



## **Radiantly You – Episode 67**

# **A Conversation About Self Love with Akal Pritam**

{[radiantriverwellness.com/67-self-love-book-akal-pritam](http://radiantriverwellness.com/67-self-love-book-akal-pritam)}

**SUSIE:** Hello radiant souls, thank you for joining me for another episode of Radiantly You. Every week I invite really inspirational guests to share their books, wisdom, their creativity, their strategies...all of this to help you move more deeply into and through your journey of healing and awakening your creative power... that inner strength and wisdom, intuition, and spiritual energy.

And in this half hour, we're actually going to slow things down. We're coming into that winter seasonal cycle, which is all about the pause, sort of restful period that's really necessary to see the fertile spring. It's a time to turn inward and appreciate your own inner winter. That might be something that you're already sensing a shift. Maybe your intuition is more tuned in right now, or maybe you're feeling a bit more reflective or even a little tired and like you're needing some rest. You know, the daylight hours are shorter, and the dark of the night is lasting longer.

Now the irony of our modern way of life is that what we actually do during this time when we're needing the rest is we cram in as many holidays and celebrations as possible and it's a time when we really should be tapping into our inner wisdom, our inner crone and it would be wise really to balance this sort of artificial energy flow that we have going on, with malls staying open until all hours of the night, family coming into town, hosting the parties... to kind of balance that with some inner work. My guest today is going to help you dial up some self-love and really create some sacred space so that you can receive the insights and wisdom and nourishment from the crone - that amazing archetype of the winter cycle. Although what she's going to be sharing with us really apply to every cycle, I just want it really wanted to sort of highlight that wintry time since that's where we are right now. Although our guest is from Australia, so she is in a different seasonal cycle. All of this self-love is going to help you launch more vibrantly into the spring season when it gets here in March.

So like I said, joining us all the way from Australia, Akal Pritam has created a beautiful book that is part art, part wisdom and part practical guide. It's called *Self Love: Finding Peace and Happiness*. And it is yummy to look at because Akal is a Dharma artist and she illustrated the book with.... lush is the best word I can come up with... it's really lush art that just draws you in and wraps you up in the energy of self-love. We're going to talk about the art that Akal does and she's going to share her own journey of self-love will talk about the book and dive into some of the ideas in there for how to nourish and love yourself working with chakras, Moon energy, seasonal cycles, aromatherapy, mantras, eating and so much more.

We'll get through as much as we can. This half hour is going to fly by! Welcome to the show Akal. Thank you so much for joining us.

**AKAL:** Thank you for having me.

**SUSIE:** So because this is radio, I have a big confession actually, when I first saw your book I didn't reach out to you at first because I thought this book is just, it's so visual and you know, I was in awe of the art and the beauty of the book and radio is really not a visual medium. But after I spent some time kind of taking in the visual journey of the book and really started diving a bit more into what you wrote, I was blown away by the wisdom. And even with as much reading as I do, your book really stands out as as unique to me. So I want to say thank you for bringing this book into the world for us.

**AKAL:** [04:21] You're welcome. Thank you. It's had a cast of thousands contributing to it for a very long time. So I can't really take the credit for it. It's just been so many beautiful people I've met for my whole life that are kind of all melded into the book and it doesn't really have a beginning or an end. It's just this little sort of world that I was fortunate to sort of really dive into for a while. Yeah, it's great. And it's sort of its continuing for me, but it's sort of like it's this bubble that exists it's amazing, actually.

**SUSIE:** Let's start with his idea of self-love and maybe help us understand how you see that and define that, because there's so much talk about self-care and self-love these days...sort of in the context of your journey and your book. Where do you see that?

**AKAL:** [05:08] I think it has to really begin with so forgiveness. I think that we have been driving ourselves and each other into this extreme expectation of something that is not even something we really want. And the not forgiving yourself along our whole life journey just, it is encouraged and it just compacts over time. And so the forgiveness to the self, to... I guess Alexandra Roxo in her heart chakra really that really resonated with me where she was saying: I had a lot of I'm sorries to do to myself because I realized how mean I was to myself for so long, and how harsh, and how much I judge myself and and was thinking in terms of lack. And so I think giving yourself permission to live the life that you know that you feel in your heart is possible, but you you can't actually yet see it, and sort of forgiving yourself for not even being able to see it yet, but just realizing we don't know anything and that we should actually revel in that, so forgiving ourselves for thinking we needed to know everything. You know, it's just it's endless...the forgiveness that I think is a continuing thing, and that's very intrinsic to self-love, it's just really compassion. Yeah, self-compassion.

