



Honour Yourself

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Having good relationships with others starts with us having a good relationship with ourselves. If you want to work on relationships, then start with the relationship you have with yourself. Get that relationship right first. And you can start by honouring yourself. One of the core tenets of law, most spiritual practices, and democracies, is that we are equal and valuable human beings. Hence each adult gets one vote. All people are judged by the same criteria according to the law. Human life is valued and taking someone's life is a serious crime. When you honour yourself, you accept yourself, faults and all. You know that you are not perfect (no one is), you make mistakes, you do the wrong thing at times, but you still accept yourself for who you are. You accept that you are a valuable human being worthy of respect and dignity. This allows you to be your best self, and thus others get to experience the best of you.

So, what does it mean to honour yourself?

1. It means to know yourself. Know what your strengths are and know what your weaknesses are. Know what you value. Know what you don't value. The more you know about yourself the more you will understand why people are the way they are around you. The more you know about yourself the easier it will be to make the right choices in life (such as with a career or a partner).
2. It means to treat yourself with respect. And in turn to treat others with respect. If you don't respect yourself, it is easy for those around you to see this, and unfortunately some people will take it as an invitation to treat you with disrespect as well. Make sure you are treating yourself with respect in all situations. People who respect and accept themselves are better at accepting their faults and doing something to improve.
3. It means you speak up and advocate for yourself. You have a right to have your own feelings, thoughts, beliefs, opinions, and values. Others of course also have a right to have theirs. If you are going to honour yourself, you are going to be open about what you like and want and express it appropriately. When you do so, you encourage others to speak up for themselves in an appropriate way.

4. It means to be yourself. What some people call being authentic. It means you present the real you to the world. You don't feel a need to, and don't act in a false way. You are genuinely you in all situations.
5. If you honour yourself, you like and accept yourself. You don't have to like everything that you have done, and you can certainly want to improve in some areas, but at a core human level, you like who you are. If you don't like who you are, you open yourself up to abuse. People who don't like and accept themselves tend to be defensive toward criticism of their actions and are less likely to change and improve.
6. It means to act with integrity. That means what you say and what you do align. If you say something and do the opposite, or do nothing when you promised to do something, you lack integrity. And when you behave with a lack of integrity you do not honour yourself.
7. It means you take care of yourself. This doesn't mean you act vain or like you are someone special. It means you realise that you count, your body and mind count, and you need to take care of yourself as best you can.
8. It means you can admit when you are wrong. Being able to admit you were wrong and apologise requires a mature person. It also means that you realise mistakes do happen, they are normal, and we need to make right what we can and move on.
9. It means we take responsibility for our lives. Acting like a victim does not indicate we honour ourselves. Being passive and just letting things happen also does not indicate any sign of honouring ourselves. If you honour yourself, you are proactive in life, and you set and work towards goals which help you have the life you want.
10. It means we do our best. Some people might wonder about this last point. If you are lazy, if you are doing work below the standard you know you can, if you procrastinate and put off doing what needs to be done, you are not honouring yourself. You are definitely dishonouring and in fact disrespecting yourself. Honouring yourself means valuing yourself enough to show up as your best.

Almost everyone will be on a continual journey towards honouring themselves. This is quite a list with some challenging areas for self-development. All human beings are works in progress. No one has it all sorted out. Some aspects of ourselves we will have worked on, and these will be helping us get ahead in the world. Other aspects of ourselves we may not have worked on or believe we cannot change and most probably our challenges in life arise because of these. Then there are still other parts of ourselves that we are not even consciously aware of.

To some extent maturing and growing older are about learning from life and the people around us and becoming who we are meant to be at our best. As we become older, and hopefully wiser, we should find it easier to honour ourselves. If you know you need to do some work on yourself and you want more success and happiness in life, then it would be good to start with looking at how well you honour yourself. If you know you are falling short as per one or more of the points above, then you have some idea as to where you can start working on yourself.