



SHAUN PROULX

SPIRIT & THE CITY

The greatest love of all

Many of us live under a false premise that our most important relationship in life is with our partner, our children, family, dear friends, or even work.

The most important relationship is the one between you and you.

Your relationship with you sets the tone for every other relationship you have, with your mate, kids, family and friends. It is the backbone relationship you have with the universe (under which unfolds personal interactions, experiences, and so on).

I love something Melissa Etheridge said to me years ago: "The strongest, most powerful thing you can do in your country, in your town, on your street, in your family, is to love yourself. And when you hold onto that, you will affect your family, your town, your country with a vibration that then moves out and changes the world."

Want to reset the relationship between you AND you? Here are simple, powerful ideas that work fast and last:

- **Be conscious about the story you tell yourself about you and your life.**

The thoughts you think about yourself attract the next thought you think and the next, and that's how you create the reality of who you are and the life you lead. What's on loop in your head? What do you declare aloud, or on social media? Edit old stories that don't serve you. "I like the idea of more ease and flow in my life" is a reframe I'm currently using as I manage a demanding career while journeying through an unexpected, painful end of marriage. (You don't want to hear my old story on that one.)

- **Be loyal to yourself.** Stop calling people who don't call you. Stop using the word 'should' regarding yourself. Stop comparing yourself to others; you're irreplaceable. Don't make time for people who don't for you, or think of people who never think of

you. Betrayals of self are toxic, and fester within as time goes on.

- **Stop being possessive about things you don't desire.** ie: "my cancer," "my awful boss," or "my fat ass," don't own what you don't want. And know that what you choose to say after "I am" is a powerful choice. Instead of "I am broke," for example, try, "I am loving the idea of better finances."

- **Please yourself with your mind.** Displeasing yourself feels awful — not because it's true, but because it's bogus to who you truly are, which is a genius, wonderful person. So congratulate yourself often — on big things and little things. Write, "There is so much good that wants me" on paper and tape it on your bathroom mirror so it is the first cue about you that you receive each day.

- **Please yourself with your actions.** Buy yourself flowers, take yourself on a date. Last year I mailed a note from the Dominican Republic, where I was writing a book, to my home here in Toronto. The note said: "Congratulations on your bestseller." I have not opened the envelope yet, or finished the book, but it's there in my office and when I spot it — almost daily — I feel a visceral boost in confidence, from me to me about myself, and my work.

- **Be gentle with yourself.** Speak to and of yourself as your best friend would. Love the feeling of your own complexity. Let yourself off the hook more. It doesn't matter who you used to be, it matters who you've become.

Investing in your relationship with yourself pays dividends that will quickly surprise and delight you. You will never regret having been kind to yourself, this I guarantee.

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