

# Being Human

*my* Universal Human Needs

## Cultivating Self Love

Connecting to and Working with  
My Unique Experience of Universal Human Needs

A Component of



# Contents

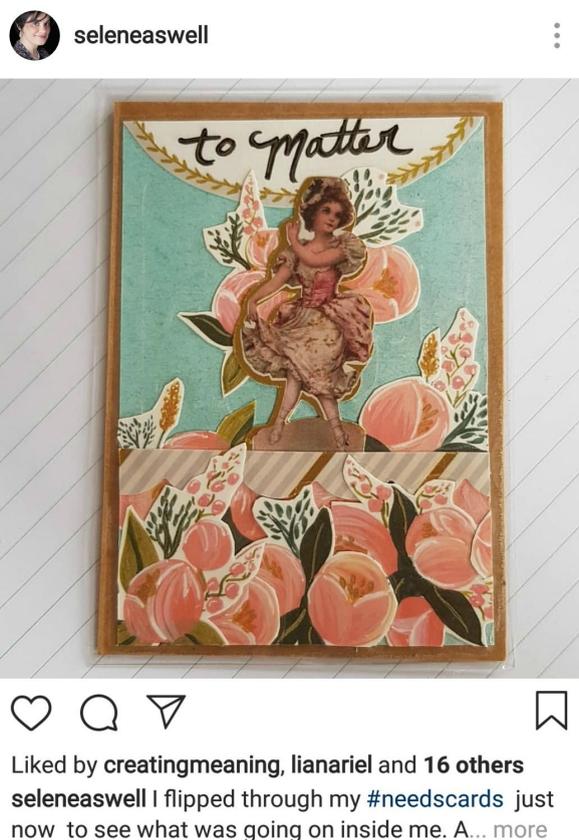
<b>Contents</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Section 1:</b>	
<b>The Context</b>	<b>2</b>
Introduction	3
What is NVC?	4
Cultivating Self Love	4
What are Universal Human Needs?	5
What is a Need?	5
Needs are Universal	6
Everyone's Needs Matter Equally	6
There Is Enough	6
<b>Section 2:</b>	
<b>Creating the Cards</b>	<b>7</b>
Your Digital Download Includes	8
The Needs Cards	8
The Working with Needs Cards	9
A Note About the Back of the Cards	9
Printing Your Cards	10
You will Need	10
Instructions	10
Using Intuitive Collage to Make Your Own Cards	11
What is intuitive collage?	11
How to Make Your Cards	11
Connecting to Your Need While Making Your Card	12
Bonus Tip: Viewfinders	13
How to make a viewfinder	13
<b>Section 3:</b>	
<b>How to Work With Your Cards</b>	<b>14</b>
Using the Needs Cards When Blank	15
Cultivating a Practice of Self Empathy	15
Building Literacy	16
Working With a Specific Issue	16
Getting Support	17
Cultivating a Daily Practice of Self Love Online Course	17
Cultivating a Daily Practice of Self Love Practice Group	17
Coaching with Selene	17
More Advanced Work	17

# Section 1: The Context

Self Love is the sum of all the things I do to meet my own needs.

How do I do that? I start by learning what my needs are.

## Introduction



This is one of my needs cards. I recently posted this image on Instagram and the strong response both there and on Facebook, took me by surprise. People responded to the beauty of the card, asking where I got it (I made it!). People responded to the beauty of what I shared (I really want to know if I matter).

Human needs are universal... everyone wants to know and trust that they matter. And yet, the experience of the need “to matter” could vary from person to person. It is an expression of my own, unique spark of life. How do I know when I matter? How does it feel inside my body when I am confident that I matter in a specific situation? How do I experience those moments when I am worried that my need to matter will go unfulfilled? How do I know when I need to take action to provide for my own need to matter? These are some of the questions that we explore in this project.

It is my firm belief that our experience of needs are unique, which is why I created this project. The images that I would use to connect with my need to matter may be different from what you might connect with. I created blank cards, each with a frame for your art. Use collage, draw directly onto the cards, or leave them blank and connect with them like a Rothko painting.

