

Interpersonal Love, Falling in Love, and Being in Love

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“If this book is incomprehensible to anyone and jars on his ears, the fault, if seems to me, is not necessarily mine.”

[From Nietzsche’s Genealogy of Morals, Kaufmann, tr.]

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Preface

You know how it’s very easy to spend a lot of time, energy, and money trying to improve our love lives without ever gaining any lasting fulfillment?

If you’re dissatisfied about having insufficient genuine love in your life, my hope for you is that the ideas expressed here will enable you not only to understand why that’s so but also what you could choose to do to improve your results.

What occasioned me to write it?

I enjoy corresponding by email with various friends. Recently, five women who all happen to be in their 30s have told me that they’ve fallen in love. None of the five are married. Two of them have a single child, whereas the other three are not mothers. They live on 3 different continents. I’ve never met any of them in person or even talked on the phone or Skype with any of them. Since three of them don’t have English as their native language and the other two may not have been using the phrase as it’s usually used, no implicit criticism of any of them should be inferred from what follows.

How should we think about interpersonal love, falling in love, and being in love? How should we evaluate them? What might we do to improve if our evaluations are too low?

About a decade ago in a blog post entitled *Sexual Desire* I wrote: “Everyone except romantically deluded teenagers understands the brevity, instability, and insanity in ‘falling in love.’”

Apparently not.

Permit me a very fast review of some of the major ideas about love and its associated emotions and desires. Assuming that they’re not already familiar to you, my goal here is that you find them stimulating and consider them more intensely yourself in order to improve your love life.

The best work on the idea of love in the western tradition known to me is Singer’s 3 volume The Nature of Love. I recommend it. According to him, every human being hopes that “Power and value reside together within an infinite and eternal source of love” [vol. I, p. 310 – hereafter cited as ‘I, 310’]. That may well be correct.

As background, permit me here only to mention two revered seminal ideas.

One is the distinction from ancient Greek thinkers about love into three kinds, namely, philos or the love of a friend, eros or erotic love, and agape, love of the divine.

The other is an idea that comes from the Platonic (and Neo-Platonic) tradition that everything emanates from Being [Oneness], which is the supreme union of Reality, Goodness, and Beauty. It connects the idea of (an impersonal) God [Being] with love and suggests that not all love may be delusional.

That becomes an ideal for later western thinkers: “More than any prior doctrine, medieval Christianity recognizes the love of persons as the highest ideal” [I, 360]. It’s critical to note that, here, a “person” is not an empirical ego but an abstraction, namely, a transcendental soul.

Already, then, we have a conceptual framework for distinguishing genuine (real, true) love¹ from falling in love². Love¹ can be real, valuable, and noncorporeal, whereas falling in love² may be delusional and corporeal.

What about sexual love? What about sexual relationships?

Singer identifies two traditions, namely, the *idealist* tradition that gets codified as courtly love in the Middle Ages and romantic love in the 19th century and the *realist* tradition of everyday and scientific experience.

Importantly, both traditions have the same starting point. “There is one point on which realist and idealist accounts of love tend to agree. They usually begin with the loneliness of man” [II, 4]. Love is an attempt to overcome separateness, an attempt to merge 2 human beings.

Love is union. This idea goes back at least as far as Plato’s *Symposium*. To love is to attempt to merge with another. Wanting love is wanting the completion, fulfillment, enduring satisfaction, that comes from union.

Idealists would like this to merge with sexual reality, but realists don’t think it does.

Notice the danger that comes from egocentricity, namely, using another for one’s own selfish purpose of feeling union (oneness, unity).

Thinkers who promoted courtly love tended to agree that, by itself, sexual love is valuable and ennobles the lovers. When it’s passionate or emotionally intense, which is different from being merely sensuous, it creates a holy union. Previously in the tradition, the idea of passionate oneness had been reserved for Christian love (agape) rather than eros. Furthermore, it’s not merely reducible to libidinal impulses and it’s not necessarily related to marriage.

“The tradition of courtly love is Western man’s first great effort to demonstrate that the noble aspirations of idealism need not be incompatible with a joyful acceptance of sexual reality” [II, 35].

Although they liked the idea of love as two people searching for mutual goodness, some thinkers (e.g., Andreas Capellanus), however, found that incompatible with the idea that such a search should be dependent upon transitory emotions such as jealousy or fear. Besides, isn’t sexual union outside marriage nothing but sin?

Isn’t there a difference between love¹ and lust (love²)?

Love¹ may be other-worldly, but certainly love² isn’t. Isn’t there an obvious experiential difference between loving God [Being] and loving another human being? It’s not clear how courtly love and religious love can be harmonized. In fact, many medieval romances clearly delineate conflicts that cannot be harmonized (such as the split between thwarted lovers and the rest of society [II, 111]).

For Cavalcanti the erotic love that results from absorbed attention is doomed; in fact, life cannot give us what we desire. The idea of religious love was a powerful idea that affected the thinking of such transitional Renaissance authors as Petrarch and Dante.

Shakespeare is different. He “presupposes that extensive enjoyment, here, now, and however long nature allows, is what everyone really wills as

the outcome of sexual love” [II, 209]. There are, for him, two problems and both reflect his realism. The first problem is time. It ravages us. (Just read some of his great sonnets.) Unlike the Neoplatonic tradition, goodness and beauty for him are two and not necessarily one. The second problem is overvaluing the beloved. Love is consummated in human experience by marriage, which requires constancy even after the beauty of the beloved fades.

Marriage as the embodiment of sexual friendship was the Puritan ideal. It wasn't “a passionate or extravagantly emotional oneness but rather a constant, enduring fellowship” [II, 242].

For Descartes, if he can be taken at his word, although the paradigmatic example of love is our love of God, friendship and affectionate love are important elements of a well-lived life. Like most philosophers since Plato, Descartes thought that intellectual pleasures were superior to sensory ones. After all, the objects of sensory pleasures are transitory and fleeting. They do not and cannot last. How could they possibly compare well to feeling unity with a timeless God?

Many philosophers have shared Pascal's skepticism about all love for human beings, namely, that it's too transitory to be very valuable.

