

Bonus: Becoming Your #1 Priority

This is where my clients often ask “What about my family?”, “What about my job?”. We feel like we’ll have to abandon everything we hold dear if we put ourselves first. These are big concerns because of a few myths we’re told when growing up.

Myth #1 - Putting ourselves first is selfish. And being selfish is bad.

Putting yourself first simply means your primary concern is your own wellbeing. Personally, as a human who wants to live a long, happy life, I like this idea. It’s also the opposite of selfish because modeling this self-care will be inspiring and help others to heal themselves.

Myth #2 - Putting ourselves first means neglecting everything and everyone else.

This can seem true because chances are you’re doing the exact opposite right now. Putting other people, your job, your appearances, all ahead of yourself and your own wellbeing. We all do this on some level. But I assure you, you don’t have to neglect everything and everybody else in your life. When you put yourself first, you are able to give so much more to others because you’re not depleted from stretching yourself thin.

If there’s one message your body is giving you when you get a diagnosis, it’s “pay attention to me”. Focus on your health - emotionally, physically and spiritually. Focus on learning what energizes you, what rejuvenates you and what depletes you.

You won’t find the answer by pushing yourself to work 80 hours a week while your body is telling you to slow down. But the answer *will* be clear if you give yourself your full attention.

Have a discussion with yourself. One that’s honest and ongoing. Start by literally asking yourself, “What do I need?”

What I’ve learned by making myself my #1 priority - I can be an introvert and taking time by myself rejuvenates me. That I’m way more focused when I’ve had time to meditate. I’ve learned the subtle cues my body uses to communicate - and I can respond early and keep a little problem from becoming big.

The biggest thing I’ve realized when I decided to put myself first is that no one noticed. They didn’t get mad or feel neglected. Actually, that’s not true- they did notice because I was so much happier and no longer an unfocused shell of myself when I was with them.

Where’s one place in your life you can put yourself first? Spending five minutes alone to ask yourself what you need? Taking something off your calendar that irritates you? It may not be seamless and you will have to make a conscious effort to put yourself first if you’re not used to it.

But you’re worth it.