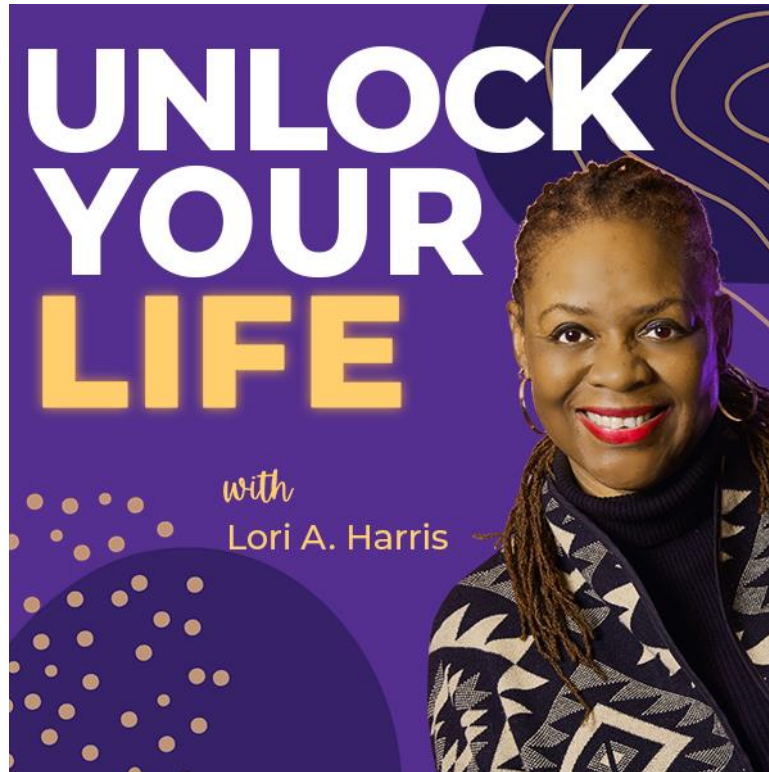


## Ep #13: Loving Kindness



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Lori A. Harris**

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## Ep #13: Loving Kindness

Welcome to episode 13 of the *Unlock Your Life* podcast. I'm your host Lori Harris. Today we're exploring loving kindness. First, we start with ourselves. Let's get going.

Welcome to the *Unlock Your Life* podcast, a podcast for highly successful visionary women who want more out of life. If you feel that ache of unfulfillment in your soul, you're in the right place sis. Join life mastery consultant Lori A. Harris as she teaches you how to stop living for others and finally put yourself first. Let's dive into today's show.

Hey fam. Hey. Welcome back. So this week we're going to explore loving kindness. The reason I want to do that is because I think it's essential for building a life that we love. In order to really truly love and attract the kind of life that we would love to live, we have to develop a practice for loving ourselves.

So when I was younger, I think it's an honest assessment to say that I had a bit of a difficult relationship with my mom. It was just hard. For a lot of different reasons, it was difficult. Not because neither of us were willing to work at it. It was just we both had ideas of what should be. We will talk about the word should in a later episode, but it was troubled. Let's leave it at that.

As a young woman contemplating being a mother myself, I was concerned obviously. I didn't want to duplicate the kind of relationship, the difficulties I'd had with my own mom. I started a practice with my daughter when she was very young. We started this practice because I wanted her to know that if we ever came to a time when she and I were having difficulties that there were other people in the world who loved her and would help her and would assist her if she couldn't come to me for whatever reason.

No thankfully and prayerfully that isn't the case. We pretty much are very close, and I'm honored to be not only her mom but her friend and her

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confidant. Which is quite amazing and kind of miraculous. I attribute that to part of this practice. Part of it's because she's just who she is. She came here fully formed, and I did my best not to screw it up. This practice is something that we used to do all the time.

It was a little game we called. We would make a list of all the people in the world who loved her. When I'd say, "Elizabeth, who loves Elizabeth?" We'd go through the list. Mommy and Daddy and Papa and Grandmother and Elysia and Adrianna and Auntie Kim and Auntie Erica and Auntie Hattie and Godmother Rita and Godmother Anne. We would just keep going and going and going.

