

# *Timothy Carlisle* On How To Learn To Finally Love Yourself



[Authority Magazine Editorial Staff](#)

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known. I was amazed at how well she could work with, manage, and coach people to produce outstanding results. At that time, I wondered if I could ever do that.

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**As** *a part of our series about “How To Learn To Finally Love Yourself” we had the pleasure to interview Timothy Carlisle, CISSP, PMP, DTM, PDD, who has a very diverse leadership background.*

*Tim spent 20 years serving in the Submarine Service; he served on four different submarines, rising to the level of Chief Petty Officer. He co-wrote many instructions for protecting data and computers in sensitive installations.*

*Timothy has worked as a project director, cybersecurity expert in the public sector, and consultant. His consulting engagements included*

*eBay, Starbucks, Sutter Health, and other large organizations. He is certified as a CISSP and PMP, both gold-standard certifications in Cybersecurity and Project Management.*

*He has earned 4 degrees: two Bachelor's — in Technology and Operations Management from Excelsior College, a Master's Certificate in IT Project Management from George Washington University, and a Master's in Technology Management (Information Security with Distinction) from Capella University.*

*In his volunteer work, Tim currently serves as the Chief Technology Officer and District Commander for U.S. Submarine Veterans Inc., Toastmasters Past District 4 Director (San Francisco and Palo Alto, CA). He is also an Event Leader at Landmark Worldwide.*

*The opinions given here are his own.*

**Thank you so much for joining us! Let's Get Intimate! I'd love to begin by asking you to give us the backstory as to what brought you to this specific career path.**

**In** 2019, I was an intense and angry man. Each time I took a step forward, it felt like I was taking two steps back. Then, I attended a weekend seminar at Landmark Worldwide that changed my life — after

that weekend, I could put down the emotional baggage I had carried around most of my life.

While for some, it might be all rainbows and unicorns after that, it was the exact opposite for me. Things became far worse, but it was what was needed to enable extraordinary growth. One of the biggest things I learned was to stop being a people pleaser and start owning my power, which was considerable, and I didn't even realize it.

**Are you working on any exciting new projects now? How do you hope that they might help people along their path to self-understanding or a better sense of well-being in their relationships?**

I am an Event Leader for Landmark Worldwide. I am committed to helping people have powerful relationships. I have seen participation in this program make amazing transformations and life changes for anyone willing to discover them. You must genuinely understand yourself before you can truly hope to understand other people.

**Do you have a personal story that you can share with our readers about your struggles or successes along your journey of self-understanding and self-love? Was there ever a tipping point that triggered a change regarding your feelings of self-acceptance?**

As a child, I dealt with childhood trauma and extreme bullying. Through attending that weekend seminar at Landmark Worldwide, I was able to eliminate the power that those stories held over me. I found that the ability to be authentic in relationships with people completely changed my worldview and trajectory for the better.

That tipping point occurred for me in 2019. My life has changed dramatically for the better ever since that time.

**According to a recent study cited in [Cosmopolitan](#), in the US, only about 28 percent of men and 26 percent of women are “very satisfied with their appearance.” Could you talk about what some of the causes might be, as well as the consequences?**

The causes regarding appearance satisfaction are obesity, beauty equals plastic, and natural, authentic humanity is not honored in pop culture.

Some consequences are lower birth rates, constrained relationships, lack of self-love, and the belief that self-care equals plastic surgery.

**As cheesy as it might sound to truly understand and “love yourself,” can you share with our readers a few reasons why it’s so important?**

Authenticity, vulnerability, and peace of mind. Having the freedom to be yourself, be honest, and say what matters to you positively impacts both your self-esteem and that of others. To truly understand and love yourself is not something you can just “power through.” It requires you to delve deeply into who you are and why you are that way and exercise the choices to change or remain the same. Many times, I personally did not realize that I had a say in that. I most certainly do now.

**Why do you think people stay in mediocre relationships?  
What advice would you give to our readers regarding this?**

Regarding mediocre relationships, I have been guilty of this. We cannot change others; we can only change ourselves. Those closest to us may be the last to see that change. We cannot “fix” anyone, but we can accept them. Sometimes, neither of those are possible. I also have seen many instances where bad behavior is exhibited and projected onto others. When that occurs, some people will run or minimize the impact as much as possible and wind up staying in a bad relationship for far too long.

My suggestion for people in mediocre or bad relationships is to know your worth and remember there are plenty of fish in the sea. Go and find a relationship that honors both people.

**When I talk about self-love and understanding, I don't necessarily mean blindly loving and accepting ourselves the**

**way we are. Many times, self-understanding requires us to reflect and ask ourselves the tough questions to realize perhaps where we need to make changes in ourselves to be better not only for ourselves but our relationships. What are some of those tough questions that will cut through the safe space of comfort we like to maintain that our readers might want to ask themselves? Can you share an example of a time that you had to reflect and realize how you needed to make changes?**

1. Who are you to and for others?
2. Will being and acting the way I am now get me where I want to go and allow me to be who I want to be in the future?
3. Realizing that what got you here will not keep you there.