By working through your needs one by one, meditatively, you’ll be better prepared in the face of conflict or intense emotion to know which need(s) to focus your active attention on.

Explore your own humanness through your unique experience of Universal Human Needs.

## What is NVC?

“The objective of Nonviolent Communication is not to change people and their behavior in order to get our way: it is to establish relationships based on honesty and empathy, which will eventually fulfill everyone's needs.”

Marshall Rosenberg

This work is based on Nonviolent Communication (NVC). NVC is a practice developed by Marshall Rosenberg based on some very simple universal truths:

- everyone has the same basic human needs
- everything we do is an attempt to meet those needs
- connecting to those needs can transform pain, conflict, and violence into connection, acceptance, and empowered action

NVC is used to facilitate easier, more authentic connection between people. When used as method of communication, NVC is a process to co-create effective, compassionate dialogue. By helping us to understand what motivates humans, we can use NVC to improve our relationships, with others and with ourselves. NVC is a tool for profound self-awareness. More specifically, I use NVC to support my own daily practice of self love.

NVC is a spiritual practice grounded in the present moment. When spiritual teachers tell us to “BE in the present moment”, NVC answers the question “but how do I do that???”

Learn more about [NVC here](#).

## Cultivating Self Love

In the course I teach, [Cultivating Self Love](#), I define Self Love as **the sum of everything we do to meet our needs**. This is broken down into three components, Self Empathy, Self Acceptance, and Self Care. When practicing Self Empathy, we “check in” with ourselves and ask “What am I feeling? What am I needing?” When practicing Self Acceptance, we accept responsibility for our feelings and our needs, and we give ourselves permission to have those needs! When practicing Self Care, we take action to meet our needs for ourselves.

Marshall Rosenberg said: “The number one reason that we don't get our needs met [is that] we don't express them.” I would take that a step further, we cannot express our needs if we don't know what they are! In order to effectively practice self empathy (and empathy for others!) we must know what our needs are.

How do we do that? We practice getting in touch with our needs.

“Most of us grew up speaking a language that encourages us to label, compare, demand, and pronounce judgments rather than to be aware of what we are feeling and needing.”

Marshall Rosenberg, Creator of NVC

## What are Universal Human Needs?

3 Minutes. 3 Days. 3 Weeks. That’s how long it will take for a human to die, if they don’t have oxygen, water, or food, in that order.

But how long can a human survive without community? without a sense of meaning or purpose in their life? without positive touch?

Are those needs or are those things just extra niceties? It’s easy enough to agree that every human has certain needs: food, water, etc. There has been discussion on this topic across the globe and across the span of history. What are human rights? What is necessary for human existence?

In NVC we express certain elements as needs, in the sense that they are indeed necessary for survival. This may not be socially accepted, but there is more and more research being done to support this assertion. For example, research has shown that having inadequate social support can be as bad for your health as smoking four packs of cigarettes a day! Or what about the premature babies who survive unexpectedly, when cuddled more?

The goal of this project is not to convince you, rather, to invite you to form your own conclusions, by interacting directly with your own lived experience of human needs.

## What is a Need?

Value. Quality. Life force. Something that’s really important to me.

These are some other words that can be used to express what we mean when we say “need”. Marshall Rosenberg said that there was no word in the English language that fully matched what he wanted to express; he chose to use “need” because he wanted to convey a sense of urgency.

I enjoy thinking of needs as the movement of life within me. When I’m hungry, it’s because the spark of life within me is letting me know what I need to stay alive! The same is true when I feel lonely because I’m needing more connection. Or when I’m tired because I’m needing more rest.

When you connect with a human need, you are connecting with the vital energy of life itself.

[Learn more about this.](#)

## Needs are Universal

The key thing to remember is that these needs are universal. Every human has them (and most things that are alive also have similar needs!)

Regardless of age, culture, or economics, we all need the same things. As you work through this pack of cards, ask yourself if you can think of any one person who doesn't also need this need!

When we realize that the person we are in conflict with has the same needs we do, compassion is a much more natural response.