For Spinoza, it's false that union is the essence of love, although he thinks it a property of love. What is love? “*Love* is pleasure, accompanied by the idea of an external cause.” In other words, love is the ability to enjoy something while being aware of our enjoyment. What is good is what is desirable, pleasurable. The ideal outcome would occur when all human beings become something like “one single mind and one single body.” Ultimately, for him, every apparently different object is one and the same substance; he's a monist. Nevertheless, Goodness is not the same as Beauty because, Beauty, unlike Goodness, is stained by its dependence on sense perception.

For Hume, it's impossible to define ‘love’ [A Treatise of Human Nature, Book II, Part II, Section 1 – hereafter cited as ‘II, II, 1’.] because there's no “simple impression” that renders the word itself intelligible.

Hume argues that reason is impotent to address our most vital concerns: “Where am I, or what? From what causes do I derive my existence, and to what condition shall I return? Whose favour shall I court, and whose anger must I dread? What beings surround me? And on whom have I any influence, or who have any influence on me?” [I, IV, VII].

He's skeptical that anything including reason can help him: “When I turn my eye inward, I find nothing but doubt and ignorance” [I, IV, VII]. In fact, he doesn't even know what he is: “For my part, when I enter most

intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other . . . I never can catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe any thing but the perception” (I, VI; Hume’s emphasis). He means by the word ‘perception’ what we mean by ‘object’ or ‘form’; because objects or forms are limited, they can be singled out. Selves can’t be.

“Reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions” (II, III, III). Since experience and not reason is the only reliable guide, Hume elevates the emotions (passions, feelings) higher than reason. He wasn’t just skeptical about his own personal identity, but also about reason when it comes to such topics as God, causation, individuals, and traditional morality. He rejected the emphasis on reason advocated by Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz and was sympathetic to the empiricism of Locke and Berkeley.

Still, Hume isn’t big on passionate love. The object of love is always another person. Friendship is important and it should be the basis of marriage. Unlike friendship, erotic love is restless, impatient, variable, and unstable.

By de-emphasizing reason, Hume opens the door to the so-called Romantic period of poets like Blake and Coleridge. Nearly all Romantics accepted the craving for love as the desire for union and overcoming separateness. As a mystical process, merging can be painful and frightening as well as pleasurable.

Following Spinoza, everything – not just other humans – could be loved. Their emphasis was on the experience of loving rather than on the beloved object. The Romantics worshipped the experience of loving itself as divine. “For medieval Christians, God is love; for the Romantics ideology, love is God” (II, 294).

Critics, of course, pounced. Isn’t this just egoistic self-delusion? Isn’t trying to use another being to satisfy one’s own emotional needs mere selfishness and not love at all?

Some Romantics replied that, whatever its object, love embodies holiness. Love is infinitely valuable. “[T]he concept of Romantic love . . . implies that sexual love . . . is an ideal worth striving for, that love ennobles . . . that love is a spiritual attainment that cannot be reduced to sex alone, that it pertains to courtship . . . and that it is passion creating a special oneness” (II, 300-301).

Some Romantics echoed Rousseau who thought of “true or ultimate love as a transcending of both marriage and sexual love, and in general of all moral possibilities that people encounter in their natural relations to one

another” (II, 310). That idea itself, of course, echoes Neo-Platonism. Rousseau minimizes the value of sexual satisfaction and ultimately admits that genuine love is a delusion. Sexuality is bad. Even though emotions both kill us as well as make us feel alive, he believes that emotions themselves are essential parts of a good life.

The Marquis de Sade thinks that usually what is natural is evil. Since emotions undermine the quest for pleasure, “passionate love is always a form of madness” (II, 345). Unlike Rousseau, Sade finds no redeeming social value in love. Individual human beings are constant in their desire for pleasure and that typically requires other people. Since nature teaches us that the greatest pleasures are intimately associated with the greatest pains, when we engage in cruel or even criminal sexual practices, we are just being natural. Whether we are giving or receiving pain, that’s what stimulates the most intense sexual pleasures.

Like Rousseau, Kant thinks that sexuality is bad; it’s a degradation of human nature. The only exception that renders sexual desire moral is when one person is married to another and, so, has rights to that other person as a whole, including to that other’s sexuality. Marriage is a contract between two people in which they grant each other reciprocal rights. He assumes that “in itself sexuality is nothing but an appetite for some other person” (II, 382). However, as Singer points out, sexuality also involves interpersonal sensitivity so that one is able to relate to another person’s qualities that include nonphysical ones.

Schlegel creates what amounts to a religion of love. The primordial form of human nature is bisexual and Schelling extends this to the Romantic ideal that “love enables a human being to attain oneness with all nature” (II, 387). In interpersonal terms, this seems to be something like a blending of sexual desire, passionate longing, and friendship.

There are some very interesting ideas here, aren’t there?

What is falling in love and how should we evaluate it? After continuing the discussion from the last section, my answer follows in this section.

Stendhal thinks that passionate love is the only meaning to be found in life, which is a view to which some recent philosophers such as Robert Solomon (see his The Passions) have been attracted. Stendhal's ideal of love between a man and a woman blends passion-love, sympathy-love, vanity-love, and physical-love. Even though he has nothing to say about what a happy marriage might be like, to enjoy passion-love is supposedly the greatest happiness available to humans.

What about feeling oneness with all nature and not just another human being? That's Schelling's idea. He imagines of God as separate from nature but also pervading all nature. Divinity is the omnipresent One and the All.

For Hegel, absolute Spirit (God, Geist) somehow develops through history with the goal of becoming aware of its own nature ('Bewusstsein', self-awareness or self-comprehension), which is a complete understanding of consciousness. In a love between equals, the lovers are life sensing life and the oneness they feel is real. Ultimately, sexual love is just a developmental stage to be superseded as a kind of rational and yet spiritual love that is a driving force in which alienation is overcome, which was what Luther believed.

Coleridge thinks that poetic imagination could be superior to reason as a cognitive device (II, 419]. For Shelley, similarly, it's most important to understand that people in love use their imaginations to unite or commune or merge with one another. In sexual love, this overpowers the three complementary factors of sexual desire, the enjoyable sensation that comes from awareness of beauty, and goodwill or kindness. He wasn't only a poet but a panpsychic who thought that the world was always getting better.

