

# THE JOURNEY OF LOVE

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## THE JOURNEY OF LOVE

### INTRODUCTION

What do you think about when someone says the words love? Do you think how tough love is for you? Do you think how wonderful it is. Do you see who that person is for you? Do you take time to recognise how it makes you feel? Do you remember the last time you experienced love? What did it mean to you?

Love is a shifting tide, that comes in waves of emotions, often leaving people unguarded. Love is present in our daily lives in the smallest of ways, and in the often goes unnoticed.

With our lives becoming ever so consumed by media, work, daily chores and social gatherings. We lose the ability to see the reason why we act and behave, we lose the ability to see the smallest things we are grateful for, because we take them for granted.

I once heard a guru speak. He spoke of people being complacent in their lives. In the way they want to be the best and do the best. He then went on to say.

' What many people don't realise is that everyday we sleep, only to wake up again tomorrow, about 1 million people do not wake up the next day. Think of the sorrow and grief that their families go through '

In that came a shift in my perspective, to be grateful with each day I wake up and each breath I take. This goes to say that most people, animals, pets and things we love will one day part from us. So how will we be able to cope?



## LOVING WITH CONDITIONS

We have all gone through experiences in our lives in which we have loved someone or something based on conditions, whether we have done that ourselves or been on the receiving end of the situation. We all know it's not a healthy or good situation to be in long term, don't we?

However it can't be helped as part of our learning process growing up, we learn this either by looking at how our parents, friends or relatives behave. However patterns can be changed, you don't need to go through the same patterns or unhealthy patterns of love behaviours.

Now I am not talking here about sugar daddys and sugar babies, these are essentially business transactions and not love, however in some cases these have led to love.

Loving with condition is loving someone, can put restraints and limit the progression of a relationship, especially for those who wish to have a long term relationship, that will later lead to marriage.



Questions you need to ask:

- Have I given someone love with conditions?
- Have I been on the receiving end?
- How did it make me feel?
- Reflecting on the relationship, what did I learn?
- Would I do this again?
- What has hurt me in the past that has caused me to act like this?

## LOVING WITHOUT CONDITIONS

Loving without conditions is usually the form of love we find in our parents, no matter how many mistakes you make, or how many wrong doings you do, our parents will usually still love us. They understand that we as individuals grown up to be our own person, at one point in their lives, they were also making mistakes and learning.

However it can be more difficult to adopt this in romantic relationships. Usually those who have not been in many romantic relationships will often love without condition. The way you would love your pet animals, however this can be both a blessing and a curse.

Loving without conditions does not mean you need to sacrifice everything you stand for in order to be with someone, nor does it mean they should have to do the same. Both people in a relationship need to have communication and healthy boundaries. Boundaries does not mean conditions.

The term unconditional love does not mean love without limits or bounds. It means, "I offer you my love freely without condition." This means that when we offer our love, we offer it without expectation of repayment. It is important to offer this type of unconditional love in our relationships. Otherwise, we are offering love with "strings attached." This creates power and control imbalances.

The problem with love without boundaries. Love without boundaries can lead to unhappiness at least and abuse at worst. If we do not let our partners, parents, children, and friends know where we stand in terms of how we expect and need to be treated, then we will not have an equal voice in the relationship.

The word unconditional can sometimes create confusion or lead us to place unrealistic expectations on ourselves and the way we love. If it's easier, consider instead the idea of wholehearted love.

## LOVING WITHOUT CONDITIONS

Wholehearted loving means leaning into the vulnerability of offering our love because we want to offer it. Offering our love in this way means that we give it because it feels good to give it and not because we expect a particular outcome. Wholehearted love also acknowledges and prioritizes the wholeness of both the people.

To give wholehearted love, you must love your partner and yourself wholly. You will know it is wholehearted love when both people are willing to enter with their whole heart. When each person has a voice. When challenges are reflected upon. When growth happens.

You will know it is not wholehearted love if there are strings attached, debts owed, and boundaries violated. You will especially know when you find that the basic expectations of love, kindness, and safety are not being respected.

### How to love wholeheartedly

1. Pay attention to your offerings of love
2. Learn to accept, and value influence
3. Be transparent
4. Learn to listen
5. Notice if there are control dynamic and try to stop them.



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### SEEKING LOVE EXTERNALLY

There are people who feel as though they need to be in a relationship in order to receive love. There are probably more of these people than we can count. The reason this is the case, is because in most cases, the person is trying to seek love from external sources, rather than work on themselves.

You need to be aware of this, as this can end up with you being in a codependent relationship, and this is not healthy for anyone. These types of people usually have been through a lot of things such as being a victim to bullying and feeling as though they are not enough. At times this leads them to seek support and love and validations externally, to make themselves feel as though they are loved.

We can help these individuals by giving them help and support and trying to walk about these issues that arise.