## Everyone's Needs Matter Equally

**“Most of us have been trained to ignore our own wants and to discount our needs.”**

Marshall Rosenberg

This is so important to dissolving conflict on the planet. We all need the same things, and my need for food is just as important as a wealthy person's need for food. My need for purpose and meaning is just as important as my employer's need for sustainability. Other people's needs are as important as my own, and that my own needs are as important as theirs.

Not only that, but even within myself, all my needs are equally important for a balanced, healthy life. My need for rest is just as important as my need for stability. Sometimes certain needs might be more immediate than others (if I'm struggling to breathe, I'm not going to be worried about having a sense of beauty), but those are extreme cases. In average, daily life, our goal is to meet all of our needs, as much as possible.

## There Is Enough

Finally, NVC operates under an assumption of an abundant universe. With enough creativity and patience, inspiration comes and we find new, unexpected ways to meet everyone's needs. It is possible to meet my needs and your needs, even if we don't yet see how.

This applies so prominently in our inner world. So much of our pain comes from our needs going unmet, for long periods of time. We often struggle to believe that those needs could POSSIBLY be met, perhaps never!

As you connect with your needs, try to approach them with the possibility of enough. It's possible to meet all your needs, with enough creativity and patience, and perhaps, support from a friend in dreaming up ways.

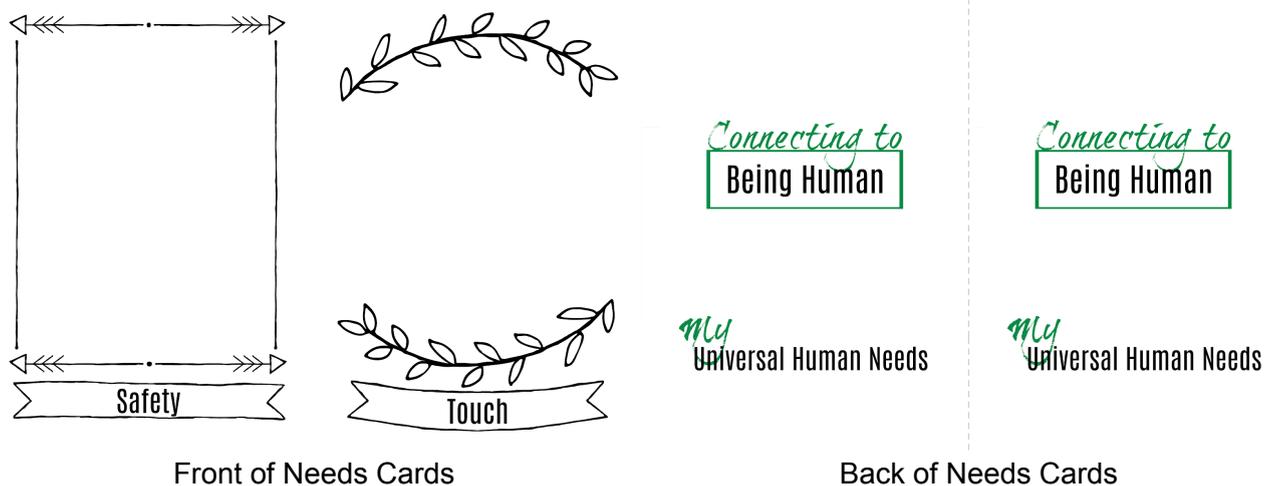
## Section 2: Creating the Cards

How to print and make your cards using intuitive collage.  
How to connect with your need while making your cards.

## Your Digital Download Includes

- (1) Instructional Video
- (1) This instruction booklet
- (27) Front of Needs Cards.png
- (3) Front of Needs Cards Blank.png
- (1) Back of Needs Cards.png
- (1) Working with Needs Cards.png
- (1) Back of Working with Needs Cards.png

### The Needs Cards



Each "Front of Needs Cards" file comes with two cards; when you print it with the "Back" file included, you'll be able to cut along the dotted line to safely separate your two cards. Once cut in 2, these 27 files will give you 52 needs + a few bonus needs I couldn't resist including (Nature and Transcendance!)

Please keep in mind that these are not "ALL" of the human needs that exist. These are some needs that I pulled from various NVC trainers' lists. That's why I've included three blank files that allow you to write in a need not represented here, or perhaps one that you want to "redo".

