

# *The Love Process*

## A GUARANTEE OF LOVE

**To be in love is no reason ever to get married;  
To be out of love is no reason ever to get a divorce.**

Valentine's day is coming, and everyone wants a guarantee that their love will last forever.

The feelings of love are not the result of an accident, Cupid's arrow, or animal magnetism. *It is a process*, and since it is a process, you can reproduce that process whenever you want to re-create your feelings of love. If you have "fallen out of love" or want to stay in love with your sweetie, knowing how you two created the feelings of love can be your guarantee of lasting intimacy.

You will need to be aware of several steps in the love process, and they all consist of making decisions. First, you see a person "across a crowded room," and you decide. "This person looks very interesting." The love process starts when she decides to drop her "handkerchief." For the guy, he must decide to pick it up.

She has seen many men whom she would not drop her handkerchief on a bet, but she decides to drop it for this one. On the other hand, the guy has had many women drop their handkerchiefs for him. Some, he has been too dumb even to notice; with others, he has decided to walk on by.

The process is not finished once he decides to pick up the handkerchief. It does not mean that you are in love. You cannot be in love with someone you see for the first time. You may be in lust, but lust is not love. There is no such thing as love at first sight. You may love an idea or image, but the person you are seeing is not the person in your fantasy.

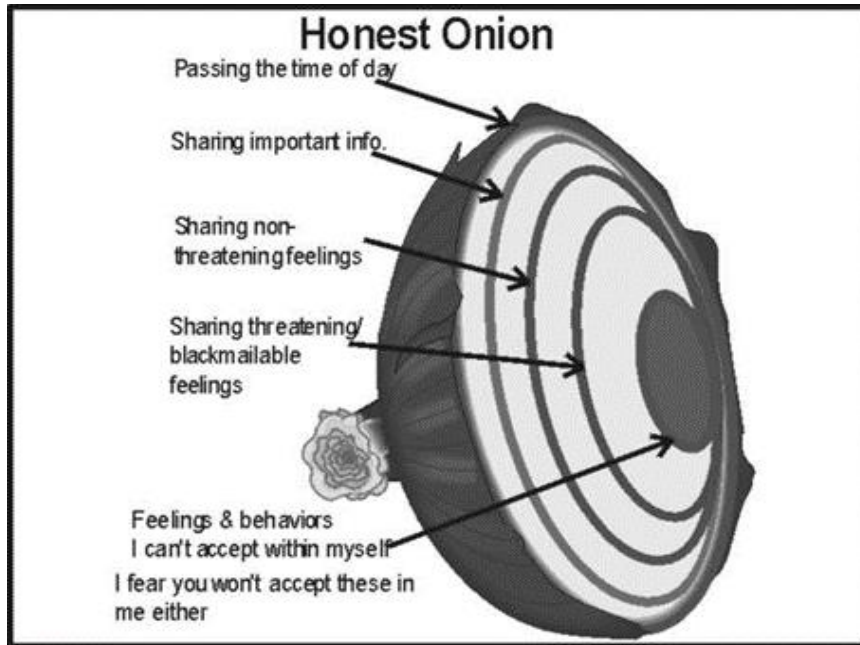
### **Three Steps to Love, the Process**

**Spending time together** is the first step in the Love Process. Being in the same house, sitting on the same couch, and watching the same TV program is NOT being together! When I talk about spending time together, I'm talking about a particular type of time. There is an old joke that you can walk into any restaurant and tell who is married and who isn't. The two people whose eyes never seem to leave each other, who are talking and listening intently, who are absorbed in each other – they're not married. That is what I mean by spending time together.

**Honesty** is the next step toward being in love. Unfortunately, some people see honesty in black-and-white terms. "You are either honest or dishonest." For these people, there is no gray area. I believe that honesty is a little more complicated than that. "Good morning; looks like it is going to be a beautiful day?" Is that statement honest or dishonest? Yes, it is honest but superficial; it is something you might say to a stranger

you just met on the elevator. Honesty is like an onion; there are layers or degrees of honesty.

A deeper level of honesty would be the historical report: "and he said. . . then she said. . . and then the cops came, and grandma ran out the back door." This historical report may have happened last night, last week, or last year. It will have little or none of your emotional content included in the story.



### **Honest Onion**

The fear of emotional pain stops most couples from sharing personal and "blackmailable" information. For example, "I ran into my old girlfriend at work; she is going to work for the company." This is the level where most couples substitute sexual intimacy for emotional intimacy. It is safer to be sexually intimate than to be emotionally intimate.

Honesty must start with being honest with yourself and then sharing that honesty with another. For a couple to be in love, they first must know themselves and then share their center with the other person. Many couples allow the other to know them up to a point, but then everything stops, and they remain acquaintances. Sometimes, you will start calling your acquaintance your love. Difficulty sharing to this vulnerable level will result in you never truly feeling loved, for there is this little voice in the back of your head that keeps telling you, "If my mate knew all the things that I have not shared about me, they would not love me. How can someone love me when I can't love myself?" You will find true love only when you are not afraid to share to your centers.

**Acceptance** is the next big decision. Once you have been open and vulnerable to your center, it is out of your hands. It is up to the other person to accept or reject your feelings. Once the other person has accepted your feelings, it is up to you to let that in. You could question their acceptance, "They are just saying that. They do not mean it. How could

they accept that about me?" Of course, this acceptance must be going both ways. Both of you need to give and get acceptance.

At this point, you will feel the feelings of love; you will have "fallen in love."

