

What is Love?

Extract from Unmani's new book 'Die to Love'

The word Love has been used ad nauseum, and that is partly because we can not understand it and partly because we know exactly what it is. They say that Love is blind. I disagree. Love is Truth - absolutely all-seeing, absolutely aware and conscious knowing. Noticing all that is. I am speaking of the Love which is who You really are. This is the 'You' who is aware of all that happens, and yet is never affected by what happens. Love that loves itself despite it all. Love has no name. No shape. No form or even a feeling. Love is unbound by condition, space or time. Love never cares what is next or why things happen. Love is always fresh and new. It is free – Freedom itself. But Love is also an annihilation. Love is the end of 'me'. In Love there is no 'you' or 'me'. There is no mine and yours. All boundaries melt. Nothing to hold on to. True Love is a death. A death of all separation.

We have many ideas of what Love is. We think Love is lovey-dovey. We think Love is an emotional thing. We assume Love is outside of ourselves. We think Love comes and goes. We think that Love is the rush that you feel when you fall in love with someone. But as soon as we think we know what Love is, we also know that it is not only that experience. Love is not confined to any one particular physical or emotional sensation. Love is so much more. So much, much more that it is endless, limitless.

You can never put your finger on it. Love can not be pinned down. It can not be known, because for it to be known it has to be limited. Love is absolute Freedom. Love is absolute Presence. It outshines all confusion or seriousness which seems to limit and restrict. All ideas of who you are or what you think Love is, are simply burnt up in Love and seen to be meaningless.

You don't need to seek, find, or go out and get Love. You don't need to demand it from others, or even expect it. You can't get, seek, find, demand, or expect what You already are. Love is already here. Everything is already infused with Love. You are already Love. Love is not an experience which can come and go. Love is who You are and this is the only constant, when everything else comes and goes.

There are moments when Love is recognised, such as when you fall in love with someone or when you are out in nature or look at the stars. It is in these moments that consciousness seems to open and expand as everything and all separateness is gone. This natural movement towards openness is the expression of Love. In that expanded and open state, you know that you are Love. You know, beyond logic, that you are not separate from what is seemingly outside of 'you'. But these moments can also feel very frightening and vulnerable, especially when you are so used to living behind walls of protection. And so often follows the return to the more 'normal' contracted state of being wary of other people and afraid of life situations. These states of expansion and contraction come and go in this play of life. Expansion is when You recognise and experience yourself as

Love and contraction is when you experience yourself as a separate individual.

This state of love comes and goes. It seems that you can fall in love with someone and then fall out of love again. You can like or dislike someone. This state of love comes and goes and seems to be able to be switched on and off. You can choose to be loving or friendly towards some people and not others. You can decide who you like or dislike. You can have ideas of who you are not supposed to love and who you not should love. For example, you are supposed to love your family and not love someone who does not share the same beliefs. But the Love I am pointing to, is the Love that is unaffected by what you think or believe. This Love loves no matter what is happening, in fact, often despite what is happening.

When you recognise this Love which transcends all experience, then you recognise who You really are. This plays out when you interact with other people, you know the deep connection which goes beyond whether you like or find them agreeable. This union is usually unspoken and yet is so much more powerful than the words spoken. When this Love is recognised then openness meets openness. Two melt into one. There are no more boundaries – only absolute intimacy. We know this so clearly in nature or with animals or babies, who do not seem to have a sense of a separate identity. We can easily feel at peace and love them. But when two adults interact, usually there are so many boundaries which are believed in. Two separate identities with such strong walls which protect and separate them. We are so wary of each other. But when these walls come down, even just for a moment, all there is, is Love. Perhaps it is just in a look or a

smile, and suddenly there are no two people, there is only one Love. It could be with a stranger on the train, or with your best friend. Love does not depend on whether or not you know the other person or even like them.

In this play of Life there is a natural movement towards openness and truth. Once you begin to recognise that you are not separate, there is no end to this movement of Love. Love deepens and opens itself like a flower. There is no end to its flowering. When there is a yearning for truth, this natural movement towards openness and truth is never-ending. It is continuously deepening and opening itself to Love. Wherever truth finds lies, the lies become such a contradiction that they can not last for long. You can not hold on to who you think you are, or any unconscious patterns, for long. Love tears down your whole house. You lose everything.