Each card includes a frame, in which you can place your art, image, words, or nothing. Most of the banners with the name of the need (ie "safety" or "touch" in the above example) have plenty of empty space for you to write in other words that you may enjoy to use for this need. (i.e. "physical safety" or "care" instead of "nurture").

## The Working with Needs Cards

### *Working with a Situation*

Have a specific issue you'd like to understand?  
Maybe a conflict, trigger, or celebration?

Hold the issue in mind. Meditatively flip through the cards, select those that catch your attention, and set them aside.

This could be a body sensation, a "yes" feeling, or just a color or image that jumps out at you. Don't think about it, let it be organic and intuitive.

Browse the cards you selected with curiosity.  
What do you notice? Try free writing about it.

Try arranging the selected needs on the table as if they were a flow chart or diagram.  
What do you notice? Try free writing about it.

Is there a primary need(s)? Connect to the current state of that need within you.  
If you met this need, how would the other needs you selected be affected?

Are there any actions/ideas coming to you?

Based on Nonviolent Communication

### *My Unique Experience* Building Literacy

What does this mean?  
Are there other words that resonate better?

How do I know when this need is met? unmet?  
Emotions? Body Sensations? Memories?  
Colors? Images? Vague senses? Thoughts?

Is this need related to other needs?  
What are they?

How is this need currently expressing?  
What is the current status of this need in:  
my life? my body? my relationships?

Create a list of ways to meet this need.  
Schedule a few. Do them.

*Working with*  
**Being Human**

*Working with*  
**Being Human**

*My*  
**Universal Human Needs**

*My*  
**Universal Human Needs**

Front of Working with Needs Cards

Back of Working with Needs Cards

The purpose of making your own needs cards is not only to make them, but to use them after you have completed them!

These two "Working with Needs" cards are designed to support you in connecting with your needs in a consistent practice of self empathy. Print and cut these cards and keep them with your needs cards for when you have a specific issue or situation you want to get to the bottom of or for when you want to increase your needs literacy generally. You may want to print these on a different color card so that you can more easily identify them.

Please note that the back of these "Working with Needs" cards are DIFFERENT from the back of the "Needs" cards. Please pay attention to this when you are printing, as this will help you to find them more easily when you want use them.

## A Note About the Back of the Cards

It is my recommendation that you do print the back of the cards, for three reasons. First, as mentioned before, this will provide you with an unobtrusive guideline for cutting the cards in two.

Second, it will provide a "cohesive" feeling when you have created all your cards. Because you will probably end of up with very different images on the front of your cards, having a uniform back of the card will give a sense that they all belong together (like the matching book covers in a book series.)

Third, because it indicates that these are "needs". I am planning on creating a similar pack of cards that highlight feelings, and should you decide to participate in that project, it would help you not to mix them up!!

# Printing Your Cards

## You will Need

### Paper

Before you purchase any paper, consider what form of art you would enjoy doing to illustrate your needs. (This is after all an art project!) If you want to do collage, then any cardstock will do. If you enjoy drawing or painting or watercolor for example, then choose a paper that will work with that medium AND that will flow through a printer!

If you don't want to do any art and prefer to leave them blank like a "Rothko" painting, then feel free to choose a color or colours that you enjoy, again, in a cardstock that will stand up to use.

### Access to a Printer

You'll want to choose if your at home printer will work for you or if you'd prefer to bring the files to a printer to have them done up for you. If you do choose to print them at home, just know that I kept ink use to a minimum. I recommend that you test your printer on regular paper to make sure that you know which direction is up and down for printing front and back.

### Order Pre-Printed Cards

If you decide that printing yourself is not enjoyable, you can order a set to be mailed to you.

## Instructions

### Sizing the Cards

The cards are designed to print at A4 size. When cut in two they will be A5. If you are printing in the US, then just select "fit to printer" and everything should work out fine. A5 is a nice size for doing collage, not too big or too small. If you want to go smaller, then follow the instructions on your printer to print 2 to one page. Make sure to repeat whatever settings you use for the front and the back.

