

Why is it that we have such trouble with love? We try to own it through marriage or committed relationships. We are afraid to open to it for fear of the possibility of getting hurt by the object of our love. We say we cannot live without love. We get jealous if the person we love says they love someone else.

We behave as if love comes in limited quantities. If we don't hold onto our little section of love, then we will never have enough. This scarcity of love theory is a popular one. Can you think of more ideas about love? Everyone seems to have a point of view about love.

In our culture, we have two kinds of love: conditional vs. unconditional. But are there really two types of love or have we confused an unspoken agreement with conditional love? This agreement implies that if you meet my needs then I will meet your needs. It is a need-based relationship that passes as a form of love. But, if love is truly unconditional, then there is only one kind of love. That is the willingness of one person to open his or her heart to another without any conditions. This might be called acceptance with an open heart, which is unconditional love.

We were raised in the scarcity of love atmosphere and our behaviors are an outgrowth of this. Most of us were told we had better hang onto any form of love that shows up in our lives or we would lose that love. This implies that love is a thing and that we can hold onto it. But, as evidenced by our current divorce rate, love cannot be owned and is not a thing that we can hold onto.

Love is an acceptance that is freely given from one to another. In a sense, you take a stand to come from an open heart. This stand says that I love you no matter what form our love takes. Nothing is required of you to deserve my love, I just declare that it is so. In my declaration, I am creating the space of love into which you can show up. It is like a bowl that holds all forms and all behaviors. In this bowl, a person can freely express who they are knowing they will always be loved. It is not a shackle that holds someone back in life. Rather, it is a generative force that allows for full self-expression and the inner experience of safety. A being coming from love feels sourced and safe. They know they are loved. This is the opposite of the prevailing attitude in life that you have to hold onto love.

What passes as love in our culture holds no freedom. It is all about limiting another's behavior. It comes with lots of rules and is based in ownership. If it does not allow for another's freedom, then it cannot be true love.