



5th Allure Article - for Sunday, April 20, 2008

Know Your Intrinsic Value

By Patricia Omoqui

www.patriciaomoqui.com

Have you ever noticed how much children love themselves? I have a visible reminder of this on the mirror in my living room. My younger daughter, Skye, turned three this week. When I came into the living room a few days ago, I saw her standing close to the mirror. I stood quietly at the entrance of the room and watched. She was so close to the mirror that you could see her breath cloud up the mirror. She was admiring herself - she was touching her hair, smiling and looking into her own eyes. After a few moments of self admiration, she started kissing herself in the mirror. It made my heart happy to see her do this. She sees her own beauty. She loves herself. I left the lip marks on the mirror all week to remind myself of the importance of loving myself.

I believe we are all born knowing that we are valuable. Adults love to "ooh and aah" over the babies that enter our lives. We are fascinated by these little beings. We make infants feel welcome and important. Babies know they are pure and precious. Maybe that explains the spark of excitement in their eyes. Somehow between infancy and adulthood we lose much of our excitement and energy for life. We learn from our parents, our teachers, our community, and the World at large how to judge ourselves. We are compared to our siblings, to other children in our class. We are constantly being told that somehow we don't measure up: "Your grades aren't as good as your friend's. ..You need to lose some weight, you are getting too heavy... Why are you so loud all the time? Can you just be quiet?... Stop being so silly... You aren't as fast a runner as your brother... You aren't as pretty as your older sister. .. I wish you would make better choices... You can't do anything right!... What is wrong with you?" Does any of this sound familiar? Did you hear these voices of judgment when you were growing up?

Anyone reading this article knows what I'm talking about. Without even being aware of it as children, many of us "learned" that we were just not good enough. We were continually judged. We accepted these judgments as truth. We started to look in the mirror and judge our appearance. We started comparing ourselves to everyone we encountered. We learned judgment; we weren't born with it.

These voices of judgment became part helped form our self-image. We judge ourselves

harshly. We criticize others. We compete with others to be the best looking, the most physically fit, have the nicest clothes, and the most money. We learned from society that our worth is based on having things and doing things. We believe that if we don't have enough, then we aren't valuable. If we aren't "successful" by society's standards, then we aren't important. We believe that we have to prove our worth to others. So, we run ourselves ragged. We push ourselves to extremes. We put tremendous pressure on ourselves and never allow ourselves to simply feel happy about who we are.

I am here to tell you something today. Please read this closely. Please write down this idea and keep it in a place where you can see it all the time. What I'm going to tell you right now is an idea that could change your whole life. If you really focus on these words, consider them and adopt them as truth, you can't help but feel better. Are you ready? Seriously, I want you to be ready for what I'm about to say. As they tell my children at school, "Put on your listening ears." Do you have yours on?

You are intrinsically and inestimably valuable. You were born valuable. You are worthy of love just as you are. You are a remarkable spirit in a human body. You have permission to love yourself right now. You no longer need to prove your worth by acquiring possessions. You don't have to impress the World anymore by what you do. You can release the internal pressure you put on yourself. You can just be you. Plain and simple—just be you. Be the unique, authentic, loving you. You are valuable just as you are.

Did you understand that? If you didn't feel those words at the core of your being, please don't read any further. Stop. Go back to the last paragraph and read those words again. Read them over and over. I want you to hear clearly the truth I am offering you today. If you were able to sense the truth in your spirit, then read on.

How would your life change if you simply knew your own value? I'd like you to write this question down on a piece of paper and give it some thought this week.

I offer you some further questions to help you in thinking through this idea. Would you choose to be as busy as you are if you knew your own value? Would you keep the same friends as you have if you accepted yourself? Would you buy the things you buy if you felt valuable? Would you pack your day with activities if you didn't have to prove yourself to the World? Would you be able to relax more? Would you feel differently about your life if you believed you were valuable?

Every day as I talk to life coaching clients, I see that often the core of the suffering in their lives is that they doubt their own value. They think that there is something wrong with who they are. Take, for example, a life coaching client, a woman named Judy (I choose that name for the sake of her confidentiality).