### Printing The Needs Cards

It's my recommendation that you print the back first. Follow the settings on your printer or computer and do a test run first on cheap, regular paper, with "draft" quality ink. This way you can check that your settings will print the size you want, and you can test which direction the printed paper comes out of the printer. (If you have difficulty with any of this search online for instructions for your own printer.)

When satisfied with your test run, print 30 copies of the "Back of the Needs Cards" file. (15 copies if printing 2 to a page).

Let the ink dry before touching them if necessary (depending on your printer and the paper used).

Following the instructions of your printer, return the printed pages to your paper tray to print the front side. You may want to use your test sheet to check that everything prints facing the right direction. When satisfied with your test page, print all “Front of Needs Cards” and “Front of Needs Cards Blank”.

Repeat this process with the “Working with Needs Cards” and the “Back of Working with Needs Cards” file and you are done!

## Using Intuitive Collage to Make Your Own Cards

### What is intuitive collage?

Collage combines different images in a creative way to make a new image. It’s a wonderfully accessible art form because you don’t need any experience or any “talent” or any technical skill to do it. All you really need is some glue and some images of some kind.

It becomes intuitive when you suspend the need for a “plan”. The only plan you have is to pick a need card and glue something to it. The rest is based on felt senses. Actually, this is a fantastic way to practice the skill of nonverbal empathy. You select images based on what “feels good” and you combine them in ways that “feel right”. Often there is no logical reason until it all comes together and then it makes sense! The symbolism may be unique to you or you may have tapped into the collective unconscious, like in a dream.

Do your best not to overthink it, but to let yourself be surprised by what forms in the images. It’s an exercise in trust.

### How to Make Your Cards

#### Gather Materials

Minimally you will need:

- Glue (a dry glue like a glue stick works best)
- Scissors
- Images

It’s a good idea to just be constantly on the lookout for new sources of images, either at a charity shop, garage sale, used book store, or your grandma’s basement. Look for old magazines, scrapbooking supplies, stickers, junk mail, children’s books, whatever!

Optional Extra Supplies:

- Small Cutting Utensils for details  
(i.e. a craft knife + mat, nail scissors)
- Pens, Markers, etc
- Ruler
- A Sealant

Such as: a pva glue like modge podge, spray lacquer, laminator, packing tape, page protector, etc. This is for when you are finished and want to preserve your card.

## Choose a Need to Work With

You can select a blank card based on what “jumps out at you”, a recent unmet need, or you can join our facebook group and participate with us week by week [facebook.com/groups/1691764024275096](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1691764024275096).

## Select Images

- Keeping your need in mind, select a handful of images, more than you can use
- Choose intuitively, based on a “yes” sensation, a gut level reaction to the image(s). There may be a “that’s it!” feeling, or you may feel drawn to it non-logically.
- Try using multiple images in different sizes, or you may only be drawn to one image and that is just fine. You may also be drawn to cut out words, symbols, or plain colors

## Arrange Images

- Lay out your images on your card base, no need to use all of them.
- Move around the images in different combinations until they “click” together
- There will most likely be an accompanying feeling of satisfaction or “correctness”
- Once everything feels like a “yes”, glue them in place

## Seal the Card

- When your card feels “finished”, let the glue dry.
- If you choose to seal it, follow the instructions on your sealant of choice. (I personally chose to laminate because that is what I already had.)
- It is not necessary to do this, but it will prolong the longevity of your cards, particularly if you want to use them frequently. (Spilled coffee happens.)

## Connecting to Your Need While Making Your Card

The goal of this work is not to only make a bunch of cards, but to connect to the living quality of this need, which exists on a nonverbal level. It is this energy that you are striving to express in the intuitive collage you are making.

In order to best express this living energy, while you are focusing on the card making, let any feelings float up. Let any memories surface. Try to approach those feelings and memories meditatively, don’t mentally attach to them, just notice that they are happening in connection to the need you are focusing on.

On a more intellectual level, you can work with the prompts provided on the “Working With Needs” cards. Try to keep your focus on describing to yourself the EXPERIENCE of need, not really the stories stimulated by memories.