Questions to ask:

- Do you feel as though you seek love or acceptance from other people?
- Why does that matter to you?
- How does it make you feel?
- What has happened in the past to make you feel this way?

Luckily there are great ways in order to help you or someone you love, to learn to love themselves. **My 5 top tips** are:

- Make a “you” section in your daily gratitude journal.
- Before seeking external validation, ask yourself, “What do I hope that person tells me?” Then tell it to yourself
- Recognize when you’re judging your feelings
- See yourself as the parent to the child version of you.
- Get in the habit of asking yourself, “What do I need right now?”

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### SELF LOVE

Self love is important, and I don't mean being selfish. Self love is being happy being all that you are and all that you are not. When we learn to accept and love everything about ourselves, we can then grow to appreciate the strengths we have and weaknesses. We are able to notice what skills and knowledge we have to work in our favour than thinking of that we don't have in comparison to someone else.

Self-love is not simply a state of feeling good. It is a state of appreciation for yourself that grows from actions that support our physical, psychological and spiritual growth.

Live intentionally. You will accept and love yourself more, whatever is happening in your life, when you live with purpose and design. Your purpose doesn't have to be crystal clear to you. If your intention is to live a meaningful and healthy life, you will make decisions that support this intention, and feel good about yourself when you succeed in this purpose. You will love yourself more if you see yourself accomplishing what you set out to do. You need to establish your living intentions, to do this.

We can use this **7 Step Process** to help kick start self love.

#### **Step 1 - Become mindful**

People who have more self-love tend to know what they think, feel, and want. They are mindful of who they are and act on this knowledge, rather than on what others want for them.

#### **Step 2 Act on what you need rather than what you want**

You love yourself when you can turn away from something that feels good and exciting to what you need to stay strong, centred, and moving forward in your life, instead.

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### SELF LOVE

#### **Step 3 - Staying focused on your needs**

By staying focused on what you need, you turn away from automatic behaviour patterns that get you into trouble, keep you stuck in the past, and lessen self-love.

#### **Step 4 - Practice good self-care**

You will love yourself more, when you take better care of your basic needs. People high in self-love nourish themselves daily through healthy activities, like sound nutrition, exercise, proper sleep, intimacy and healthy social interactions.

#### **Step 5 - Set boundaries**

You'll love yourself more when you set limits or say no to work, love, or activities that deplete or harm you physically, emotionally and spiritually, or express poorly who you are.

#### **Step 6 - Protect yourself**

Bring the right people into your life. I love the term frenemies that I learned from my younger clients. It describes so well the type of "friends" who take pleasure in your pain and loss rather than in your happiness and success. My suggestion to you here: Get rid of them! There isn't enough time in your life to waste on people who want to take away the shine on your face that says, "I genuinely love myself and life." You will love and respect yourself more.

#### **Step 7 - Forgive yourself**

We humans can be so hard on ourselves. The downside of taking responsibility for our actions is punishing ourselves too much for mistakes in learning and growing. You have to accept your humanness (the fact that you are not perfect), before you can truly love yourself. Practice being less hard on yourself when you make a mistake. Remember, there are no failures, if you have learned and grown from your mistakes; there are only lessons learned.



## WHOLENESS

Our emotional experiences throughout life, and especially during the early imprint years can result in the creation of Parts at the unconscious mind. These Parts generate their own values and beliefs, and are responsible for certain behaviours. Overwhelming feelings and reactions, as well as out of control behaviours are the result of 'Conflicting Parts'.

There is a very successful modality called parts integration I use for these conflicts and it is a useful skill to overcome 'bad habits', indecision, procrastination and all sorts of internal conflicts.

What it does is bring the part back home to wholeness where it first was before these emotional experiences. All this can be avoided for the future if we create a relationship with ourselves once again.

The relationship that we truly have is with ourselves. Regardless of what stage of life you are one, you experience growth at every step and allow experiences to happen along the way giving you potent life lessons. Have you ever experienced that moment when your inner voice criticizes you for being a size too much and also some time you hear a part of you saying that you are absolutely amazing! This is just an example of how conflicted we can be in our minds.

However there are some ways in which we can learn to feel whole and strong within ourselves again.

- Stop comparing yourself and judging others
- Learn to get go and heal past trauma
- Don't underestimate your self worth
- Be forgiving, for your own peace of mind
- Practise acceptance
- Always see the glass half full - try to be positive.

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### CONCLUSION

When it comes to love, we can seem to go through many hoops, be burned constantly and still have faith and hope that there is someone out there for you.

The journey of love I believe first starts with you. How much do you love yourself, in order to make changes for the better, to ask for that promotion, to set out and achieve your goals?

Thought of the day

If you had no problems or limits and everything you wanted to achieved for your dream to come true was given to you, then what would you be doing right now?

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