

Growing Deep: The purpose of intimate love...

Falling In Love

In an instant, we can fall in love. As if it comes from thin air. Love is upon you, you're over the moon or, more likely, out of your depth. Love can also show up suddenly from the past. A first love, an old friend a close confidant that suddenly shares intimate territory of the heart. No matter what the trajectory, or the length of time we know the other person, or even how many times we've been in love before, there is an inevitable conflict ahead....Ourselves.

Is love a Test?

Loving another person is neither a test, nor a venture for the faint of heart. In fact, intimate love is often regarded as the most beautiful and difficult of life practices. Fair warning, the way we 'attach' to love, can sometimes sabotage love itself.

Is love a Trick?

It can feel like a cruel trick. It can also feel like spiritual evidence, a wild animal, a whining child or a good ol' wanton passion. We must learn to feel it all at once with a courageous heart.

Is love blind, or.. is it just me?

It IS you... and, its them too. But, try not to perseverate on the *who* dunnit! The real question is, *why* does something so natural as love turn out to be so difficult for all of us to find? And, most times even harder to sustain?

What about Crimes of the Heart?

There are things we do to hurt one another. Perhaps even things we need to forgive. Intentional or not, this pain can linger and become toxic and resentful. Healing needs the full attention of the couple. Keep in mind, whether this hurt feels like a misdemeanor or a felony, most of the time the 'ability to forgive' and move forward together is a three-step process: 1) understanding our own attachment style/intimate wounds 2) mutual accountability for the present hurt and, 3) The safety that comes from actionable intimate change. If you have been hurt by love, then there is much more to learn about yourself through the eyes of your intimate partner than you could ever do alone.

Fear NOT!

You are NOT alone! In fact, it is by no means a rare occurrence that something so natural as intimate love can be the hardest thing we ever do. And, just as our needs for deep feelings can undermine our goal to find a partner, keeping a partner can be more challenging by many fathoms. And the *solutions to the conflicts* of the couple, is...(drum roll).. the 'couple' itself.

So ...what's the Deal?

The deal IS, the problems that often emerge in a couple, were there long before you met. In fact, the irony and humility of coupling is that you are unwittingly signing up to fix/grow-yourself-up in front of an intimate partner. Because, quite frankly, we are all as uniquely loveable as we are broken. So, in short, love doesn't fix you. Yet, the couple can be a door to the healing what you cannot do alone!

What IS a 'couple'?

Most of us suffer from old 'ideas' of ourselves. Which very often come from our childhood. These ideas can lead to 'ideal' expectations of intimate others. (As an aside: It's fair to note we 'showed up to life with some predetermined set points like body type, health and temperament), but don't confuse your genetic 'raw material' for 'who' you are becoming. Your early attachment bonds get more credit for that. And, the early bonding that shapes your later intimate life, is still here to this very day. With a healthy couple, you can create a better mirror to 'grow-up' the neglected and more underdeveloped parts of your ever maturing 'adult'.

Are you saying we could be stuck like this?

Probably... for the moment at least but, not trapped in time for good. Developmentally speaking, we all have sticky spots. Regardless of how much we 'become ourselves, there are parts of you that remain undeveloped. If your goal is intimacy, then, finding your partner ultimately means inviting another person to see how imperfect you really are. Desire to be loved and connected is no match for the need to be truly seen. In fact, as much as we try to hide such things, what we really want to know is, 'if someone sees me fully, these broken bits, will they stay and love me anyway'. This becomes the safe opportunity to become more emotionally mature. Being in a couple, you signed up for personal development. And the mirror of development can get rough if the couple is steeped in conflict.

Where do I sign up?

So now that we know this previously unspeakable truth. It's time to commit to growing deeply with one another, all the while, 'growing-up' these undeveloped places in ourselves. Ultimately, our life's satisfaction hinges on the quality of our connection with others on the journey. And so, if we choose to grow deeply with our partner, then we fulfill two life purposes. To know, develop and love oneself, while providing that same gift to an intimate another. **Read on to understand the 3-C's of Coupling.*

3'C's as a Couples Deep Practice

As you step into this 3-C's practice, keep this in mind:

*'The heart knows what it wants,
but not so often what it needs.'*

When confronted by the 'heart' not quite knowing what it needs. The three C's and associated couple's exercises are very effective tools for deepening.

What are the 3 C'S

Cadence, Comradery, and intimate Connection are the landscapes where we can repair and heal from the challenges of complacency, fear, loss, and even traumas that may continue to obfuscate intimate desires in your life.

Why practice 3-C's

Whether it's sex, time, money, power, parenting, energy - or, whatever houses the couple's conflict... there are just as many territories for healing. The 3-C's are the landscapes to practice *deepening* while repairing and *healing* from the challenges you faced in early childhood development.

How do I practice?

Surrendering to this practice implies vulnerable and humble steps. You must give up on *being right* and/or *neurotic knowing* of your significant other. Learning and meeting your partner's needs comes from the deep observation, playful curiosity, and a keen understanding that... *Whatever problem we face, ultimately 'the couple' that emerges, becomes the wisest 'adult' to deal with the conflicts ahead.'*

MLS