These kinds of views owe much to Hume who emphasizes the value of sympathy. Although Hobbes thinks everyone is selfish, Hume thinks that all human beings have an innate disposition to be sympathetic and that this disposition provides the foundation for all morality.

Byron reacts against any kind of doctrine of love as "benign merging" [II, 428]. Reality is how things are and that's quite different from how we'd like them to be in our longing for unity or oneness. For example, no two lovers can survive the shipwreck of marriage to each other.

Is a happy love between two people who have fallen in love possible? Even if not, it seems certainly infrequent.

Many Romantics are pessimistic and believe in “love-death.” Many, like Goethe, value love but think genuine love may be impossible given our worldly imperfections. Insofar as Romantic love depends upon imaginative processes, it’s in danger of simply being covert egoism, Romantic self-delusion (II, 296).

Like Hegel, Schopenhauer thinks that death is a complete loss of individuality. For him, individuality is nothing but a delusion of the intellect. Reason just objectifies the underlying “will” or life force that is the dynamic energy that drives nature. He reduces all kinds of love to the reproductive instinct. For Schopenhauer, nothing justifies existence itself [II, 447]. Like Augustine and Pascal, our search for happiness is in vain.

What’s the difference between being in love and falling in love?

Correctly in my judgment, Ortega y Gasset considers falling in love to be madness, a kind of insanity or dysfunction [II, 363-4]. It’s like a self-induced hypnotic state in which one overvalues the beloved. As Singer puts it, it’s “only a pathological substitute for truly being in love.” (For a good literary description, read Ferlinghetti’s Her.)

If so, that implicitly answers one question with which we began, namely, the question about how we should understand and evaluate falling in love. When love feels like falling into a pit, when it feels as though something is happening to us rather than feeling that it’s something that we are or are doing, it’s not really love at all. No matter how temporarily exhilarating, it’s insanity. It’s mostly deluded teenagers or young adults – or so it seems to me – who think that, where ‘S’ stands for the someone who is beloved, *if only S loves me will my life be meaningful*. This is nothing but an example of **the someday syndrome**, which is always delusional.

Notice that falling in love never works for long. Typically, it lasts for a few weeks or months and almost never more than a year or two. The exhilaration from it, however, can become addictive, and that addiction can lead to serial monogamy in which one keeps chasing its associated emotional highs.

Faith in future fulfillment cannot work for a simple reason: **there is no future fulfillment**. When the future arrives, it’s always the present moment, right now. Belief in any version of the someday syndrome is always dysfunctional. Fettered by time, we fail to appreciate the depth of the insight that, similar to the way the past is no longer real, the future is

not yet real. As Eckhart Tolle repeatedly emphasizes, life is only ever lived in the present moment.

Furthermore, death, too, lies in all our futures. Since death obliterates all fulfillment, any kind of belief in future fulfillment or the someday syndrome renders us deeply conflicted.

Stendhal had studied the philosophy of Destutt de Tracy who argued that, although married love has its origin in reproductive instincts, its complete development goes well beyond physical desires. Stendhal writes, "Love is friendship embellished by pleasure; it is the perfection of friendship" [II, 371].

Most philosophers throughout the centuries have taken friendship to be the paradigmatic kind of interpersonal love. In a marriage, it may happen that, while sexual and emotional desires fade, the friendship deepens.

Perhaps it should be noted that many major philosophers from the western tradition were not themselves married. Consider, for example, this list: Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Augustine, Aquinas, Descartes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche. Only 5 of them were married or, in effect, married, and one of those, namely, Augustine notoriously dropped his family. In that sense, most were thinking beyond their experience, which is always dangerous. Also, of course, they were all men.

Anyone who struggles to think seriously about the nature of love must, if honest, be sympathetic to an entry in Emerson's diary in which he could see the "inadequateness" of his own essay on love [II, 484].

If you think that I have the final word about it, you are deluded. Nevertheless, I have fulfilled part of my self-appointed mission. I've answered the two questions about "falling in love."

What remains to answer is the question of the nature of "being in love."

Although Nietzsche disagrees, it's usually assumed that answering that clearly requires separating out our faculty of thinking or reasoning from the emotions (passions, feelings). Hume famously argued, "that reason alone can never be a motive to any action of the will" (Book II, Section III.). What a host of tangled ideas to clarify!

The ideal of being in love is too important to think about carelessly.

What is being in love and how should we evaluate it?

The previous two sections were about the idea of love in the western tradition as well as falling in love.

Assuming the argument so far to be sound, whereas **falling in love** is a form of insanity, **being in love** is sometimes thought to be part of the highest quality of life. Let's investigate that.

There's an immediate problem: How? It would be nothing short of hubris to rely on my own experience. That would be to make the idiotic assumption that I am an authority on love. I am not.

So, who are the authorities? To whom should we turn for wisdom with respect to love?

This is a specific instance of our most important epistemological problem, which is based on the fact that *there may be no intrinsic or phenomenological difference between a true opinion and a false one*.

I assume here the basic distinction between **knowledge** and **opinion**. Whereas there's no such thing as false knowledge, there not only are false opinions but also they are distressingly common.

Merely thinking or believing a proposition to be true doesn't make it true. Whereas knowledge is backed by demonstrative evidence (cf. Panayot Butchvarov, The Concept of Knowledge), opinions are only backed by nondemonstrative evidence and, so, may be false.

There is no agreement or clear understanding about what nondemonstrative evidence is. It's not just that Hume pointed this out in modern times, but philosophers have been aware of this problem at least since Plato's *Theaetetus*.

Unless they are true, opinions about love are as useless as other opinions. We can attach or cling to them, but that's irrelevant. The question is: "How can they be justified?"

There is a way out. We ourselves may be unable to tell the difference between true and false opinions, but the greatest sages seem able to. So, who are they? **Who are the authorities about love?** My answer follows in the rest of this section.

For Socrates, human error is involuntary. The underlying problem, again, is that what we think is true may not be what actually is true. That we lack the inherent means to distinguish true opinions from false ones is amply demonstrated by the widespread phenomenon of false beliefs that are frequently accepted as true.