You may want to journal after you’ve made the card about your experience of this need. Or you may want to chat with an empathy buddy about it.

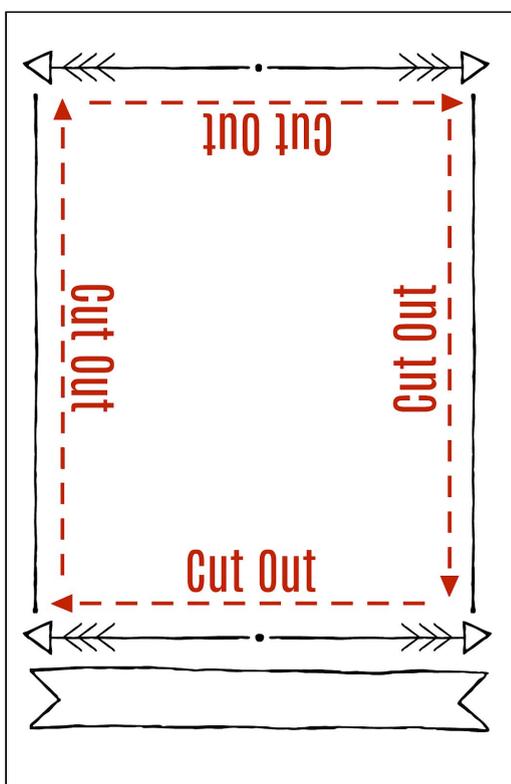
Let this be a fun a playful project! If you turn it into work, you’ll find reasons to avoid doing this project. One way that I kept the project playful was to have a movie playing while I searched for images and glued stuff down. This kept my conscious mind busy and freed up room for my subconscious mind to take over the art process. This is similar to when you get creative ideas while doing a mundane task like the dishes.

Another way to make this fun would be to invite a friend to make one with you!

## Bonus Tip: Viewfinders

As you'll see in the instructional video, a viewfinder is a simple tool that can be a huge help in creating your collage! Slide it around on the images that you are considering using to have an idea of how it might turn out. This is especially useful for when you thinking about using a large image, like a full page from a magazine or a large piece of scrapbook paper. By moving the viewfinder around on the page, you can decide where is the best spot to cut.

### How to make a viewfinder



- Print an extra copy of the blank cards. Any heavier paper will do.

Printing on a different color paper may be helpful so you don't get it mixed up with your regular cards.

Or you can write "viewfinder" on the label.

- Cut out the inside of the frame (See guidelines to left).

You can use a ruler and craft knife to do this or follow the instructions in the video to cut out the inside of an image with scissors.

- Repeat this with all the blank frames. Now you have a custom viewfinder for each type of card.

“To practice NVC, it's critical for me to be able to slow down,  
take my time, to come from an energy I choose,  
the one I believe that we were meant to come from,  
not the one I was programmed into.”

Marshall Rosenberg, Creator of NVC

## Section 3: How to Work With Your Cards

Multiple ways to use your cards once you've made them.

## Using the Needs Cards When Blank

You may want to use your cards to build your literacy or work with a specific issue before you've completed your art OR you may not want to create any art at all, but rather leave them blank!

How do you use them when blank?

A few years ago, I was inspired by the Rothko Chapel in Texas.

Rothko is a famous artist who made these HUGE paintings of swashes of color. Now, when I saw them as a print on someone's wall, or in a museum, I was frankly not that impressed.

But, one day I went to the Rothko Chapel, which is a non-denominational spiritual building in Houston Texas. This place is not associated with any religion of any kind. Rather, it is a quiet place, with huge paintings by Rothko on each wall, and benches to sit on and gaze at the paintings. The paintings are mostly white, but nuances in color that are not boring to look at. The idea is that anyone could sit there and look at those almost blank canvases and see their own image of God, projected by their mind onto the walls. People from different religions and different cultures could sit right next to each other and have wonderful spiritual experiences inside themselves! It was a beautiful concept that inspired me and continues to inspire me.

