

# No More Self-Betrayal – Listening To Your Self Is The First Step To Loving Others

[BY ANNIE MUELLER](#)

She invited me over a few weeks ago.

I said yes. I enjoy her company, and I crave time with friends. But something in me was hesitant. I put the date on my calendar. I muttered to myself in the shower. I thought up excuses.

Finally, I said it aloud: “I don’t want to say yes to this.”

Instantly, the surge of inner reprimands:

*But she’s your friend.  
You already said yes.  
You don’t have a reason not to.  
You’ll hurt her feelings.  
You’re so selfish.  
What’s wrong with you?  
You’re a terrible friend.*

I felt panicky. I felt guilty. I felt terrible.

***I let the feelings come. This time, I didn’t fight them or avoid them. This time, I waited. Everything mellowed. The angry red screams faded into mellow sunset orange. The inner room settled,***

## ***grew quiet.***

It was time to ask.

I asked, and I listened to the answer: "Why don't I want to say yes?"

The answer came quiet but clear:

*"Right now, she is looking for someone to be like her. She feels unsure, and she wants to mold someone in her image. You have felt that pressure. It is unconscious but strong. That is why you are resisting. You are just learning to be who You are; to live for your Self, no one else. You do not need this pressure right now. It will take too much energy to resist. You need all your energy to practice being your Self. As you grow in certainty and strength, you can revisit and revive this friendship. The pressure will not bother you. But now is not the time."*

The answer didn't come as words, but as an understanding.

By sitting still, with my Self – by listening, by thinking of my friend, and what I was feeling about her – I was able to understand.

She was working through her own issues, learning her own lessons, writing her own story. And this time, our narratives didn't mesh.

It was tempting to pretend that they could. As soon as I felt that intuitive understanding, I knew it was true. I thought back to interactions over the last few months. I saw the signs and patterns. I revisited my feelings after a conversation, a visit, shared times. I had walked away feeling...what?

Feeling betrayed.

It took me a long to name the feeling. It didn't make sense.

She didn't do anything wrong. Then I realized: I felt betrayed by myself. Not by her. Yes, she exerted the pressure. But it was unconscious, her own inner pain reaching out for relief. It wasn't a betrayal.

***But my choices were. When I submitted to the pressure, when I forced my Self to bend and warp, to be smaller, to be silent, to agree, to mimic, I betrayed who I am.***

I said no to her invitation. I did not make up an excuse. Instead, I spoke the truth. I said: "Now is not a good time for me."

I want to save the ones I love. I want to spare them pain. I want to meet their needs. But those are cries of the ego with its savior-complex, cries of the personality with its need to be admired. So many times those cries overpower the whisper of Self, quiet but clear.

This time, I listened.

To honor my Self, first, is the purest way I know to love. It is how I honor the true Self in others.

***For more self-study, [The Urban Howl](#) recommends [The Inner Voice of Love: A Journey Through Anguish to Freedom](#) .***

***Sip a little more:***

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***Singing & Be The Amazing Thing***

***Recognize Your Symptoms Of  
Breaking Free – This Is Not A  
Disease, It Is The Cure***

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