



BE the CHANGE

Sean Casey LeClaire, Publisher

LOVE

As we enter another year, I want to risk saying a few things about Love.

First of all, I don't believe we choose who we Love. When we truly Love someone, this Love is a gift given from Spirit. Because we have free will, what we get to do is to choose whether we will fully accept the gift and commit to the other person in order to grow as individuals in relationship. True commitment in a relationship means that we accept the whole gift, not merely parts of the other person. My friend and colleague Patrick Thornton captured the essence of commitment best when he asked a profound question... Do you Love her the way she is, and the way she isn't?

I have spent much of my life believing that Love had to do with feelings, thoughts and bodily sensations. I had even thought that Love was about achieving a certain sense of security and comfort and stability and peace. I do think that Love can and does include these things but Love is not limited by having or not having them. Much of my thought, feeling and sensation phenomenon has been of my mind. Unfortunately, under certain circumstances, my mind can quickly become muddled. Then I become of two minds, ambivalent. When this happens, I suffer because Love is not moving in and through me. And my body reacts to the mind's contraction and becomes like a kinked garden hose. When my mind once again becomes clear, then I become a vessel, a vehicle, a clear and easy way for genuine Love to enter the world. When I use the word "Love," I mean Awareness—not psychological awareness—but Awareness, Self, Wholeness, Consciousness, Presence, call it what you will... Buddha, Allah, Shiva, Bhaivara, Jesus. By its very nature, most people know when it is present.

I was given a great gift recently—an experience of what Love is definitely not. I have, at various times in my life, hated some of the people who I have said that I "loved." In early December I had the occasion to experience intense hate arising within me toward my ex-wife. Hate is painful because hate is a contracted form of romantic love. Hate is an amplified contraction of ego-based love. Having observed and felt the hate fully, I was then able to let it go. I am grateful for the healing that happened inside of me. The key to let go of old pain is to feel it fully, while remaining the observer of the pain. I don't become the pain; I feel it fully, while being the observer. It's not an easy process but until I stopped projecting my old pain into that relationship, I could not allow a movement of Grace to heal me. This past week, my son's mother dropped our boy at my home, by herself, for the first time in over a year. I have no idea what that gesture meant to her but for me it was a blessing.

Presently I am blessed to be in a four-year relationship with an extraordinary woman who I have never hated. It's completely impossible; and, although we Love each other deeply, we do have our challenges. I can only speak for my part, and it mostly has to do with me getting scared and reaching for my "broadsword" and/or using my intensity as a way to protect myself from perceived rejection, loss or abandonment. When I can stay present, and not make my fear her problem or make her fear my problem, this allows me to fully reclaim the abandoned baby and hurt young teenager who live in me. These energies are vital to my life force and I am grateful for the ongoing healing. What I find also helps to nurture the relationship is for me to respect my partner's healthy boundaries and have appropriate boundaries myself. Along with this, I have found that nothing works so well as gentle and clear communication.

When we are given the gift of Love for another, and it appears that they may not choose us, we can begin to think that Spirit is against us. But Spirit is only for us, and everything, absolutely everything, happens and doesn't happen with Infinite grace and Love and in God's time. I can't make someone stay with me. But I can ask for what I want in the relationship. And I must do my own healing footwork and completely own my part of creating any loss in my life, and I can always Love. To be in a committed relationship, two people must choose each other. The choice is to be and relate with one another... sometimes awkwardly, sometimes angrily, sometimes passionately, sometimes annoyed, sometimes silently, sometimes supportively, sometimes fully communing as One, sometimes mundanely, sometimes with uproarious laughter, sometimes with great solitude—but always together.

Certain aspects of my own psychological make-up much prefer love as feeling or sensation or thought, love as an idea, where I'm getting what I want and I'm not too disturbed by the person who I say that I love. I continue to observe that these immature parts of me have split off from the Whole (Love) due to a distorted desire to a stay in control or to be right or to think I know what's best in a situation. Like many of you, I am engaged in an ongoing healing process called life, learning to Love these split-off parts of myself. (You ever notice how Spirit puts people in our path to show us where the split-off parts are, and that these people are often the ones who we cherish most?) I have observed that when I can allow space for all of me, I can allow space for all of you and speak my needs, wants and opinions gently and clearly when I choose to do so. And, when I don't Love all of me, I stumble and speak without much tenderness or skill.

A profound teacher of mine Mr. Goenka says: Love is a one-way street.

It gives. It doesn't care-take. It gives. It doesn't manipulate. It gives. It doesn't get angry, or hurt. It does not feel excluded. It gives. It does not judge. It does not withhold. It does not control. It gives. It waits. And it shines. Love gives. When I make the decision to choose to stay in Love, the gift arrives immediately. By its very nature, love gives. Bees buzz, grass grows, snakes slither, spiders weave, flowers grow, water moves, children laugh and love gives. It is all it can do.

Anything else is not Love.