care* has been around for a while, but it was reborn during these tricky times. Here's how I define self-care: *Doing what you intuitively sense will help bring balance and harmony to all aspects of your life—body, mind, emotion and spirit--to lead you toward overall well-being, supporting your true purpose in being alive.*

*Intuitively sense* is the key, rather than forcing yourself to do something because it is *supposed* to be good for you. Like pushing yourself to take “me time” when you actually *want* to work; eating ice cream when craving vegies; or forcing social interactions when you just ‘*vant to be alone.*’

You may have recently discovered self-care while living through the pandemic. Did you learn to give yourself a much-needed screen time break? Permit a mid-day snuggling session with your dog/cat/child/spouse? Take up that hobby you were putting off until retirement? Allow a driveway moment, breathing deeply before going through the front door?

The list of self-care activities is mind-boggling, with no one-size-fits-all. They always sound nice, soothing and supportive, but, with anything done from an external place, they work temporarily. Without recognizing and clearing those self-sabotaging programmed beliefs, they are as fleeting as a nice meal – the pleasure lasts until the dishes need washing.

Programmed beliefs are those limiting thoughts that pop in when you are about to try something new. Or the fear that ties your tongue when you want to be vulnerable. Or your concerns when meeting someone new, wondering how they are judging you.

Those thoughts are often lodged in your subconscious mind and take some digging to discover. Accessing the more surface-level beliefs are a bit easier with mindful attention.

No amount of exercise, snazzy outfits, expensive cars or glamorous makeup will change those underlying thoughts. The fiercest ones are believing you don't deserve. No pricey spa treatments, salary raises, positive thinking or assertiveness will change that programmed notion. Gotta get to the roots and pull those bad boys up.

Have you noticed how rapidly lottery winners' money dissipates? How common it is that major league athletes after receiving raises often sabotage their careers in some way? Or famous actors that slip into addictiveness and scandal?

Coincidence? I think not. There is part of us that subconsciously sets out to destroy whatever we receive if it's more than we believe we deserve.

Changing your negative beliefs about yourself, getting to the origins of why you have those notions, is the only form of self-care that actually reduces stress, overwhelm, and anxiety. The joke is, resolving those beliefs can release the need for self-care in the first place!

Here are some *beyond the bubble bath* suggestions for self-care:

**1. Determine what will truly support you.** Remind yourself that turning self-care into a should turns it into a burden, a dreaded chore. Like, the difference between I *should* go to the gym VS I *get to* go to the gym.

**2. Prioritize self.** Bumping yourself down to the bottom of your priority list happens far too easily, especially when others depend on you. Additionally, you spiritually minded folks probably start reciting the maxim "*I am here to serve.*" But deserving to serve *yourself* is equally important.

Think of yourself as a garden. Without air, sun, dirt and water, ignoring the onslaught of weeds and munching insects, it's bound to shrivel. Deserve to receive what nourishes your garden and then serve others from the bountiful harvest that results. Having more YOU to gift the world is what true self-care is about.

**3. Be radically truthful.** Tune in with yourself and discover your true self-care motives. Are they pure, or is your ego craving something? Are you avoiding or covering up fear justifying your choice to soak in a tub? Why are you really saying no? Or yes?

**4. Honor yourself.** There are times for pushing yourself, times to rest and times to go inside and connect. Make sure you are not excusing lack of meaningful progress toward your goals and dreams by using self-care excuses. Discern between healthy and unhealthy pushes.

A healthy push is a natural part of the creative process. It's like going for a run, getting tired, but pushing yourself with a final burst of energy to reach the finish line. What an amazing feeling to go beyond that place where you want to give up. It truly expands you.

An unhealthy push is when you are moving beyond what feels right due to some underlying fear. Are you trying to prove you are good enough,

compensating for feeling like a failure or a fraud? Needing approval from others? Those unhealthy pushes come at the expense of yourself and can cause burn outs and health crisis. Plus, they generally don't get the desired results.

- 5. Trust your inner seasons.** Continuing with my garden analogy, we all have "inner seasons," times that just feel right for doing and not doing certain things. Are you in fall, when plants drop their leaves and appear dead? Winter when roots grow deep from the nourishing rain and snow? Spring when everything bounces back with a flourish? Or the slow, restful fade during summer that starts the cycle again?

Honor the season you are in, but don't use it as an excuse to not follow your dreams. Trying to stay balanced, not over-extending, could really be camouflaged justifications for self-limiting, programmed fears.

- 6. Face your fears.** Doing things from an inspired place aligned with your inner self generally feels energizing, like a natural high. Being in that flow, you may not even feel the need to rest. If you're feeling struggle, resistance, or downright resentment about what you're doing, it could be a message that this is not the right direction for you.

However, if it's just FEAR (False Evidence Appearing Real), encourage yourself to push past that inner barrier and get to the finish line. Hitting that place where you always hold back, facing fears head-on and not obeying them, inspires tremendous transformation and growth. That makes it easier and clearer the next time. And the next.

Keep in mind that true self-care is creating a life that fully supports you so that you don't need to get away from it. You can't fake that with bubble baths.

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As a transformational facilitator, Royce Morales helps people resolve the origins of subconscious, self-sabotaging fears, for true and permanent self-care. Reach out to her at [www.RoyceMorales.com](http://www.RoyceMorales.com).

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