

Love Yourself, Love Others: The Key to Healthy Relationships

FACILITATION GUIDE

Description: Have you ever considered how self-love influences all other relationships in your life? This program dives into the vital role self-love plays in fostering healthy relationships. Participants will uncover why self-love can be challenging yet incredibly rewarding. Through a guided activity, participants will reflect on the strengths and qualities of those around them while also being inspired to recognize and appreciate their own attributes.

Learning Objectives:

- Participants will compare how they see and speak about others vs. how they see and speak about themselves (Self-awareness)
- Participants will analyze the challenges of self-love (Intention and self-direction)
- Participants will reflect on the importance of self-love for their relationships (Self-awareness)
- Participants will practice expressing self-love (Comfort with vulnerability)

Facilitator: VP philanthropy, VP membership programming, chapter president, advisor, a member of the organization with a special or active interest in healthy relationships, or a fraternity or sorority life advisor

Audience: This program can be used with both collegiate and alumnae chapters, as well as with a larger Panhellenic community.

Space: Any room that can comfortably seat participants and gives them space to write on a card.

Duration: 40 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Valentine's Day cards provided on page 8. *Do note, if you are a fraternity and sorority advisor adapting this to your Panhellenic community, you may consider utilizing a different, more generic Valentine's Day card.*
- Writing utensils for each participant

Preparation: Print and cut enough Valentine's Day cards **for each participant to have two**. You may pass these out when participants arrive or prep them at each table or desk beforehand. You may also consider playing a fun, upbeat playlist with love songs as participants arrive.

Follow-up: Be sure that every facilitator and participant of this program completes the Programs with Purpose Feedback survey!

It is very important that we receive feedback for each of our Alpha Chi Omega programs in order to continue to improve our resources. This survey is designed to lead the facilitator and participant to questions relevant to their own experience, so the same link can be used for both parties.

Survey link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/D9BSHRS>

Note: In the left column of the facilitation guide below, the number to the left is the amount of time the facilitator will spend on that section of the program. The number on the right is the amount of time that has currently elapsed in the entire program.

FACILITATION GUIDE

<p>10/10</p>	<p>INTRODUCTION</p> <p><i>Facilitator should hand every participant two fillable Valentine’s Day cards (can do as they walk in or have them prepared at tables).</i></p> <p><i>Facilitator should introduce themselves and the reason they’re facilitating (e.g. celebrating Healthy Relationships Week, as a Galentine’s event or sisterhood activity, etc.)</i></p> <p>To get us started today, everyone should have two Valentine’s Day cards. I want you all to take one and fill it out for someone—this could be a sister, a friend, a significant other, whomever! This can include an expression of your love or appreciation for that person or a list of why you admire them. Hang on to the other card for now.</p> <p><i>Give participants 5 minutes to fill out their Valentine’s Day card. Once that time is up, bring the group back together.</i></p> <p>Does anyone want to share who they wrote their card for, why they chose that person and, if you feel comfortable, what you wrote in the card?</p> <p><i>Allow three to four participants to share. Thank them for sharing.</i></p> <p>As we’ve seen through our activity, when we think about relationships, we often think about romantic relationships, friendships and maybe our familial relationships. We envision the love we share with a partner, the bond and support of our friends and sisters, and the comfort we find in our families. While these connections are undeniably important, today, we’re shifting the spotlight to perhaps the most important relationship of all ... the one we have with ourselves!</p> <p>Our relationship with ourselves is the foundation of all the other relationships in our lives. Think of the oxygen mask theory! Flight</p>
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	<p>attendants always instruct passengers to put on their own oxygen mask first ensuring they can assist others. Similarly, when we prioritize self-love and self-care, we become better equipped to nurture and strengthen our connection with others, creating more meaningful relationships.</p>
<p>5/15</p>	<p>WHY IS IT HARD TO LOVE OURSELVES FIRST?</p> <p>Now that we've acknowledged self-love as the foundation for our other relationships, let's talk about why it sometimes feels challenging to love ourselves first. Despite its importance, many of us aren't taught how to cultivate a healthy, positive and loving relationship with ourselves.</p> <p>Why do you feel it can be hard to love yourself first?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are our harshest critics! We tend to focus on our flaws more than we celebrate our strengths. Imagine if we treated our friends the way we sometimes treat ourselves. Could you imagine having highlighted their mistakes or flaws in their Valentine's Day card rather than gushing with praise and appreciation for them? • Societal influence also makes it challenging to love ourselves better. When we are seeing messages of how we "should" look or act, or what it means to be "successful" and we don't meet those unrealistic standards, it can make us feel inadequate. • It's also important to consider how past relationships can play a role in our self-love ability. Negative experiences or relationships can leave lingering, unwanted feelings of self-doubt. <p>While I wish self-love were easily achieved overnight, it's a continuously evolving journey. What's important to remember though is that because it's a journey that can ebb and flow, you may never become a self-love expert. This is OK! You don't need to be a self-love expert to deserve good and healthy love in other relationships.</p>