**SUSIE:** For our listeners who can't see the incredible imagery in the book can you describe the art and maybe explain a little bit how you visually layered it with this Dharma art, and maybe explain that too. But you basically got this style that's expressing, I think as you put it was, many layers of the complex divine feminine.

**AKAL:** [06:52] In that, and I've used a digital medium a lot. I'm traditionally coming from a place where I've done a lot of watercolor and done a lot of incredible fine pen work. So that was sort of where I was really drawn when I when I went to art school. That was the sort of type of art that it just I kept falling back into. And I think the thing that really resonated for me with watercolor was the fluidity, the Adi Shakti, the sacral chakra waters, which would literally, you know meld with, if you use beautiful watercolor paper, they would actually work for you. Like you could actually witness the universe working for you in that you were literally putting pigment down there and with your intention it would just do its own thing and organically something quite beautiful would happen.

So that would be a beginning point for me that I loved and then, beginning, you know, starting to work on the digital side of it, it was the opposite you were actually able to paint with light, which meant that I could create an image with incredible depth and then I could go back and put light through it. So I could actually erase parts of it or lighten parts, and it was just like that was so interesting to me because that was the other side of it. So it was really, yeah, giving myself permission to just enjoy everything that I had, all the tools that were available to me and then not feel as if I was cheating somehow because it came so easily, because it was so joyful. Because that was another part of my journey was to sort of accept that you're allowed to enjoy yourself, like it's okay because I was very aware that I really enjoy my life and I'm very aware that a lot of people aren't enjoying their life and that's been a really big challenge for me. Because I've always had art, I've always had fantasy, I've always had the garden, I've always had nature. So I felt very, very fortunate that I had a very strong connection to those things.

And so giving myself permission to really move to Byron Bay, which is very different to where I grew up in Melbourne. So I moved to somewhere temperate, moved to somewhere absolutely beautiful beyond what I could imagine to live in. And then give myself permission to actually surrender to that and enjoy it. So that's probably how the art came about, it was delight, it was actually sheer, kind of a little bit like I got away with it.

**SUSIE:** I love it. I know I would say also in reading the book, it felt almost a little bit too like an artist journal because it has a little bit of that really beautiful art, but then, you know, there are times when you had a beautiful piece of art and then you just wrote on top of it. You know, it's like well, this is what I was thinking about today. But it's always, it's all like spot-on. I'm like, this would be the journal I would love to keep for myself.

**AKAL:** [09:37] I guess it's showing that it's okay to be a little imperfect and change your mind and see a different perspective and speak that, and then see another one. And I guess that's where the layers come from as well.

**SUSIE:** That's when I started picking up on as I kind of went through the book more than once. And I love that about the book because I think that it's the type of thing that you come back and you'll get a little something different each time you read it based on where you're at and how you're looking at the picture a little differently.

**AKAL:** [10:06] That was my idea. I had a store with my partner in Melbourne that was a it was a vegan cafe for want of a better description, but it was really sort of like a soul food place. And I just became so aware that it was like people really needed their held and when they embarked on this journey of going to the self and loving the self in any way that they could, they'd dip their toe in and then they'd run away.

I found that even in the store I created hundreds of birthday cards and greeting cards and things, we had a whole rack that we just, I just had a great time. I just created, I poured my heart out and I imagined everyone I wanted to wish happy birthday or get well or have bon voyage, and I just let myself like they really sort of lavish and just say all the stuff that maybe might be too embarrassing to someone you actually knew, so it didn't matter.

So I used to just as pour that and people would just go, 'how did you know? I just needed this card for this person, it's so perfect.' And I watched people and they would just come and give their time to stuff, and some people would just come and read the card rack and and run out of the store crying, you know, and I would just go, wow, people really need time.

**SUSIE:** You, in creating the book, there was a lot of your own intuition in there and your own truth and experiences. I'm curious if you could share a little bit about the own journey in your life that led you to dive so beautifully into this practice of self-love.