Probably you learned that as a child. Perhaps you were taking a test in school and were convinced that one of your answers was correct. After the test was over, you looked up the answer only to find out to your chagrin that your answer was false. Being convinced that some proposition is true doesn't mean that it is.

The good news is that Dr. David R. Hawkins recently discovered a way out. If you'd like to understand it and evaluate it for yourself, read in order the following three of his books, namely, Power Vs. Force, The Eye of the I, and I. What follows here is a very brief introduction to his powerful discovery using my own terminology.

An **entity** is a real form (object, thing). Every form is limited (bounded, circumscribed). This is what enables us to single them out, attend to them and focus on them by separating them from their backgrounds. Real forms are multiply "singleoutable" (cf. my The Concept of Existence or Butchvarov's Being Qua Being). For example, if the tree that I'm seeing is the tree that you're seeing, it's real. For example, if the tree that I'm seeing is the tree that I'm touching, it's real. For example, if the tree that I saw yesterday is the tree that I'm now seeing, it's real.

Every entity emanates an invisible **energy** within consciousness. Each energy field or level of consciousness may be calibrated according to their measurable effects.

As our frequency or vibration of energy increases, there's a corresponding rise in our so-called level of consciousness and reported level of happiness. (The phrase 'level of consciousness' is misleading in the sense that all consciousness is the same. For example, auditory consciousness and tactile consciousness differ only in their objects; they are not two kinds of consciousness. As long as this is understood, there's no harm using the popular phrase 'level of consciousness' and using it is less pedantic.) The higher one's personal calibration (personal energy, level of energy, consciousness calibration), the happier one is.

Every apprehension of truth is relative to a certain perspective; judgements are true only under certain circumstances from a particular viewpoint. These come from "attractors," which are hidden energy patterns relative to different levels of consciousness. The phenomenal world of Becoming we experience expresses the endless interaction of different attractors of varying strengths. However subtly, every form interacts with every other form. This interconnectedness grounds the idea of the unity or oneness of the world. The noumenal world is Being, which is formless and timeless.

Dr. Hawkins developed a logarithmic (not arithmetical) map or scale of all possible levels of human consciousness from 1 to 1000. (Unlike arithmetical scales, logarithmic ones do not have equal distances between measurement levels.) A personal calibration for any human being can be calculated and then plotted on Hawkins's map.

These personal calibrations are not fixed until we die. At every moment, we all have a specific level of consciousness that corresponds to the state of our central nervous system. These levels can stay the same, decrease, or increase. They sometimes increase or decrease very significantly. Although one's level at a given time cannot be directly apprehended, it can be calibrated indirectly using muscle testing when the calibration is done by an experienced, qualified tester.

If you'd like to learn how to do the calibrations yourself and plot their results, see the first 4 chapters of my [How to Dissolve Unwanted Emotions](#). [That book calibrates at 569.] Hawkins died in 2012, but many of his calibrations and those of his students can be found in his [Truth vs. Falsehood](#). [If they want it, I give each of my coaching clients their own personal calibration.]

We're naturally most interested in the happiness that comes from living well. Those who live well are wise. **Sages** are those who have mastered life. The purpose of philosophy is to become wise. Sages live well and, so, are the happiest human beings. They are the successful philosophers. Etymologically, to be a philosopher is to be a lover of wisdom, i.e., someone who seriously seeks to live well.

Hawkins's map provides us with a way to determine who is wise. So, though you and I may not be wise, there's now a way to determine who to ask to answer our questions about love.

Those whose personal calibrations are *600 or higher* are sages. While the personal calibrations of dead sages is fixed, living sages can be ranked from 600 on up. Since truth is relative to a specific level, pay more attention to the teaching of a sage who ranks at, say, 950 than to one who ranks at, say, 750 or 610.

Sages are the less than 1/2 of 1% of human beings who live heavenly lives. They occur infrequently in the human population; there may be only one sage in ten million people. ***Sages enjoy unconditioned awareness that transcends ordinary personhood, and, so, live beyond the delusion of individuality that causes all dissatisfaction.*** Theirs is a 100% happiness rate.

According to my own calibrations, the greatest living sage is Eckhart Tolle. Some other recent spiritual teachers such as David R. Hawkins,

Philip Kapleau, and Thich Nhat Hanh as well as contemporary ones such as The Dalai Lama are relatively well-known.

This gives us a simple **method** for learning about love or wisdom: pay attention to the teachings of sages with the highest calibrations, pay less attention to the teachings of sages with lower calibrations, and pay little nor no attention to the teachings of nonsages to avoid confusion. Among the highest-ranked sages are the Buddha and Jesus Christ, who both calibrate at 1000.

Most of us are not sages; sagehood requires unconditioned consciousness. Our personal calibrations are 599 or lower because “our” consciousness is conditional. (Since no quality is personal and consciousness is best understood as a quality, I quarantined ‘our’ in the previous sentence.)

Those whose personal calibrations are *199 or lower* live hellish, animalistic lives below the level of integrity, truth, and empowerment in the world of force. *200 is the most important division.* Practical wisdom requires avoiding the influence of such people as much as possible.

Everyone else with a conditioned mind calibrates in the domain of integrity, truth, and empowerment *between 200 and 599.*

500 is the second most important division. It’s the division between the objective material domain [1 – 499] and the subjective immaterial domain [500 – 1000] where love begins to blossom. The ability to love unconditionally begins at level *540.*

Ultimately, people with personal calibrations of 499 or lower live in fear, whereas people with personal calibrations of 500 or higher live in love. [I return to this point in what follows.] Those of us who calibrate in the 500s have a 98% happiness rate.

The *400s* is the domain of rationality, which trumps emotionality. Becoming rational is a valuable achievement. Theirs is a 79% happiness rate. However, it’s as if many with that degree of conceptual sophistication become satisfied with it and simply stop developing.

Our conditioning is culturally and not just personally relative. The average calibration in some favored countries such as the U.S.A. and Canada is much higher than the average calibrations of, say, many countries in the Middle East. This does *not* mean that the average North American is morally superior or more valuable than the average Middle Easterner, but it does mean that the average American is happier than the average Middle Easterner simply by being lucky to be an American.

