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LET'S CELEBRATE

Love

THIS MONTH

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I have to confess that I have mixed feelings about Valentine's Day as I suspect do many people. I think it's definitely commercialized and demonstrations of love lose some value when it has a price tag attached, and "to show our love" we must purchase something. In addition, there's the messaging in advertising the holiday that in order to be happy you must be romantically involved with someone, which makes single people feel less than, unlovable or like something must be wrong with them and that just sucks!

On the other hand, I welcome the reminder to celebrate each other and the love we have for one another even if it is on this one day. We get so busy going about our business that we forget to thank those around us, to tell them how much we love them and appreciate them being a part of our life.

I have compromised and try to balance it and take the opportunity of the holiday to remind those I love that they are an important part of my life by cooking a special meal, pre-covid sharing a treat at the office, sending a valentine's message and just bringing to their awareness that I care even if it takes a chocolate to remind them :)

Take this month of February to celebrate LOVE in general not just romantic love, but all of LOVE. Love is defined as "an intense feeling of love and affection" and it is not limited to a specific person. We have many loves to celebrate among them love for our family, significant others, friends, co-workers, jobs, pets, nature, ... but most importantly OURSELVES.

When you celebrate this Valentine's Day remember to celebrate YOU and treat yourself to some well-deserved self-care treat of your choice.

Have a wonderful month celebrating what you love including you!



Marilyn Mejia Peña, LCSW, CIMHP

## Self-Care Ideas

### MIND

- Do a mindfulness exercise from an app
- Read a book
- Watch a fun movie
- Try something new
- Declutter
- Listen to a podcast
- Color/craft

### BODY

- Breathe
- Eat a delicious treat
- Go for a walk
- Get a massage
- Get a manicure
- Dance
- Drink water

### SOUL

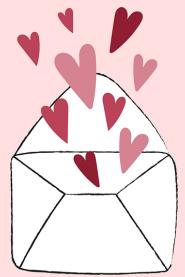
- Call a friend
- Spend time with family and people that make you feel good
- Watch a sunrise/sunset
- Spend time in nature
- Listen to your favorite music
- Light a candle and practice gratitude

# LOVE LETTER TO MYSELF (Self-Care exercise)

Pointing out all the things we hate about ourselves tends to come with ease and self-dominantly do we take time to highlight the things we love about us. This exercise allows for some time to reflect on all the positive unique things that makes us-us. I hope you take some time to remember how lovable you are through this activity. For the clinicians reading this, you can utilize this exercise with clients by completing it during a session and allowing time for processing.

Supplies: pen, paper, envelope and stamp or access to the internet to write the letter at <https://www.futureme.org/letters/new> (you set the date when you want the letter emailed to you)

1. Find a space and time when you can be uninterrupted for at least 5 minutes.
2. Take a few deep breaths to focus and play some relaxing background music if you like.
3. Now begin writing a love letter to yourself on paper or online (link above). For example: Dear \_\_\_\_\_, I wanted to write this letter to remind you that you are so special to me because..., I love that you..., I love that you are..., I love it when you..., I love your...
4. Choose your own words but be descriptive and specific and give examples of the things/events that demonstrate how special you are. If you are having trouble coming up with content, remember how you made it to the age you are now, the challenges you have confronted, or ask your friends why they are your friends and what they like about you to get some ideas.
5. Once you complete the letter, place it in the envelope and mail it out to yourself or set a future date when you want to get it on futureme.org
6. When you get it in the mail read it, absorb it and enjoy it.



## IT'S ALL ABOUT TRUST

One of my goals this year was to get through the stack of books I have next to my bed and actually read them. *The Thin Book of Trust* by Charles Feltman, is the one I'm reading now. It truly is thin and I have found it to be extremely helpful in understanding work as well as personal strategies that we use to protect ourselves that sabotage trust (resistance, avoidance, arguing, ignoring, withholding, ... sound familiar?) Here are some key points that might be helpful in assessing and building trust.

The author shared 4 core components of trust: **care, reliability, sincerity, and competence.**

To assess your own trustworthiness you can ask yourself how you measure in meeting these four characteristics. If you asked your co-workers or partners to rate you in how much they think you care, how reliable you are, how sincere you are about caring about them/job and how competent you are at doing the job, what would their answer be? If you discover there are areas that need some improvement, then working on strengthening them will help increase your trustworthiness. The same goes for assessing the trustworthiness of others in your life whether they are your partner, co-worker or supervisor. Rate them in those four areas and then you can decide how to bring the ratings to their attention for your relationship to be healthy and a trusting one.

Trust is essential for healthy relationships, let's learn how we and others are bringing trust to the table and take actionable steps to build trust.

## NEW GROUPS

I'm in the process of getting these 2 coaching groups together and I'm super excited about it. The plan is for them to start meeting at the end of the month. If you are interested please contact me as soon as possible to hold your spot, because space is limited.

### Therapist skill building Coaching group.

Designed to strengthen your clinical skills and add evidence based techniques to your practice while in a supportive environment.

### Healthy Lifestyle Coaching Group

Go beyond setting a resolution of a healthy lifestyle by actually following through and accomplishing it. This group helps you stay committed and accountable by assessing your current systems and adjusting it as needed to develop healthy habits. Tips for success will be shared including for sleep, meal planning, food for happiness, time management, and self-care. Also, you will be able to connect with others in the same journey.

For more info contact me.

By the way I am available to provide in-service staff development trainings in-person or virtually as well as consultation services and professional coaching. For questions or referrals contact me via social media, website, email or phone provided in the first page