The point was to point out to her that I wasn't the only game in town. That there was lots of love. There was more than enough love to go around. That she was never going to be alone, and there was a huge support system available to her. I didn't know. It was just an experiment. What ended up happening is my daughter has this great sense of self-assuredness. What's funny is she really loves herself quite a bit. It's not an arrogant kind of thing or unattractive, but she is good at the job of loving Elizabeth.

So what could we do as people walking this Earth to develop and cultivate a habit and self-culture of loving? Loving ourselves, loving what is, and treating ourselves with kindness. In order to have rich and fulfilling lives, we need to have a healthy relationship with ourselves. That means that we accept the mistakes that we've made without judgment, without ridicule.

Here at the time of this recording, we're in the month of September. The month of self-awareness. For the last few weeks, we've been talking about what it means to build our own self-image. That we can't express or accomplish anything outside of our own self-image, but we can enhance it. We can build it. We can change it. We can improve it. It starts with that willingness to look lovingly, not critically, but lovingly at ourselves and the

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experiences that we've had and even the mistakes that we've made to be kind to ourselves.

So we're building a practice. We're learning how to notice our thoughts and notice our thoughts about our thoughts. We're looking for the places in us that might harbor self-harm kind of thoughts. We stop and we pause and interrogate that and check them for truth. We're constantly checking our thoughts for truth and building the ability to have self-understanding, self-compassion, self-awareness.

We learn to look at our fears and look at how our fears contribute to a lack of peace, a lack of unhappiness, and a lack of self-worth. So we are building within ourselves an ability to love and forgive ourselves and cultivate a heart of compassion for ourselves. Because when we can do that, we are better equipped to love another. We are better equipped to set good standards for our own self-care.

So we learn how to delegate those tasks that are better served by another person. We learn how to build boundaries that enforce good self-care. When we impose a boundary and we require people to treat us with a certain level of care, we are practicing good self-care.

So the willingness is to love and look deeply within our own being to understand ourselves. When we do this, we practice how much love, how much peace, how much lightness can we cultivate within ourselves. When we do that, we learn to cultivate more love for ourselves. So our job is first of all, accept ourselves exactly as we are. Looking deeply at ourselves, learning to know ourselves. That is the first practice of love. First, we love ourselves, and then we develop and build a capacity for compassion, for looking deeply. It empowers us to have the skillset to love another.

So in my coaching practice, I help people to build what we call a full spectrum life. That means that we're looking at the four quadrants of life

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that pretty much make up all of life. That's health, relationships, vocation, and time and money freedom. What are we doing with our time, what are we doing with our money that's going to give us the tools to experience the freedom that I believe we all want?

So for me, this is the practice. This is the exercise. One of the tools that I use is loving kindness. Loving kindness is described as a meta meditation. It's very common in multiple meditations or Zen or Buddhist practices. I'm going to share it with you today. I believe we all have the capacity to love, but it needs to be developed and cultivated. There are exercises to learn to love and appreciate ourselves even more. So we go through those four quadrants. In order to have good health, good relationships and vocation and time and money freedom, we must learn to infuse each area with love.

So I think I shared with you over the last few weeks that I have been working on developing and enhancing my relationship with myself and my body and my health. I found that in order to do that, I had to find a place in me that could love me right where I was even though I had made some choices that left me feeling depleted. Left me feeling less helpful than I wanted to, and left me not feeling quite frankly proud of the state that my body was in.

I'd found myself feeling tired and lethargic. The more I thought about it, the more angry I felt. That wasn't healthy. I wasn't able to transform that when I was coming from a place of self-deprecation. So I chose to practice a practice of self-love.

So I'd started with just being willing to be kind to myself. Willing to love myself, and willing to love the Lori who had made the choices that I made in the time that I made them. Because that's what I needed in that moment. So in 2020, my father made his transition. That was difficult for me. I was there at that moment of transition, and it was deeply personal and deeply honoring. I was grateful for it.