This point deserves emphasis. Having a higher personal calibration does *not* make someone better than someone else with a lower personal

calibration. Why? Unlimited formlessness [Being, God, unconditioned Consciousness] is present as the essence or whatness of all human beings. Although some of us are luckier and happier than others, we human beings are all essentially equally valuable from the moral point of view. Nobody is more valuable than anyone else.

What we believe determines what we experience. The content of mentation is recontextualized at every major paradigm shift, namely, 200, 400, 500, and 600.

With the concentration and fixity of focus on constantly surrendering all mental contents characteristic of advanced spiritual work, detachment evolves into spiritual purification and nonattachment as the separation between the observer and that which is observed diminishes and, for sages, eventually dissolves. That is the end of dissatisfaction (suffering, discontent, misery, unhappiness). This typically requires faith, a true teaching, dedicated adherence to an effective spiritual practice to the point of mastering it, and almost always the guidance of a qualified spiritual teacher with integrity. [I return to this in section 7.]

We all want to be happier. The problem has been that we don't know how to become happier. After Hawkins's discovery and research, we have a measurable way forward. That's important because *what is measurable is easier to improve than what isn't*. We become able to tell what's working and what isn't.

Those whose personal calibrations are 600 or higher are the happiest and most abidingly loving, joyful, and peaceful human beings. Those whose personal calibrations are in the 500s are on the doorstep to sagehood and happier and more loving, joyful, and peaceful than anyone whose personal calibration is 499 or lower.

If you want to become happier, raise your personal calibration. The wiser you become, the happier you'll become. You'll also automatically become more loving, joyful, and peaceful.

Almost everyone who attains a calibration of 500 or higher does so by mastering some classic meditative practice or other such as zazen or aliveness awareness. In other words, they practice "no-thought" and learn to live in alert consciousness without compulsive thinking (judging, conceptualizing, evaluating).

Alert consciousness without thought is spiritual wakefulness. In addition to being formless, Being is characterized by silence, stillness, and timelessness. If you think of thoughts as mental

noise, it makes sense to imagine how dropping them could remove obstructions to the direct realization of Being.

That's why the Buddha said, "Sorrow springs from attachment . . . Meditate, practitioner! . . . Let go of the past! / Let go of the future! / In the present, let go!"

That's why Bodhidharma [died about 530 C.E.], the first Ch'an [Zen] ancestor from ancient China, says that being able to live without thinking is the Zen life: "No thinking about anything is Zen. Once you know this, walking, sitting, lying down, everything you do is Zen."

That's why Jianzhi Sengcan [died 606], the third Ch'an ancestor, says in his famous poem: "live in bondage to your thoughts, / and you will be confused, unclear."

The key to spiritual development, the essence of spiritual work or practice, is surrendering (letting go of, detaching from, dropping) *all* egocentric attachments, which include all thoughts and emotions. That's why it's impossible to think one's way to sagehood. **The only way to wisdom is the way of nonattachment.** Becoming a sage is transcending egoic personhood.

The lower someone's personal calibration, the stronger the ego. Personal calibrations of 199 or below are really "varying degrees of emotionalized egocentricity" (from Hawkins's Truth Vs. Falsehood). Persons who calibrate that low have no ability to use muscle testing well. The happiness rate of those whose personal calibrations are between 100 and 200 is just 15%. Between 50 and 100 it's 2%. It's 0% at 49 or lower. *The stronger the ego, the lower the happiness rate.* Why?

"[T]he core error is that the ego's dualistic, distorted perception sees everything in terms of the perpetrator/victim model (cal. level 130)" (ibid). People with calibrations that low don't live in reality; instead, they live in "emotionally motivated fantasy" (ibid). The narcissistic ego refuses to accept personal responsibility. "Narcissism is inherently paranoid" (ibid),

As the threshold of integrity at 200 is surpassed and personal calibrations continue to increase, acceptance and compassion more and more dissolve the ego. **As ego delusion diminishes, happiness increases as well as abiding love, joy, and peacefulness.** Our consciousness calibration is the single most decisive influence in the quality of our lives. At levels 600 and higher, egoic personhood is transcended.

The more surrendering to reality and nonattachment there are in someone's life, the more accurate muscle testing calibrations made by that person become. The results of muscle testing are plotted on Hawkins's Map, which yields personal calibrations. *There's no reason why nearly all*

human beings cannot calibrate at 500 or higher, and, so, become saner and more loving. The higher your personal calibration, the better for you and the better for the rest of us, too.

If you'd like an independent way of estimating your own degree of wakefulness, there's an inventory in the Appendix to Dr. Steve Taylor's The Leap. You may also be able to find a Zen or other qualified master who is willing to test you.

Since there's an egocentric judgment at the heart of every emotion (as I've argued in multiple places such as Emotional Facelift and Emotional Empowerment), **emotional afflictions decrease with ascending personal calibrations**. Effective meditative practice or spiritual work dissolves prolonged, unwanted emotions (see my How to Dissolve Unwanted Emotions). At levels 600 and higher, emotionality dissolves as egoic personhood gets transcended.

Sages can still function as persons, but they have actually transcended personhood, which is a truth that those of us who still calibrate at 599 or lower cannot understand.

So, how should we understand genuine love or being in love? Ask sages! What they tell us follows from the perspective just sketched in this section. Let's find out.

What is love?

Any answer to the question concerning the nature of love must enable us to understand why interpersonal love is usually so difficult, why falling in love is insanity, and why being in love is often so highly valued.

Elsewhere I've argued that all entities are empty of substrata (e.g., Chapter 6 in Mastery in 7 Steps). I follow the Buddha, Hume, Nietzsche, Butchvarov, and others about that.

Aristotle and many other philosophers have understood change to require something that changes and something that remains the same to change, which may be called a "continuant substratum." For example, if you are cold outside and go inside to get warm, you are the same entity that underwent the change from cold to warm. If so, a person is cold at one time and warm at another time. To be a "continuant" is to be the same entity at different times. Aristotle thought that continuants are what remains the same to change (whether they in fact change or not). In this way, he understands us to be persons who are continuant substrata.

Qualities are commonalities, in other words, what 2 or more individuals may share or have in common. Since 2 ceilings can be white, whiteness is a quality. By way of contrast, for example, that ceiling is an individual that is not the same as other individuals even though it has qualities in common with other individuals.