10/25

THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-LOVE

So, how important is self-love to our other relationships? Consider this: when we struggle to value or show compassion for ourselves, it can be difficult to believe that others genuinely see and appreciate those qualities in us. That mindset and lack of self-love can create barriers to forming strong, healthy connections with others. So back to our original question, how crucial is self-love to creating healthy relationships?

- For starters, self-love can enhance our emotional regulation. A study done at UT Austin examined self-compassion and self-esteem. Self-compassion was described as how a person treats oneself with kindness, recognizing one's shared humility and being mindful when considering negative aspects of oneself. They found that self-compassion predicted more stable feelings of self-worth than self-esteem did, and further that self-compassion gives us a healthier "self-stance." By having a healthier "self-stance" and recognizing our own needs and desires, we are more likely to communicate those to a partner with kindness and patience. This emotional stability and self-awareness foster healthier, more supportive relationships.
- Second, self-love improves relationship satisfaction. In another study, they found that individuals with a higher level of self-love and self-esteem report greater relationship satisfaction. This is in part because self-love fosters a sense of confidence in people. When we love ourselves better, we're less likely to seek validation or approval from others, which can reduce a constant need for reassurance and promote a more balanced relationship.
- Third, self-love can help us set healthy boundaries in our relationships. When we understand and respect ourselves, we are more confident in recognizing and upholding our boundaries. This level of self-awareness also enables us to communicate our limits and needs.

	<p>How else can loving ourselves better help us create healthier relationships?</p> <p><i>Thank participants for sharing.</i></p> <p>Practicing self-love can look a myriad of ways for different people. Good self-love is extending patience, compassion and forgiveness toward yourself—the same patience, compassion and forgiveness that we so readily offer to others.</p> <p>What else does self-love look like for you?</p>
<p>10/35</p>	<p>GIVE YOURSELF THE LOVE YOU DESERVE</p> <p>Thank you all for engaging in this discussion and exploring how much self-love matters! It’s been amazing to hear your insights and seeing how you expressed appreciation and love through your Valentine’s Day cards at the beginning of this session.</p> <p>Before we wrap up today, I’d like everyone to take a moment and grab their second Valentine’s Day card. If you haven’t already guessed, this one is for you. Think about the same things that you appreciated and loved in others and reflect on the strengths and qualities you admire about yourself. Write down the love, kindness and compassion you deserve to give yourself.</p> <p><i>Give participants time to fill out their second card.</i></p> <p>Would anyone like to share their experience of writing this card to yourself? It’s voluntary, but sharing can be a powerful reminder to us all about the importance of self-love.</p> <p><i>Allow two to three participants to share. Thank them for sharing.</i></p>

2/37	<p>CLOSING</p> <p>Thank you all again for participating today. Remember, your relationship with yourself sets a very important tone for every other relationship in your life. I hope you all leave here today embracing self-love a little more.</p> <p>Please feel encouraged to give your first Valentine’s Day card to whoever you wrote it for and keep the second as a commitment to loving yourself better.</p> <p>Thank you!</p>
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REFERENCES:

[HTTPS://BALANCEAPP.COM/BLOG/HOW-TO-LOVE-YOURSELF-IN-A-RELATIONSHIP](https://balanceapp.com/blog/how-to-love-yourself-in-a-relationship)

MURRAY, S. L., HOLMES, J. G., & GRIFFIN, D. W. (1996). THE BENEFITS OF POSITIVE ILLUSIONS: IDEALIZATION AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SATISFACTION IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS. *JOURNAL OF PERSONALITY AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY*, 70(1), 79-98. [HTTPS://DOI.ORG/10.1037/0022-3514.70.1.79](https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.70.1.79)

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VALENTINE'S DAY CARDS

YOU ARE LOVED ♡ YOU ARE LOVED ♡ YOU ARE LOVED

Hey,

TO: _____

FROM: _____



Healthy Relationships Week

YOU ARE LOVED ♡ YOU ARE LOVED ♡ YOU ARE LOVED

YOU ARE LOVED ♡ YOU ARE LOVED ♡ YOU ARE LOVED

Note to Self ...



Healthy Relationships Week

YOU ARE LOVED ♡ YOU ARE LOVED ♡ YOU ARE LOVED