Consider now these blank needs cards. You could hold a card, with just the empty frame and the title of the need, and meditatively gaze into the white space. You can bring the same questions as you would when making the cards or working with "finished" cards. Imagine how many lovely, varied experiences you could have with the same "blank" space at different times!

When approached in this way, truly anyone can use these cards at any time.

## Cultivating a Practice of Self Empathy

Self Empathy is the art of checking in with yourself! It's when you ask yourself "What am I feeling right now? What am I needing right now? What am I really longing for right now?"

When Eckhart Tolle talks about the power of the now moment, I say to myself, that sounds wonderful BUT HOW DO I DO THAT!!! For my personal spiritual practice, self-empathy is my how.

To do this, simply sit down with your cards. Have this intention in mind of finding out the current status of your needs in this now moment. Flip through the cards until one jumps out at you. Ask yourself how this need is showing up for you, right now. Is it currently met? Is it currently unmet?

Then you can move into any actions that feel good to take to nourish that need.

## Building Literacy



What does this mean?

Are there other words that resonate better?

How do I know when this need is met? unmet?

Emotions? Body Sensations? Memories?

Colors? Images? Vague senses? Thoughts?

Is this need related to other needs?

What are they?

How is this need currently expressing?

What is the current status of this need in:

my life? my body? my relationships?

Create a list of ways to meet this need.

Schedule a few. Do them.

The first thing you want to do is build literacy. The purpose of this project is not to make a series of collages, but to use the process of collaging to build your need literacy. What does that mean?

It means knowing your vocabulary! How can you ask for your needs to be met if you don't know what it is you are needing in this specific situation? How can you know what you are needing in this specific situation if you don't know what your needs are? And if you do know what your needs are, what if you don't know what they feel like to experience?

**Needs literacy is knowing generally what Universal Human Needs are out there in the human existence AND it is knowing what it feels like uniquely for you to experience those needs.**

It is knowing how to check in with your inner self and find out what it is needing!

To do this I've included this "Working with Your Needs Card". Use it with any of the cards when you want to improve your understanding of that specific need. **Make sure to do this when you are NOT upset.** This is like learning your vocabulary so you can later read!

### Working with a Situation

Have a specific issue you'd like to understand?  
Maybe a conflict, trigger, or celebration?

Hold the issue in mind. Meditatively flip through the cards, select those that catch your attention, and set them aside.

This could be a body sensation, a "yes" feeling, or just a color or image that jumps out at you.  
Don't think about it, let it be organic and intuitive.

Browse the cards you selected with curiosity.  
What do you notice? Try free writing about it.

Try arranging the selected needs on the table as if they were a flow chart or diagram.  
What do you notice? Try free writing about it.

Is there a primary need(s)? Connect to the current state of that need within you.  
If you met this need, how would the other needs you selected be affected?

Are there any actions/ideas coming to you?

### Working With a Specific Issue

When you have a specific issue that has come up that you want to gain some understanding on the underlying needs, turn to this card.

What kind of issue? Maybe you are feeling upset? Maybe a recent conversation that didn't go how you wanted it to go? Maybe you want to discover the need behind a worry?

Maybe you are feeling just so so happy and you are super curious as to what is the need that is beneath that happiness?

Follow the suggestions on this card to explore your situation.

# Getting Support

## Cultivating a Daily Practice of Self Love Online Course

Support yourself with my Online Course that covers the 3 Components of Self Love, including Self Empathy and Universal Human Needs, the Purpose of Feelings, and more introduction to NVC. 10 Videos, 10 Lessons, and 10 “tips” will be sent to your inbox over the course of 10 weeks. Learn more [here](#).

## Cultivating a Daily Practice of Self Love Practice Group

You can join my Facebook Group for free! I host group coaching sessions aimed at implementing a practice of the three components of self love, we have a challenge of the month, and we work through these needs cards together. [Join us here](#).

## Coaching with Selene

If you would like more personalized support, I offer [communication coaching](#) and [transforming pain sessions](#) where we connect with the needs beneath your pain.

## More Advanced Work

Keep your eye on my blog ([VibrantlyAlive.me](#)) and my Instagram Account ([@SeleneAswell](#)), where I will be sharing how I work with my cards.