Individuals are clusters or bundles of qualities. That ceiling has a color, a shape, a texture, and so on. The question is: *What's doing the clustering? What does the bundling of its qualities?* If it's something (a substance or "substratum"), what is it? What could a qualityless individual be? If it's nothing, how are an individual's qualities clustered? After all, a list or set of qualities is not the same thing as a unified bundle.

It's false that substances or substrata exist. The question about the clustering of an individual's qualities can be answered without positing the existence of substances or substrata to do the clustering (cf. Chapter 12 in my The Fundamental Ideas or Chapter 7 in Butchvarov's Being Qua Being).

This may seem irrelevant to the discussion of the nature of love until you clearly understand that persons (selves, empirical egos) are, supposedly, substances or substrata, presumably continuant substrata (cf. Chapter 7 in my Are You Living Without Purpose? as well as my Love and Respect). Although it's practically useful in daily life in the way that it's also practically useful to adopt Aristotle's understanding of change, it's

actually an important mistake to believe that persons are continuant substrata. No, **we are empty of substrata.**

This is nothing but the Buddha's doctrine of nonself. All entities, including human ones, are empty of a self or separate substratum. Nothing exists in splendid isolation. Every entity inter-is with every other entity. The existence of one entity requires the existence of every other entity.

From the spatial perspective, we think nonself. From the temporal perspective, we think impermanence. Although we are able to separate them in thought, nonself and impermanence are the same.

The Buddha taught three dharma seals, namely, anatman (nonself), anitya (impermanence), and nirvana. If thoughts are noise, nirvana is complete silence. It's Being itself. To be a buddha is to realize our true nature, which is Being.

We are all buddhas. However, only sages have realized their true nature. There are degrees of realization and they begin at personal calibrations of 600, which I explained in the previous section.

To claim that we are all buddhas is to claim that we are all, essentially, Being. This is why we are all morally equal and infinitely valuable.

Those still in personhood calibrate at 599 or lower. Those who are sages calibrate at 600 or higher. (Those in the 500s are in transition from personhood to sagehood.)

Being is formless. Since there's nothing to single out in Being, it cannot be thought. Again, this is why *it's impossible to think one's way to realizing nirvana*. We might simply say that, although Being is the root or ground of all forms, Being is the formless fecund emptiness that gives rise to all beings. All beings (whether entities or nonentities) are temporal, whereas Being is nontemporal (timeless, eternal).

If so, essentially, even if you haven't yet realized it, you are a sage. If you ignore that, you are dooming yourself to a life of dukkha (dissatisfaction, discontent, unease, misery, suffering, unhappiness). Mastering the way of nonattachment is the way to nirvana (realization, Buddhahood).

If so, this answers the three questions.

First, **why is interpersonal love so difficult?** The very notion of "interpersonal love" is confused! If it's false that persons are continuant substrata (because it's false that substrata are real), then love cannot correctly be understood as a relational quality between two entities.

Even if it's false that time is real, it's nevertheless helpful in everyday life to use the idea of time to make plans such as meeting for lunch

tomorrow at a certain time. Similarly, even if it's false that separate persons are real, it's nevertheless helpful in everyday life to use the idea of personhood to interact.

Second, **why is falling in love insanity?** Falling in love is insanity because it's based on the delusion that there is someone separate who may be used to complete or fulfill oneself. In reality, there is no separate self to fall in love and no separate self to fall in love with. I already inter-am with everything else. It's the same for you, too. In other words, if you love another, not only are you essentially Being but also your beloved is essentially Being. In other words, what appear to be two different entities actually have the same essence; "their" essence is identical.

To love is to identify with the beloved. It has essentially nothing to do with conditioning or emotions or thinking. It doesn't require a relationship of any kind with anything else. Genuine love is Being. There's no separation or difference between genuine love and Being. This is why it's not infrequently claimed that God is love. (I discuss identity judgments in multiple places including on my blog and in [Mastery in 7 Steps](#). Again, I follow Butchvarov; see his [Being Qua Being](#).)

Notice that the idea of a personal deity is incoherent. If there are no persons, then God isn't a person. That's a primitive or childish or anthropomorphic understanding of the divine. It also seems to undermine the idea of [agape](#).

Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj was a recent sage with a personal calibration of 720. Note the title of his book: [I Am That](#). Exactly! That's the whole point. Sages identify with what appears to be everything else. Whatever fills in the blank in the material identity judgment "I am ____" will yield truth.

Thinking all such material identity judgments are true is not the same as realizing they are all true. Since all entities are temporal and since Being is nontemporal, words never work well in such contexts. Still, it's one experience just to think that your whatness or essence is the same as mine and another experience to "feel" or "sense" it or "open" to it.

This is reminiscent of Sartre's tortured discussion of "the look" in [Being and Nothingness](#). Of course it was tortured! What can be said other than "I am" where Being is the referent of 'I'? Even the subject/predicate structure of that 2-word sentence is misleading. If what I essentially am is Being, the sentence, although the rules of grammar don't allow it, should just be 'Am.' (Not the similarity to the Hindu mantra 'Om'.)

Third, **why is being in love so highly valued?** Since the only human beings with high personal calibrations are capable of it and genuine love is the only ultimate value, being in love is highly valued.

Only sages are master lovers. Only those with personal calibrations of 540 or higher are capable of genuine unconditional love. It's not a business or trading relationship; it's not an exchange of value. To become a sage is to have dissolved all attachments to egocentric personhood. Sages take themselves to be the beloved, and everything is beloved. Sages identify with what they love. That's what genuine love is: the essential union of the supposedly two entities.

Love that is sticky, clinging, or possessive isn't genuine love. Such characteristics are only attributes of falling in love rather than of genuinely being in love. So, if you find yourself in an encounter and wonder if it's a genuinely loving one, ask yourself honestly if it has any such characteristics. That's a good practical test.

Love based on neediness isn't genuine love. To be genuinely loving is to be overflowing with goodness, which has nothing to do with need satisfaction, even mutual need satisfaction, which is how many psychologists understand it.