I have dealt with these three concerns in the past 4–5 years. In my case, it was peeling back layers of the onion from my childhood, and I certainly was not all sweetness and light during the discovery and progression.

My friends, Stuart and Vlad, were on the receiving end of much of this challenging experience, and I am grateful to both for their encouragement and gentle guidance. The change was a complete 180 degrees from where I had been.



In another 9-month self-development program, my friends Krysta, Nancy, Suzanna, Mindy, Nahid, Alex, and Jasmine truly changed my worldview of myself and others. Helping me to see what I could become long before I got there and having the patience and kindness to deal with me at my most challenging allowed me to become the person I am today.



Nancy, Krysta, and I

**So many don't really know how to be alone or are afraid of it. How important is it for us to have and practice that capacity**

**to truly be with ourselves and be alone (literally or metaphorically)?**

Being alone is okay (remember, I spent twenty years on nuclear submarines). There is nothing like closing the hatch, rigging for dive, and submerging the ship, traveling far from home, with very limited communications and information — think two pages of news and sports in my time every few days.

Being uncomfortable about being alone is somewhat different than being alone and standing alone as a leader. The best submarine Commanding Officers I served with — Mies, Witzenberg, Buchanan, and Wachendorf- all made plenty of difficult decisions, which ultimately caused our success. However, sometimes, it did not seem like it would initially. I often believe it was because they listened to their people and made the best possible decisions.



The Ballast Control Panel (BCP) where I spent much time

To be frank, these experiences made most of the pandemic seem like a walk in the park (or one very long deployment). Hey, I could go outside, see the sun, have unlimited information via the internet, and connect online with friends and family — what was not to like? While the world changed during the pandemic, those changes are still being felt around the world. The organizations that have accepted and capitalized on those changes will be two steps ahead of their competitors.

**How does achieving a certain level of self-understanding and self-love then affect your ability to connect with and deepen your relationships with others?**

As someone who has become tremendously more self-aware, it has allowed me to forge deeper connections with people I have known for years — and to create many new ones. The reason is complete authenticity.

Explaining how I work and where I am most valuable when on someone's team helps me align my relationship with leaders.

When leading a team, my expectations and team goals, as well as team pulse-checking (I use start, stop, and continue, or what do you want me to start doing, what do you want me to stop doing, what do you want me to continue doing), then sharing the results at the beginning of the next meeting, provided more understanding for all of us.

Ultimately, knowing how you are seen by others and being completely authentic while being a team member or leading a team, or in any relationship, is your access to having that relationship be successful.

**In your experience, what should a) individuals and b) society do to help people better understand themselves and accept themselves?**

Invest in you! The higher you want to fly, the more time, effort, and money you should invest in yourself.

I was privileged to attend Oxford University's Executive Leadership Programme (OELP) online, which was terrific. My class had 84 students (only five from the U.S.), 34 CEOs, 45 vice presidents, a CFO, a controller, a global Project Manager, and a retired submariner (me) with a street degree long before achieving a bachelor's degree. Strangely enough, when I mentioned my submarine career — they were all interested beyond belief!

Two weeks were incredibly unbelievable: Performance Systems, how they could make or break a career, and Power and Influence, where I described situations I had seen and was lauded for having the courage to share some challenging ones.

All students recommended a leadership book — I bought them all on Amazon and am still working through them — 2 1/2 years later.

If you take a deep look — we are all more alike than different. We want our friends and family to thrive, have meaningful businesses or positions, be able to express our views entirely, and have deep, meaningful connections with others. When society learns to understand and accept this for all people, we will be able to move mountains.

**What are 5 strategies that you implement to maintain your connection with and love for yourself, that our readers might learn from? Could you please give a story or example for each?**

**1. Invest in yourself.** Determine where you want to go, develop a 5-year plan with stretch goals, plan how to get there, and make it happen.

To attend the OELP, I had to lobby my manager — I finally convinced him when I showed that out of the 35 things Oxford states you learn there, we did 31 things every week in one form or another.

**2. Exercise.** Never neglect exercising — it will lower your stress levels and help you overcome challenges like endurance.

About 18 months ago, I hired a personal trainer — he liked working with military and veterans, as well as people with disabilities. He then moved to San Francisco (where I met him on my way home from work). Although he now works at a high-end gym, he continues to train me. When I asked why, he said, “Tim, you do everything I ask of you plus more, and you refuse to quit.”