When Judy came to me for support, she was very unhappy with herself and her life. She felt good about her day only if she had gotten everything on her to-do list finished and her to-do list was really long. She would wake up early in the morning just to get started on it. She did everything with all her energy. She wanted everyone to notice how much she was getting done. She took jobs she didn't like because she felt she didn't have the ability to get the type of job she really wanted. When she went to parties she would look at the people there and think, "I'm not as successful as these people. I am not pretty enough. I don't look as nice as the other people here."

As we worked together, Judy began to observe her thoughts. She quickly saw how often she judged herself. She noticed that she compared herself to the people around her. She saw the worry that infested her mind. She noticed how often she acted out of fear of what people would think of her rather than doing things out of joy. She realized that she didn't really love herself. She believed there was something wrong with who she was.

When she considered the question, "How would my life change if I knew my own value?" she began to see that most of what she did in her life was to please others. She put her own needs and wants aside to get recognition and praise from others. She started to question her beliefs: Did she really need others to tell her how valuable she was? As she observed and questioned, her life began to change.

She made new decisions about how she focused her energy each day. She still got plenty done each day, but she didn't push herself as hard. She took the time to do things that she wanted to do for herself. She started to look in the mirror and notice her own beauty. She relaxed. She slept more. She began to feel better about her life because she recognized she didn't have to strive for acceptance for others. She began to accept herself. She stopped comparing herself to other people.

Each day I asked her to say the following thoughts out loud, "I am valuable just as I am. I am remarkable. I open to loving myself more each day." She followed my direction and soon these new thoughts became her habit. Her whole life has changed from our work together.

Knowing your own intrinsic value just might change your life in beautiful ways too. You won't know unless you take the time consider the idea.

Your assignment this week is as follows: Specifically observe your thoughts and take note of self-judgment. Watch for self-critical thoughts. Notice how often you do things out of a desire to please others - family, friends, co-workers, boss. Do you want to live like this? Does it feel good? If not, I'd recommend that you start affirming to yourself the same thoughts I prescribed for Judy.

"I am valuable just as I am. I am remarkable. I open to loving myself more each day."

Say this in the morning before you get out of bed. Say it when you look in the mirror. Keep the thoughts with you throughout the day and practice these new thoughts until they feel more comfortable. Before you go to bed each night, say these thoughts aloud in front of the mirror. Then, like my daughter Skye, kiss yourself in the mirror (or at least throw yourself a kiss or a wink). Just do it. Begin to express to yourself that you are choosing to love yourself again. You may feel silly doing this. It is merely a symbolic act so that you finally remember that you are worthy of love just by being the exquisite creation of our Source that you are.

If all of us love ourselves more, we are bound to create a more loving World. As we release self-judgment, we begin to release judgments we make on those around us. When judgment lessens, peace grows. As peace grows, we feel better and we create peace in our World.

The World is ready for you to know your own intrinsic value.

Unlock yourself from the cage that Society has constructed.

Food For Thought

Move past archaic structures.
Embrace the New Consciousness
Of Equality and respect for all
Regardless of gender, race, religion, ethnicity.
Status and Titles are meaningless.

We are all the same,
From the same Source,
Of the same substance.
You differentiate because you are afraid
 Of scarcity,
 Of what others think of you,
Because you lack
Full Self-love.

Oppression must go.
Stop oppressing yourself, your own spirit,
So that you can begin loving yourself fully.
Then, you will see
Freedom is possible for all.
Justice can be achieved.
A peaceful world can exist,
But first,

You must find peace with yourself,
Moving beyond fear
Into
Love
Complete and deep.
Embrace yourself.

Help others
Find magic moments of self-realization.
They need not be slaves any longer--
 Slaves to their fears,
 Slaves to their work,
 Slaves to their possessions.
Underlying it all is
 Their choice to be slave to self.

When you put yourself in a cage of
Self-doubt, worry, and fear
And then hand the key over to others
You can't be free.

Take back the key, your power, from others.
What they say no longer matters
For inside
You know your true worth,
Your amazing value.
Reclaim your power.

It is finding your power
That will help you to
Unlock yourself
From your cage.

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Patricia Omoqui is an internationally recognized inspirational speaker, life coach and writer. Patricia's mission in life is to inspire people to move beyond fear so they can reach their full potential.

To share your thoughts about this article, please email Patricia at allure@patriciaomoqui.com or visit her at her website: www.patriciaomoqui.com.