Remember, personal calibrations may fluctuate. There's no guarantee that exceeding the 540 or even the 600 threshold will result in permanent residence. At least in theory, all sages have simply broken the chains of egocentric emotions and desires. They've transcended self to Self. If your personal calibration is 539 or lower, your love is not unconditional. If your personal calibration is 499 or lower, your love is not wholly genuine.

In practice, sages lead lives of selfless service to others. In truth, we could say, their service is to Self and we are all essentially that Self. They always look as though they are acting for the benefit of the beloved (as opposed to looking as though they were trying to use the beloved to benefit themselves). They are not, however, attached to the ideal of service. Being of service out of a sense of duty or obligation is not the same as naturally being of service to Self. That distinction is similar to the one between being a do-gooder trying to force doing good and genuinely doing good, which comes naturally from power rather than force. Sages have more power than other human beings.

Notice that nobody can genuinely love you if that other calibrates at 499 or lower. Should you, therefore, restrict your pool of potential friends and lovers only to people whose personal calibrations are 500 or higher? No. That's trying to use someone else to fulfill yourself rather than to love that other for the good of that other. Love everyone and, when an opening

occurs to encourage others whose calibrations are lower than 499 to boost them, encourage them to do so. That's what I'm doing here.

Notice, too, that a sage may love you without being in a relationship with you. He or she need not be your friend or your lover. Just as there's nothing essentially exclusive about it, there's also nothing necessarily enduring about genuine interpersonal love

While it seems to me impossible to fall in love with 2 or more people simultaneously, it's certainly possible to be in love with 2 or more people simultaneously. In fact, isn't that the benevolent attitude that sages actually have toward everyone else? They love everyone and are friends to all.

Sages emanate love. There's a frequency or vibration that they constantly give off that many others notice and are attracted to. If you have personally ever encountered a sage, you probably know the feeling. People have been noticing that about sages since at least the time of the Buddha about 2500 years ago and probably for centuries before that. It's part of their ineffable specialness.

Where does such love come from? It comes from the realization of Being. **The foundation of all genuine love is opening to Being.** In that sense, all love is spiritual.

If you are not a sage and yet would like to become one, what should you do? Why not master the way of nonattachment? Why not emulate sages and do what they do? Teach yourself how to delete all thoughts and, so, all attachment to compulsive "thinking."

What obstructs that? Ego attachment. **To love better, delete or transcend everything egoic.** What will happen is that you'll stop "seeing" others in terms of their secondary personal characteristics and begin "seeing" them essentially as another yourself, as Being. That's the only way to have a genuinely satisfying encounter with another, the only way to genuine love.

Yes, you have a body. Yes, you have thoughts and beliefs. Yes, you have emotions. Your personhood is the history of all your experiences with respect to them: your sensations and perceptions, the development of your conceptual system, your emotional highs and lows, your interpersonal history, and so on. That, though, is only a small part of your whole.

Your whole is Being. You are not merely a human animal opening to Being. You are nothing less than Being itself having human experiences.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin: "We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience." May you realize that for yourself!

We live in the age of stars, which is waning. The rate of star formation is much lower than it was immediately after the Big Bang about 13.8 billion years ago. It will eventually cease. When the last stars run out of fuel, the universe will go dark. Assuming cosmologists are approximately correct, light has 10 trillion years left.

Forms and time only exist in Becoming. Ten trillion years or even a trillion trillion years is no closer to timelessness than 1 minute. Being is timeless as well as formless. It's good to keep things in **perspective**.

In sections I and II we peeked at what some philosophers from the western tradition have said about love. That survey ended in the nineteenth century. Why?

Lack of perspective. We are too close to twentieth-century thinkers to have a good perspective on their importance. There's even still some controversy about whether or not Nietzsche, who flourished in the late nineteenth century, is worthy of much attention. His ideas are the subject of the following section.

That controversy is partly because he doesn't even appear to advance a coherent, comprehensive philosophical system. On the other side of the ledger, however, he's one of the few major thinkers from the western tradition whose personal calibration was over 500. That alone makes him worthy of attention.

Nietzsche's understanding of a loving human being is reminiscent of Aristotle's conception of the "great-souled" or magnanimous human in his Nicomachean Ethics (Book 9), which is the most influential single work of ethics in the western philosophic tradition.

Yet Nietzsche and Aristotle had fundamentally different views about the nature of the world. It turns out to be very helpful to focus on both their similarities and differences.

For **Aristotle** as well as for all or nearly all of the major philosophers from the western tradition, the paradigmatic kind of love is friendship (cf. Chapter 4 of my Love and Respect). The paradigmatic kind of friendship is between two good people who are equal in terms of their moral worth. Trust is built on that similarity. Ideally, they live together and encourage and challenge each other to live better. Each, then, is a good, an asset, for the other. Partly because life is short and they require considerable time to create, such complete friendships occur infrequently.

Friendships are deliberately created or produced. Friendship is a "reciprocated goodwill" that is a "mutual loving." "[L]oving is like

production” (1168a20. All Aristotle quotations here are from the Irwin translation of Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics.)

Although it’s true that “each person wishes goods most of all to himself” (1159a13, 1168b10, & 1168b30), a friend is another myself: “your friend . . . is another yourself.” Friendship is a giving rather than a taking: “friendship seems to consist more in loving than in being loved” (1159a28). One friend must love another by promoting goods for the sake of the friend (1155b31 & 1156b10).

There’s a problem. **Does living well require friendships?**

On the one hand, we all understand that having friends is required for living well “[f]or no one would choose to live without friends even if he had all the other goods” (1155a5). So, it would seem that a sage needs friends.

On the other hand, since “blessedly happy and self-sufficient people have no need of friends” (1169b4), it would seem that it’s false that a sage needs friends. Living well requires ‘study’ and then activity based on that study. Why does it require study? Because study is intrinsically valuable, uniquely human, enjoyable “and is self-sufficient, leisured and unwearied as far [as these are possible] for a human being” (1177b22). Living well also requires at least some external prosperity such as a healthy body as well. Aristotle’s sages master the art of study, i.e., think well, and then apply their improved understanding “to what we do and how we live” (1179a22). The only humans who think well and fundamentally are philosophers. To be a philosopher is to live a certain kind of life. If they think of philosophy at all, the many probably only think of it as an academic discipline, which, I’ve observed, is how many philosophy professors seem to think of it.

