

10 WAYS TO ROMANCE YOURSELF

With Valentine's Day coming up, thoughts are turning to love and romance. The men are getting cold sweats and the women are getting entitled. The candy and trinkets have been on the shelves since the day after Christmas. But there is another way to approach this celebration of love and giving – romance yourself!

It doesn't matter if you have a partner or not. You don't need to depend on another person for you to feel loved, whole and cherished. In fact, since the main person in your life is YOU, ideally you should be taking steps to honor and respect yourself every day. The following are 10 ways to do this:

1. Be generous to yourself materially. Yes, that means buying something just for you! Don't wait for someone else to purchase something for you. If you have had your eye on that gorgeous set of earrings, then buy them! You, my dear, are worth it. He can buy you the matching necklace.
2. Be generous to yourself with time. Instead of running around all day in a frenzy of activity for your job, family, school or whatever else you give your time to, take some time for you. Whether it be a day off of work, an hour long soak in the tub or ½ day curled up in a good book, give yourself permission to enjoy some down time.
3. Forgive yourself. What's done is done, and your expectations for yourself are probably higher than anything you'd ever ask of someone else. Whatever you feel you have done "wrong," learn from it and forgive yourself. You'd do the same for another person, so why not for you?
4. Let go. This goes hand in hand with forgiveness. If you find that you are carrying around anger or a grudge toward someone else, why not just let it go? The only person you are hurting is yourself – and that doesn't make much sense, does it?
5. Take care of your body. It is good to you, carrying you around and allowing you to get on with your life. Make sure you nourish it with healthy food once in a while, take supplements and get some exercise. Your body will thank you!
6. Eliminate the word, "should." Every "should" statement is laden with unnecessary guilt. If you say that you "should" do something, that means that someone else

- expects you to, perhaps even yourSelf. If your “should” is something that you honestly don’t want to do, then don’t do it. You always have a choice.
7. Affirm yourSelf. You’re good enough, you’re smart enough, and doggone it, people like you! As Stuart Smalley from Saturday Night Live knew, telling yourSelf wonderful things about yourSelf makes you feel great! If you hear something enough, you will begin to believe it. So why not make sure that you are hearing the good stuff?
 8. Pamper yourSelf. Go for a manicure, a pedicure, a massage or whatever else makes you feel special. After all, you ARE special and you deserve these things!
 9. Support yourSelf. People need people. Do you have a circle of friends that you can talk to? If so, spend some time with them. If not, brainstorm about how you can meet other women. Research has shown that women who have a close circle of friends feel more positive on a day-to-day basis.
 10. Replenish yourSelf. Spend some quiet time in prayer, meditation, walking in nature or whatever makes you feel connected to a Higher Power. Quieting your mind and connecting with something or someone bigger than you are can bring about an intense sense of inner peace.

Remember, Valentine’s Day is not the only time you can do these things! In fact doing them on a regular basis will improve your whole Self – physical, emotional and spiritual. *You* are the only one that you can totally depend on...and you’re worth it!