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There were some emotional impacts on me that I had yet to verbalize and articulate. So I engaged in some practices that left me heavy and left me self-soothing with sweets. I cannot tolerate sugar. I just cannot. But I was engaging in consuming lots of sweets as a way to comfort myself.

So in order to transform the condition that I found myself post-COVID or in the middle of COVID having helped myself to recover and self-coach from the transition of my father. I said hating myself or hating the condition of my body is unhealthy, and it won't get me where I want to go. What else could I do? So I worked on loving the Lori that was hurting. Loving the Lori that made those choices in the moment that she made those choices. Loving and caring for that Lori.

When I tapped into that place of real pain, I found myself being able to be kind to that Lori. In that Lori, I could see how she made those choices. I could see how that Lori was hurting. I could care for her. I just spent time loving on her and caring for her without any judgment, without the word should, or without any desire to change the condition as it was. But to be able to look at it and see what it is for real.

So my desire is to have rich and fulfilling relationships. That includes with myself. So I lovingly looked at myself, and I decided, "Okay. I guess I'm ready. I'm ready to now make a different choice. I'm now ready to choose differently and to attend to my body differently." It's been much easier because I'm coming from a place of love and loving kindness. So that's what's been happening in my health quadrant.

In my relationship quadrant, I work on developing loving kindness as well. Loving kindness for myself, loving kindness for my partner, loving kindness for my family members, loving kindness for my clients. When I do that, I find that is easier. I'm practicing a practice of self-forgiveness. Then it's easier for me to radiate that out to others. So we don't have to get rid of our shortcomings or become perfect in order to love ourselves. The exercise is

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loving what is. Loving ourselves as a part of the greater humanity just as I am and not requiring myself to be perfect.

So what is loving kindness? We want to say it as one word. Loving kindness. Not two words, but loving kindness. Meta. Referring to a state of mind that radiates kindness. Wishing well without wanting anything in return. We're going to start first with ourselves. Then we continue to open our hearts so that it goes out to the entire world. Loving kindness were developed by Jack Kornfield. It happens in every practice.

A typical phrase for sending loving kindness would be may I be happy? May I be peaceful? May I live with ease? So you think of that, and you allow yourself to deeply, deeply feel. May I be happy? May I be peaceful? May I live with ease? When you say that, you allow that to land deeply within you. Then you can radiate it all to others. So then you can say may you be happy. May you be peaceful. May you live with ease. May you be loved. Then may all beings be happy. May all beings be peaceful. May all beings live with ease.

As you imagine this happening for yourself, think about an image where you see true love. Perhaps you can imagine yourself as a baby or holding a baby that you really, really love. Then when you think about being peaceful, allow yourself to go in your mind to a place in nature that feels really peaceful that you associate with peace. Then living with ease. Allow yourself to release the sense of having to control everything, plan and see every eventuality on the horizon. Just be in this moment and know that this moment is a good moment. This moment is peaceful.

So the practice of loving kindness is going to be preceded by engaging in a practice of self-forgiveness. Forgiving yourself, grace for any mistakes that you might have made in the past. For any shortcomings that you might have had. For any transgressions that you might have committed. Forgiving



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the debts that you feel. Oh, just take a breath and allow yourself grace and be forgiven.

So at this moment, I'm going to leave you with a fundamental question. Who are you? What do you want? Who are you? What do you want? For me, I'm Lori A. Harris. I am a lover of people. I love loving people, and I fundamentally want to be free. I want everyone that I encounter to experience the decision and the feeling of freedom, and to live from that place. I want to see everybody shine. And I am devoting the remaining years of my life to being a beacon of peace and to helping people get to a place where they experience freedom right here and right now in this moment.

That is what I am. That is who I am. That is what I want. So the question is who are you and what do you want? This is what I invite you to consider. So go through the loving kindness meditation. Consider it, live with it, chant it, go through it, and watch what happens.

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