In his book, *THE ART OF LOVEING*, Erich Fromm talks about the three fallacies of love. The first is **that the intensity of the love feelings is proof that our love is real and will last**. In fact, the feelings of love are a guarantee of nothing. Fromm says that the intensity of the love feelings directly correlates to how lonely and isolated you have been before you let your guard down and let someone in.

**Second, the feeling of love is a function of opening up**, being honest, and getting acceptance. Therefore, it is true that being in love is no reason to get married because it will take much more than feelings of love to make a relationship work.

The feelings of love only prove that you have gone through the Love Process. So, if you want a guarantee that the feelings of love will remain in your relationship, you will need to keep repeating the Love Process of *spending time together, being honest with yourself, sharing that honesty with your mate, then getting and giving acceptance of each other's feelings*. Therein lies your guarantee that *our love will last forever*.

**To be in love is no reason ever to get married;**

**To be out of love is no reason ever to get a divorce.**

The problem is that most people view love as an accident over which they have no power. "I fell in love." Was it like slipping on a banana peel? If you can fall in love, then you can just as easily fall out of love.

Despite their intensity, the feelings of love are a guarantee of nothing. For example, over 95% of people getting married are truly in love, yet almost 50% of these love birds will end up with a divorce. Valentines is coming, and everyone wants a guarantee that their love will last forever.

**The third fallacy.** Fromm mentions a fallacy of love as "finding the right person to love." "I had to kiss a lot of frogs to find Mr. Right." Finding Mr. Right or Miss Right, this is the person who will guarantee that your relationship will last. For you, finding the Right person puts all the responsibility for your relationship outside of you. "It is luck, the draw of the cards." Zaza Gabor was married at least eight times and says she just has bad luck!

The problem is not finding the right person to love but loving the person you have found. The Love Process is a problem of acceptance that sinks many relationships.

There are two types of love. One is Object Love, "If I could only find the right person (object), then I would be happy." Object Love is like looking for a specific marble statue for your home entryway. You know what you are looking for and are sure you will know it when you see it. Finally, after traveling worldwide, you find the perfect piece. You invite all your friends to admire it; you polish it every day. The new is starting to wear off within a year, and you will only polish it once a week. Within two years, you can walk through the house blindfolded and never bump into it!

Object Love is safe, predictable, and boring, and you will start looking at other beautiful pieces. Nah, you are not going to get rid of it, at least not yet, but wouldn't life be more interesting if it would change, just a little? No one ever remains the same.

Everyone changes. The problem is that either the ones we love are not changing, and we are outgrowing them, or they are changing but not in the ways we want them to change. "Where is the girl that I married?"

No one, including you, is the same person you were ten years ago. Each of us is a dynamic, changing human being. Acceptance requires accepting yourself and accepting and embracing the changes in others. The problem is not finding the right person to love. Are you an accepting person who can love the person you have found?

The alternative to Object Love is Kaleidoscope love. You expect a kaleidoscope to always be different. You see something different, engaging, and beautiful each time you look. Kaleidoscope love is NOT predictable, boring, or safe. Your flexibility and acceptance of this type of love is paramount in your relationship. It is not all that hard to do if you think about this type of love as watching a toddler growing, changing, and learning new things every day.

This belief **is** that you must be the right person to be lovable. For women, this is smiling a lot (nice girls don't get angry), being slender enough, having the right hairdo, and wearing the right Cross-Your-Heart bra.

For men, it is having a buffed body, a good job, and a great sports car. In addition, he needs to be the coolest man in the room. He believes this is what a woman is looking for and tries to portray that image of himself.

Men and women both work at making a good first impression, putting their best foot forward to attract the opposite sex. It is a cross between having the right (fishing) lure and keeping a mystery about the real you. The emphasis here is **not** on being honest, open, and vulnerable. Just enough honesty to keep the mystery alive, but not too much, or you will scare off the other person. This need to put the best foot forward is based on your belief that you might not like me if they really knew who I am.

The problem is NOT being the right person to be loveable; are you willing to be open and honest to your very center?

The Love Process requires these three steps to create feelings of love, time Together, Honesty, and Acceptance. Once both of you have gone through these three steps, you will experience feelings of love. However, once you stop spending time together, stop being Honest to your centers and stop giving and getting Acceptance, the feelings of love will fade away until they die out completely.

The love process can be between a man and a woman, a woman and a woman, a man and a man, or between you and God. You may have noticed that sex is not a part of the Love Process. Love and sex are two different entities. You can have sex without love, or you can love someone without ever having sex with them.

The concept of the Love Process is not new; it has been around for years. Shree Rajneesh, an Indian mystic, had an interesting way of viewing the love process. See below.

## THE MYSTERY OF RELATIONSHIP

Osho Rajneesh 1931 – 1990

*Two persons meet,  
that means two worlds meet.  
It is not a simple thing—very complex, the most complex.  
Each person is a world unto himself or herself--  
a complex mystery with a long past and with eternal future.*

*In the beginning, only peripheries meet.  
But if the relationship grows intimate,  
Becomes closer, becomes deeper,  
then, by and by, centres start meeting.  
When centres meet, it is called love.*

*Love is very rare.  
To meet a person at his centre  
is to pass through a revolution yourself,  
because if you want to meet a person at his centre,  
You will have to allow that person  
to reach your centre also.  
You will have to become vulnerable,  
absolutely vulnerable, open.*

*So the first thing to be understood is:  
Don't take acquaintance as love.  
you may be making love,  
you may be sexually related,  
but sex is also peripheral.  
Unless centres meet, sex is just the meeting of two bodies.  
And a meeting of two bodies is not your meeting.  
Sex also remains acquaintance—  
physical, bodily, but still acquaintance.*

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