



# How Deep is Your Love?

## Is Your Oxygen Mask On?

By Larisa Sharipova

**We women spend much of our lives nurturing others.** We give so much time and effort to caring for our partners, children, pets, friends, family members, employers, and employees. Add to that the numerous volunteer activities, errands, housework, family functions, meetings, etc., and there isn't much time left for caring for ourselves.

When we find ourselves focusing more on others than ourselves, we become worn out, stressed out, and run down. For those of us who spend time helping and caring for others, it is too easy to neglect our own needs. It's like we're running on empty when we don't take the time to recharge.

Women who neglect their own needs and forget to nurture themselves often become sick or unhappy, have low self-esteem, and feel resentment. I can definitely relate to this. Just few years ago, I was running in cycles from work to home, from home to work, and I never had enough hours in the day to finish all my tasks. This never-ending marathon not only broke me down physically (I collapsed in my bathroom) but also ruined my mental state. I could snap at my husband for no reason or get angry with my kids for silly little things. Do you find yourself in a similar situation? Does it sound familiar?

We all know the airplane rule for if the cabin loses pressure: you put on your own oxygen mask before you assist anyone else. Only when we first help ourselves we can effectively help others. This rule is called "self-care" and means treating yourself as a worthwhile person and showing yourself that you are valuable, competent, and deserving. We women need to balance the stress and activity of daily life with activities that bring a sense of peace and well-being to our minds and bodies. Caring for yourself is one of the most important things you can do for yourself. You as well as others around you will benefit greatly from it.

Practicing self-care is not a one-time deal that fixes everything. It's the constant repetition of many tiny habits that together soothe you and make sure you're at your optimal level of performance emotionally, physically, and mentally. It is a daily practice that becomes a part of your life. There are many free or affordable self-care activities you can tailor for your own body, mind, and soul. You can take a home spa day, have a good laugh, learn something new, walk in nature, take a quick nap, meditate, send a gratitude letter or help someone.

With a little bit of attention to your own self-care, you'll feel more connected to yourself and the world around you. You'll delight in small pleasures, and nothing will seem quite as difficult as it did before. Incorporating a few of tiny self-care ideas in your day will help you to listen to your body and keep you in tune with it.

Which one will you try today?

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*I can honestly say that I understand women very well. If you understand yourself, you understand women, because, in the end, all women are the same. ~ Diane von Furstenberg. Fashion Designer. Born 1946*