

Love = 2BU

By Nicholas de Castella .

Love is a state of being in which the usual experience of separation is transcended and in its place arises an experience of oneness.

At the foundation of love is the honouring of individual truth. The most loving thing that you can do for someone is to be you and to encourage them to be them. Live your truth, tell them with an open heart (vulnerable) about your thoughts and feelings and in turn listen to, respect and respond to how they feel.

Real love is soul connection. It arises when we nakedly expose all that we are: when we come together, lucidly present with our deepest fears, hurts and longings, in a climate of open embrace of all that we are; when we commit to a journey of sharing, receiving and responding to the passionate and subtle aspects of heart-felt emotion; when we include the open-hearted and non-attacking expression of anger and sadness.

Being nice to someone is not loving them. Mostly we are nice to each other because we are protecting our own arse. We say "Oh, I don't want to hurt them by telling the truth". What we are actually afraid of is what will happen to us if we are truthful. We fear rejection, anger and real engagement with each other.

When we withhold our truth we betray ourselves and lose our sense of integrity. By not standing in our truth we reject ourselves. This creates feelings of worthlessness and self-hatred. Withholding is dishonest. It robs us of the chance of really meeting. Really 'being' in love.

Most of us were conditionally accepted whilst growing up. We were required to be a certain way, to gain acceptance and approval. As children we may have been reprimanded for speaking freely, for saying something like 'aunty Molly has lots of wrinkles', or we might have been told that we were

naughty for being emotionally expressive – for shouting when we were angry, crying when we were sad, or for laughing freely when we were happy.

Conditional acceptance is never satisfying. If I accept you because you behave in a certain way then I am putting conditions on you. This is not a loving thing to do and never gives satisfactory results. If you conform to my desired code of behavior and you get my acceptance then you still know inside that all of you is not OK. As long as you keep the parts of you that are unacceptable under control then you will be accepted.

Most of us have given up on finding real love and are now seeking unconditional acceptance.

Unconditional acceptance is not the same as unconditional love. It rates a very poor second place to unconditional love. Unconditional love is a state of being that arises out of a deep meeting when we are willing to be fully responsible and open with each other, willing to embrace all that we are: our anger, sadness, fear and joy. Unconditional acceptance is a function of the intellect in which we agree to tolerate each others differences. This is close to apathy and is emotionally detached. Unconditional acceptance rarely creates real meeting, real love.

Unconditional acceptance is a license for irresponsibility, neglect and detachment: 'They can behave however they like and we won't complain.' When we suppress our true feelings because we think that we should be unconditionally accepting we rob the other person of the chance to really meet us.

Not accepting others does not mean that we wish to put conditions on them or that we wish to attempt to control them or that we try to change them. It means that we stand in our truth and invite them to stand in theirs equally. In this way we are both invited into

the fullness of our being.

If we feel sad, scared or angry about something someone has done, then the loving thing to do would be to express our feelings directly to them: expressing ourselves not with aggression or attack, but with honesty, sensitivity, responsibility, and vulnerability; allowing ourselves to be openly expressive from deep within our being, without blame, judgment, accusation or shame. For most of us this is not easily done but not expressing ourselves openly (under the guise of 'unconditional acceptance') leads to the creation of resentment, separation and distancing from each other, and a diminishment of love.

Real love can be gutsy, passionate, fiery and honest as well as gentle, tender, joyous and peaceful. It is an intensity of experience where people connect in the furnace of absolute open expression of their truth.

Love as a state of being is not something that is going to last forever without needing any attention. Loving relationships are living organisms, to grow they need the constant nurturing and feeding provided by open-hearted, honest sharing of all our feelings.

For love to grow we need to create environments of trust in which we feel safe enough to stop running away from our darker sides, a space to bring our woundedness out of the closet so that it can be breathed into and healed. We need to gather together people who are prepared to stick around, receive and respond to our wildest rage, our deepest pain and our most terrorising fears with open-hearted honesty and frankness: people who are willing to be fully present with each others woundedness and accept feelings without wanting to take them away, fix them or console them. This allows us to move through (not around) our feelings and into deep states of loving connection and soul nurturing.