Love is Truth. Without the Love aspect, Truth is dead and meaningless. Without Love, Truth becomes an abstraction which is cool and analytical and this is not absolute Truth. In absolute Truth there is a willingness to expose all lies, all beliefs and assumptions to this intimate connectedness with everything, which is Love. This is the willingness to lose it all. Whether the personality likes it or not, an intimate connection with all that is, is there. Defenses stand down naturally in the acknowledgement of the Love that is. Although thought does its best to hang on for dear life, more and more walls come crashing down, as beliefs and assumptions are seen for what they really are in the face of Love. This is the deepening. Forever expanding into everything.

There is often an expectation that this Freedom or Love should be experienced as that, constantly. However, true Freedom is not dependant on any experience of freedom. True Love is not dependent on being in a relationship or any experience of falling in love. The Love that simply is, despite any experience or thought to the contrary, is the Love that you know you are right now. What a relief! You don't have to walk around with a permanent smile on your face or have blissful experiences, to know the bliss that is beyond any experience. So when there is any feeling or experience of lack, it is known that it is not a real lack. When you have a problem or unpleasant emotion, you know that it is not really a problem because you know that who You truly are never has any problem. Who You are never lacks, despite any thought 'I lack'.

When you love someone, this is a playful expression of the Love that You are. One playing as two. One playing at meeting myself. Loving myself in this play of Life. And in this play of loving another, a 'me' meets a 'you' and they fall in love. And yet often in this falling in Love is the recognition that the 'me' and the 'you' are not really separate. In Love all separation disappears. This is the Union, the Oneness that You are already. This is Love. The knowing beyond all appearances of a 'me' and a 'you', that there is only Love.

Love can never be understood because thought can never understand, what is limitless. The nature of thought is to limit, separate and to put labels on everything. That is its nature and it can not do anything else. Thought tries endlessly to understand it all. To know it all. But Love is to

not know. To fall into never knowing and disappear. No limits, no separation. What a contradiction! You spend so much time trying to understand what Love is and how it works and then Love comes like a tidal wave and destroys you!

Most of the time you behave as if you are afraid of Love. You prefer to play with all the words and concepts of Love, rather than face the actual annihilation of Love. This fear is the separation that you long to go beyond. You long for Love, but you fear it because you know it is death. You long for it because you know that in dying, only then can you really live. You feel stifled by thought and concepts but often find no way out of it. Thought tries to go beyond thought and so there is only circling in thought for years. In believing thought you live a half life. You compromise. You take life so seriously and believe that it is difficult. But beyond all that, somewhere deep down, you know that that is not so. You know that it is really so simple. Right now, what can be serious? I mean literally right now. Reading this **word**. All that is happening is physical sensation of perhaps holding the book, or sitting on a chair. There is seeing of these words on the page. But that is all. It is really so simple. So easy.

Fear comes up because thought is threatened. In fact everything that you have ever known or believed in is threatened. In Love every thought, concept or belief is seen to be a joke. All that you have taken to be real and true is seen to be a dream floating in what You really are. All boundaries melt and disappear. All that is known is seen to be a safety net from falling into not-knowing. Absolute insecurity.

In recognising the Love that You are, the reality underneath the overlay of thought is revealed in all its ordinary splendour. Love knows the beauty in all things, even if they appear ugly, painful or distorted. They are all part of this extra-ordinary play of ordinariness. An ordinary sound, a sensation, or a texture, is revealed to be extra-ordinary in its simplicity. Just the way it is. A conversation with someone is seen to be a beautiful dance of energy. It is only thought that labels things as right or wrong or ugly or not good enough. Beyond thought it is all absolutely perfect just as it is. Even thought is seen to be fantastic. It imagines, it criticises, creates stories, it learns, it remembers...

Love loves itself and so all experience is loved just the way it is. Love is present awareness aware of itself and in Love with itself. This is Love for the mere fact of existence itself. It isn't a Love that is caused by anything. It isn't based on whether you have a good day, or a good feeling. In fact, it could be not such a good day, or not such a good feeling, and still Love is. This is a Love that loves to live this Life because in Life it is actually meeting itself moment to moment.

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