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Self-Love from an Islamic Perspective

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Self-love, often misunderstood as narcissism or selfishness, holds significant importance in Islam. It refers to valuing oneself as a creation of Allah, maintaining self-respect, and fulfilling one's physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. Islam emphasizes balance, advocating for self-care without compromising the rights of others or becoming overly indulgent.

In Islam, human beings are honoured as the best of creation (Qur'an, 17:70). This recognition encourages individuals to acknowledge their intrinsic value. Self-love begins with the understanding that one's life and existence are part of Allah's divine plan. Valuing oneself is not arrogance but a reflection of gratitude for Allah's blessings.

Islam teaches that the body is a trust (Amanah) from Allah. Self-care, such as maintaining good hygiene, eating healthily, and seeking medical treatment, is a form of fulfilling this trust. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "Your body has a right over you" (Sahih al-Bukhari, 5199). Similarly, spiritual care, including regular prayers, dhikr (remembrance of Allah), and reflection, nurtures the soul.

Self-love also involves establishing boundaries to protect oneself from harm. Islam encourages individuals to safeguard their mental and emotional well-being. The concept of wasatiyyah (moderation) teaches Muslims to balance their obligations to themselves, others, and Allah. Excessive self-neglect or self-indulgence disrupts this balance.

Islam encourages self-compassion by acknowledging human fallibility. Allah describes Himself as Al-Ghaffar (The Forgiving) and Ar-Rahim (The Merciful), reassuring believers that mistakes can be rectified through repentance. Recognizing Allah's mercy inspires self-forgiveness and fosters a sense of hope and resilience.

Self-love, rooted in Islamic principles, empowers individuals to live meaningful and balanced lives. By valuing oneself as a servant of Allah, nurturing physical and spiritual well-being, and practicing self-compassion, Muslims can embody the essence of self-love. This holistic approach not only enriches personal growth but also enhances one's ability to contribute positively to society.

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