**AKAL:** [11:26] Being really weird.

**SUSIE:** You have a page on that, it says something about be weird or something. What does it say? I don't have that one open.

**AKAL:** [11:34] Everyone is somebody's weirdo, I think you might be referring to.

**SUSIE:** Yes exactly. So I love that.

**AKAL:** [11:38] I was everybody's weirdo. I still am, pretty much and that's why I love living up here because everyone up here is very weird and it's wonderful. We revel in it. But in the land I grew up in it was just like you know, my parents really didn't know what to do with me. They did what they could, but it just like how there was... I was very unrelatable in a lot of ways. But I see myself in everybody though, you see, so I don't feel that unrelatable. But I do see that people deny themselves of that aspect of themselves, too.

So yeah, it was... Being weird is really helped me and art school helped me because you're allowed to be weird at art school, so you're allowed to do that. And so, giving myself permission to be unusual meant that I would listen to myself, because often I would find everyone else really rather boring because they were talking about the same thing or they're all copying each other and I was just like, but there's other ways of looking at this. So I would like to listen to myself on that and reflect on that and inquire and talk to my inner self a lot. And yeah, probably all my invisible friends when I was small.

**SUSIE:** I love that, it almost sounds like this really intuitive self-love radar that you seem to have come from you have a connection with everybody, which kind of is what other people perceive as being weird probably. So I think that's really beautiful that you've been able to turn that into a book that just really is filled with ideas for self-love, compassion, forgiveness, and increasing your own self-awareness.

**AKAL:** [13:17] Yeah, and it's just, I really search for ways to communicate. That's why it's so laid and I found that the chakras are really something that people can understand their subtle nature more if they can actually begin to sort of tune in and imagine or have a perception of their rights of passage, and sense where they didn't have the full capacity to walk that. And so, understanding sort of the psyche of those energy centers really, I feel, helps people to look at energy differently...look at themselves differently and look at it more as, maybe they can look at it as color, or just other ways of understanding themselves and just opening themselves up a little bit more to see that they're more than just what we're often called.

**SUSIE:** [14:09] So I want I want to tell you my favorite page in the book because it. actually brought tears to my eyes. It's a page, it's pink, I want to describe it a little bit, and it's actually pretty simple page. It has blue writing on it. It just looks like somebody has written out their thoughts and it says, "I am a virgin. Each moment is new. Never been before. Each kiss never before felt. Each touch a new sensation. Penetration into virgin lands. New energies exchanged. Only love remains as another petal opens. Beauty continues to unfold." I absolutely love that because it is true. Every moment is a moment a completely untouched, unspoiled moment, right, in which we can love ourselves.

**AKAL:** [14:55] Yeah, it's so it was so new all the time. We're actually at the leading edge of this reality and we're so new all the time, and my heart aches when I hear someone tell me their old stories because their old stories are so beautiful, and they inform them hopefully of where they want to lead to. And, but I think it's just a reflection probably of me getting stuck to and not forgiving myself for certain things. So that was probably a way of articulating that and then, you know, it becomes an affirmation of become something that I can grow from that must be helpful to someone else as well. But yeah, we are very much, we are so innocent and we are so delightful. And yeah, and I can see that with people I when I observe them, I just think, wow, you've never experienced this before and you're doing so well, and it's amazing, you know, so give yourself the credit for being here, whatever you're doing, and it's something you've never done it before.

**SUSIE:** And I can see how forgiveness that you talked about earlier could be such a big part of returning to that innocence. And you actually include a Hawaiian practice in the book, you go into it quite a bit. Can you explain that one a little bit?

**AKAL:** [16:07] Ho'oponopono? It's more of a real inner story. What I like to use that as a tool for us to bring people into themselves. They often see that a forgiveness has to be sort of this outer thing with someone, and it's has to start deeply inside of yourself.

And I think the main thing about that practice is that you can come out of it dancing the hula, so you can forgive yourself for anything. You can actually see that you are creating your reality. And yes, collectively we are creating a bigger story, but your immediate reality, the immediate dots that you are connecting to are very much from what you've magnetized and what you're drawing to you or have an aversion to. Those, that's just something that is, so accepting responsibility for that can be challenging, but if you can forgive yourself, you know, 'Oh, wow, I didn't see that perspective. I forgive myself for not seeing that perspective. I'm so sorry I saw that from a lack perspective.'