**3. Maximize your strengths.** My greatest strengths are learning quickly and a great work ethic.

Learn something new every year. I also have learned to focus on the top 20% of what I do, then assist, mentor, and coach your team who gets the other 80%. As the Chief Technology Officer for the US Subvets, I have a very experienced team. I have handed off some project management duties to another team member, which allows me to focus on effecting the modernization that will likely be needed in the near future. I don't need to run everything, and letting go and coaching others provides me the ability to train and develop them (or maybe they are training me!)

#### **4. Work on your weaknesses.**

My anxiety is always challenging, and I have worked on being more stoic and less emotional. Regarding my anxiety, I am in the process of looking at neurofeedback treatment, where you receive an MRI, it is reviewed by neurology, and they provide you with a series of treatments (up to 20). Then, you have a second MRI to determine how the treatments have affected you. I am sure my amygdala can use some shrinking.

Whether it's good news or bad news, hearing and understanding the communication, asking any clarifying questions, and thanking that person are things I strive for in every single interaction.

**5. Be Relentless.** Read Tim Grover's book (Michael Jordan and Kobe Bryant's former trainer), and constantly pursue excellence in everything that matters in your life.

When I was first in Toastmasters, I became a chair at my first conference, where I worked closely with the first Distinguished Toastmaster I had ever known. I was amazed at how well she could work with, manage, and coach people to produce outstanding results. At that time, I wondered if I could ever do that.

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**What are your favorite books, podcasts, or resources for self-psychology, intimacy, or relationships? What do you love about each one and how does it resonate with you?**

[Domestic Silence – My Story from Survival to Self-Love](#). Kristina D'Amore — Kristina pens a beautiful book about her journey, its highs and lows, and how she has transformed her and her family's life. I watched it all happen!



Any [Dr. Benjamin Hardy Books](#) — 10x is greater than 2 x, The Gap and the Gain, Be Your Future Self for starters. Each book provides incredible insight into measuring your progress and being who you want to become and how to get there even faster.

[The Emperor's Handbook](#). Marcus Aurelius — the most outstanding Roman Emperor, explains his perspective on leading a vast organization. If you want to lead a large organization, it helps to have timeless knowledge from the top.

[Sun Tzu and Machiavelli's Leadership Secrets](#). Anthony Jensen. This book distills both subjects' materials into a cogent form anyone can understand. I have listened to this audiobook at least ten times — learning something different every time.

[Three Laws of Performance](#). Steve Zaffron and Dave Logan. This showed me what was possible in business with the right mindset and toolset.

[Reinventing Yourself](#). Steve Chandler. This book changed my life and helped me to realize not to be a people-pleaser but to own my power. It also helped me to recreate myself a few times.

Any book by [Tim Grover — Relentless, Winning, etc.](#) Hear Michael Jordan and Kobe Bryant's trainer tell us what he did and how others

applied his efforts. It's a complete game changer for me — it resonates from the perspective of how to become greatness personified.

[Extreme Ownership](#) — Jocko Willink. The former Navy Seal Officer describes his battlefield lessons, which made me better at owning my stuff and what that entailed, which was valuable in any setting. This includes owning it when things go great and when they don't.

All are very different, yet the whole ties together well.

**You are a person of great influence. If you could inspire a movement that would bring the most amount of good to the most amount of people, what would that be? Maybe we'll inspire our readers to start it...**

I am committed to creating a world that works for everyone and empowers people to be their best selves, no matter their circumstances. I also am for improving communication and leadership in the world.

Perhaps a leadership program for people who have dealt with trauma, I have seen many people who have past traumas are not the leaders they could be and some of the most intelligent and most creative people I know shy away from leadership because of their lack of confidence that comes from past traumas.

Having a program to help those people get past their trauma and discover their power and leadership, I believe, would benefit not only the person but all the people they would impact for the rest of their lives. They would also become the leaders of the nation, which would have a massive impact on how our country operates and the future of our world.

**Can you please give us your favorite “Life Lesson Quote” that you use to guide yourself by?**

President Theodore Roosevelt (slightly modified for today): “It is not the critic who counts; not the person who points out how the strong person stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the person who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcomings, but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends themselves in a worthy cause; who at the best knows, in the end, the triumph of high achievement, and who, at the worst, if they fail, at least fail while daring greatly, so that their place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither knows victory nor defeat.”

**Can you share how that was relevant to you in your life and how our readers might learn to live by it in theirs?**

I live life on the court, not on the sidelines. Being in the game is a crucial distinction towards self-mastery, where I can become part of the solution, not part of the problem. When you work to achieve something greater than yourself, whether you succeed or fail, who you become is someone who plays full out and leaves everything out on the court.

**Thank you so much for your time and for your inspiring insights!**

You are welcome! I certainly enjoyed it!

Wellness

<https://medium.com/authority-magazine/timothy-carlisle-on-how-to-learn-to-finally-love-yourself-3190102656ea>