

Did you grow up in an environment where it appeared that you often only had 2 options?

Dichotomies all around you?

Examples:

Caregiver is either happy/funny or angry/enraged?

You likely do not experience any other variation of emotion from this caregiver.

This caregiver is either Accepting or Rejecting or Critical in some ways...

More examples of all or nothing or black-white, dichotomous thinking:

Beliefs:

People are good or bad
Right or Wrong
Selfless or Narcissistic/selfish
competent or incompetent
skilled or unskilled
stupid or smart
talented or untalented

**Well, we do not live in a black or white world
And
People are so multifaceted and complex**

Well, the reality is that two opposing things can actually be true at the same time. Multiple things can exist at the same time.

This is one of the main concepts of
Dialectical Behavioral Therapy
The concept of Dialectics

Example:

I could say no to you. I could be mad at you.

And

you could still love me.

My existence is not caught up in one isolated behavior

You could love me as I experience a range of feelings.

I could love you

And be upset with you.

One experience does not X out the other.

Some Questions to Explore

Did you witness Self-Care growing up?

Did you observe either of your caregivers intentionally and actively taking care of themselves and embrace their responsibility for their wellness?

What is your understanding of Self-Care?

Were you allowed to say NO to your caregivers?

Were you allowed to decline a responsibility or chore?

Were you listened to when you wanted to say NO?

Were you validated and allowed to have opposing thoughts and feelings from those of your caregivers? .

Self-Care does not equate to
SELFISHNESS

Self-Care
is a human responsibility
we all have

We are allowed to prioritize our self-care
We are allowed to say NO to things that negatively
impact our self-care

Dialectical Thinking.

opposing things CAN CO-EXIST; multiple
things can be true at the same time

I can engage in self-care and be a loving person to others.

I can have self-care AND be helpful when I choose to be
helpful, if I in fact have the energy to be helpful.

I can have self-care and also have

No energy to over-exert or over-extend myself.

In fact, good self-care may equate to making efforts to
not over-extend myself.

I can have and maintain good self-care

AND also have and maintain good boundaries,
while also being a loving person.