There's something beautiful in everything, so there must be something beautiful in this, it's just about being able to move through and very deeply into this curiosity. Like there must be a hula dance. There must be a kiss. There must be a nose rub. There must be a flower somewhere in this thing that I'm feeling is so uncomfortable for me. There's got to be some love in it somewhere and so forgiving yourself going through that. You know, I'm sorry, please forgive me, I love you and then gratitude, thank you. And if you can come and sit with gratitude on the earth, you're pretty much doing everything you need to do as a human. If you can go through that process of anything you've experienced and then you can just find a bit of dirt, a bit of Earth, a bit of a rock and just sit and just say, thank you. I'm here still, I survived, thank you. And then if you could stand up and do a bit of hula that would be so awesome.

**SUSIE:** I love that. I love that. We should all do a hula every day. I have a quite a few books on chakras, and you go through all seven of the chakras, and what I love is how diverse what you've included in there is. I mean, everything from you know, what is the name of it to the energy. But then you also have, you know, what is the food, you have recipes or you have rituals that people can do. So you have like self-love practices, in addition to sort of the information piece of it. So it's kind of like you can experience it on multiple levels.

**AKAL:** [18:44] Yeah, yeah, like a like a rite of passage, which I believe our culture has forgotten the rites of passage. And so there's no reason why you can't take yourself through that journey and really understand, maybe, some of the things that you misunderstood or mistook in those years that relate to the chakras.

And I'm very fortunate, I'm over 50 now so I've kind of gone through the first stage. And now this is the cool bit, I get to go back and rework and really having, you know, gone through the very very beginnings of that. And yeah, it's just great fun. Like I want humans to feel like it's great fun to be human and that we're colorful and we have colorful experiences and we have a colorful body and we have a colorful mind and a colorful heart and we're allowed to be many different colors. And yes, sometimes you mix it all together and it gets to be kindergarten brown, but you know what, you know, that's chocolate. Yeah.

**SUSIE:** Yeah, and you have a lot of chocolate recipes in here. You have like a cocoa and some other things too, so...

**AKAL:** [19:53] Right chocolate is a great tool - the proper cacao, the raw cacao is a really beautiful gift from Mother Earth. It's a very strong heart opening food. So, and a very good calming of the mind and you add some very good quality sugar with that and you really going to relax the nervous system. And that's just a very good thing to experience whenever you can really. Chocolate.

**SUSIE:** The book starts out with a section about the age of Aquarius and that this is the energy age. And you talk about creating collective change and I'm curious, you devoted quite a bit of space to that, how does love self-love play into it or vice versa?

**AKAL:** [20:30] Because the past is really obsolete, like it really is ... we really did end an era of time and you'll need a bridge to get across and if you don't love yourself, you're not going to find the bridge and we are really going into very, very different lands. And the thing that needs to happen is the heart must be open and that will help because the solar plexus is going to become a lot more active, collectively. And without the heart open, that that empowerment just leads to aggression. And so it's really, really important to get the heart open, so literally the dungeon of the rib cage can be open and you can actually feel the spaciousness that you have inside of you. That everything that you need, we must have love or it's going to be self-destructive comparative. And it will be the antithesis of inclusion, it'll start to feel exclusive which is sort of happening a little bit and social, well a lot in some areas in social media, where there's people are feeling excluded and they're also led to believe that the success will come from copying those people that appear to be successful. So there's a lot of these sort of, we've never done this before collectively in this way and so we've got a lot of learning to do. And we've made a lot of mistakes already, particularly with how the young are interacting with these mediums and and how vulnerable they have been and how much they've been exposed to. And so, more so we have to find a place of self-love or it will become very aggressive and that's the last thing that our planet needs is more regression. So I think that's why I identify that self-love is really very, very key to thriving in this age because we don't have a rule book at all.

**SUSIE:** That is so true. I hadn't really thought of it from that perspective, but I love that you brought that up because that's a fact. I think that song, 'Love is All You Need,' we just need to change it to 'Self Love is All You Need.'

**AKAL:** [22:32] Yeah, if we could give ourselves permission to do that I think we'd be pretty good.

**SUSIE:** And if we can move away from the idea, I think, of past generations that any time spent thinking about yourself or taking care of yourself could be better spent doing something else and it's in fact selfish, right? That is an old story, too.

**AKAL:** [22:54] Yeah, isn't it, it's very deep. It's a very deep, well, it's a very strong archetype as well. And this is sort of like what I talk about, the solar plexus kind of, you know, if you're literally moving your energy from the energy of your solar plexus up into the heart, you'll kind of hit this fourth-dimensional collective mind that's where it kind of sits.

And I consider it to just almost be like you're trying to hit a hammer at the nail and try and get the thing to go up to the top and it just keeps going oomph, and then that is the archetype - the death mother and the Queen Victoria and the these kind of, you know, royalty twisted and sovereignty being exclusive and all these kind of things are very, they're very strong archetypes. And so one of my [garbled] for that is to actually then use a deity, like Ganesha or you know, any of the beautiful deities that actually exist as an archetype as well in the collective mind that you can actually use to help to kind of like get yourself through. Or a spirit animal or anything that you can actually get into the heart. Anything that kind of lights you up and excites you, you've got [garbled] and then the minute you do that, you've really pulled the power up from the solar plexus into the heart and it's sort of like you've kind of got past that.

**SUSIE:** Another the item that you had in the book that I had not heard of before was the Woman's 11 Moon Centers. And you have an illustration where you sort of just hand jotted down notes about each one of them and it's so interesting. I always love new and different ways to approach kind of what we're all about in this earth experience that we're having. So what are the 11 Moon Centers? What is that all about? You don't have to describe every one, but I'm just curious, where does that come from?

**AKAL:** [24:41] It's about understanding the psyche of a woman and the complexity of a woman. I mean if you want to look at it, in some dimensions or some cultures, the woman would be the strategist, the one that would be the war strategist, the one that would be the go-to for everything because she sits with the whole as a perspective. She sits with the whole. So in some cultures, for example, the sun is feminine and is a woman. In the Aboriginal culture here in Australia, the sun is a woman and if you think about the woman, she is a circle. Like, she is actually complete. She has everything she needs, she is able to give birth, she has the Shakti energy. She is the creator, so she has to be able to ebb and flow because it's just sinking in with the universe. She gets sort of put into the universe in that flow, in that flow of creation. And so, in that nature that we're all very unique, we're going to kind of like be slotted into this rhythm, which is very unique as well. So we're going to have our own little rhythm and we're only we're gonna have our own rhythmic intelligence and we're going to have our own sort of heart energy and that's what's so beautiful about all of us.

**SUSIE:** What's next for you? What do you have going on in the works?

**AKAL:** [26:08] I'm well into a book called 'True Self' and it's a manifesto of love and a celebration of being human and I'm painting everything on wood. It's very different and I'm thinking about 60 portraits of different people. Very, very different people, including their astrology and I'm wanting to paint them as if their kings and queens and I'm the court painter and I'm sort of honoring them. So I love it when I ask people and they're like, 'What? Paint me? You want to paint me?' And I'm like, yeah, so I'm loving that. And it's very whimsical and very poetic. It's not as text heavy at all, it's actually just poetry and images. Indulging even further in self-care.

**SUSIE:** I am so excited to see when that comes out. So boy, this half hour has really flown by and I hope everyone listening has been inspired to just take some time for self-love, to find practices that nourish. And I really do recommend Akal's book as literally a one-stop shopping on the topic of self-love and you can check out her book on her website at [akalpritam.com](http://akalpritam.com).

Thank you all for joining us today and sharing your art and your book and beautiful vision for planet where we love ourselves and each other.

**AKAL:** Thank you so much for having me Susie.

**SUSIE:** You've been listening to Radiantly You. I'm your host Susie Kher and to get a recording of the show please visit my website at [radianriverwellness.com](http://radianriverwellness.com). I archive all the shows as podcasts along with transcript and schedules for upcoming guests. And you can also explore ways that we can work together on your own healing and awakening journey. And be sure and tune in next week when I'm talking to Elena Mannes about her spiritual journey with her dog and how she documented the spiritual lives of animals in her new book Soul Dog. Until then have a radiant week.