Aristotle’s solution to that problem is to distinguish between external and internal goods. Internally, living well does not require friendship. Externally, living well does require friendship.

Since a sage is self-sufficient, he does not require friendship in the sense that he requires others to benefit him. However, from the external perspective, a sage does require friends – not to benefit himself but to benefit them: “the excellent person will need people for him to benefit” (1169b13).

Although of course it doesn’t guarantee that Aristotle’s beliefs about love are correct, they have stood the test of time for nearly 2500 years and, so, are worthy of consideration.

I argue in Love and Respect that, despite their practical usefulness, “all accounts that are fundamentally similar to Plato’s or Aristotle’s – and that implicates most accounts from the western tradition up until the time of Nietzsche – are theoretically insufficient” (p. 33).

One reason is that the great Greek thinkers did not think that all human beings have the same moral worth. Aristotle, for example, thought that complete friendships were only available to philosophers and that many humans such as women and the uneducated were not philosophers.

Though Stoic and Christian thinkers challenged that view (at least in theory), there's a more fundamental reason for their failure to understand love. The foundational problem is that, given their understanding of an individual, **the idea that love is a certain kind of relation between two individuals makes genuine love impossible.**

Aristotle was a great biologist who argued for an eternally fixed hierarchy of substantial forms (cf. Lovejoy's The Great Chain of Being). Although he himself retained the powerful idea of the great chain of being, John Locke, the first of the three great British empiricists, asks the critical question about the very intelligibility of substances. His starting point is simple: "No man's knowledge here can go beyond his experience." (An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Vol. II, Book iii, chapter 3.) Our understanding is confined to our ideas and our ideas are confined to our experience. "Consciousness is the perception of what passes in a man's own mind" and it makes no sense to believe "that anything should think and not be conscious of it." When we examine what we think, our ideas, we find that all intelligible entities are particulars.

In particular, when we examine the idea of a substance or substratum, the supposed entity that stands under an individual's qualities and clusters them together, we find no experience of such objects. "So that if anyone will examine himself concerning his notion of pure substance in general, he will find he has no other idea of it at all, but only a supposition of he knows not what support of such qualities . . ." (Essay, II, xxiii, 1).

The only way to save the view that individuals are substances in which qualities inhere would be to posit them a la Kant because they are demanded by our understanding. However, that tactic merely presupposes that our theories are correct and provides no evidence at all for them.

An analogy may help. James Clerk Maxwell and other 19th century physicists couldn't understand how wave motion could propagate in empty space. They therefore posited the reality of ether, which was a medium that filled space and transmitted electromagnetic vibrations. That putative entity was dropped when physical theories improved and it was no longer needed.

Assuming that we weren't born with the idea of substance and it doesn't come from experience as any even cursory phenomenological investigation reveals, what justifies it? Since there's now available a

coherent explanation for the clustering of an individual's qualities that doesn't posit substances, no such theoretical posit is necessary (Butchvarov provides that account in Being Qua Being; I explain it in The Fundamental Ideas).

If so, no individual – including you! – is a substance, much less an enduring one.

Similarly, Berkeley argues that there are no general abstract ideas and that there is no distinction between primary qualities and secondary qualities. Unlike subjective secondary qualities such as colors that depend upon our epistemic capacity, primary qualities such as frequencies were thought to be real and objective. Berkeley argued that both were subject to perceptual variation and, so, no such distinction should be made. (This is an important point that most scientists still seem to have failed to grasp. It's part of their failure to grasp that there can be no nonsubjective apprehension of what is objective.)

Similarly, Hume attacks not only the still-popular idea of substances but also analyzes the critical idea of causation itself. Again, he argues that, except psychologically, there is no necessary connection between types of events. He subjugates reason to emotionality and makes morality dependent upon emotions.

If, as others have argued and I have argued in multiple places (including Emotional Facelift and Emotional Empowerment), there are no emotions without egocentricity, then Hume's view leads – not to morality – but to its undermining.

There's no doubt that Hume is a great thinker. I myself have for decades thought him among the top 5 in the western tradition (along with Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, and Kant). I myself am a nobody; I'm certainly not a great thinker. However, with Nietzsche's help and that of eastern sages, I dare to criticize Hume's ideas.

Hume is correct, it seems to me, in rejecting the idea of substance. (This immediately and profoundly distinguishes him from Plato, Aristotle, and Descartes and inspired Kant to his critique of pure reason.)

He also is correct when he introspects and famously fails to find a self. Again, using 'perception' where we would probably use 'object' or 'form', he writes that "For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure" (Treatise, I, IV, vi). In truth, not only do we lack an experience of a self, but we don't even understand what it would be like to have such an experience.

We have what may be thought of as an empirical ego, which is made up of sensations and perceptions, thoughts and beliefs, emotions, and lots of different experiences. Hume's not denying that. What he's denying is that it's empirically or phenomenologically possible to find a substance that stands behind and has all those thoughts, emotions, and experiences.

Of course, he's right in believing that we experience particular emotions. What Hume fails to understand, though, is the egocentric essence of all emotions. He wants to ground morality on emotions, but that's impossible if morality is not to be reduced to mere egocentricity. Something has gone wrong.

Is genuine love possible?

Yes.

Permit me to explain how by beginning with a brief survey of Nietzsche's ideas. Although Nietzsche agrees with the British empiricists in many respects, he mocks the tradition of British moralists.

He'll be the last philosopher in our quick survey of the western tradition. A sufficient reason for ending it with him is that Nietzsche flourished in the late 19th century and more recent philosophers are too close to us for us to have a good perspective on the value of their ideas. Singer, for example, in the third volume of The Nature of Love only focuses on two philosophers from the 20th century, namely, Sartre (and other so-called "existentialists") and Santayana, although, to his credit, he includes others who may be more broadly classified as philosophers such as Freud, Proust, D. H. Lawrence, and G. B. Shaw. (I offer a second sufficient reason in section 7.)

In the 19th century, intellectuals like Schopenhauer and Nietzsche understood little about the eastern philosophic tradition. It took western scholars many decades to uncover and translate many teachings from the eastern tradition. The impact of that tradition didn't seriously begin to be felt here in the west until the 20th century.

Arnold Toynbee said that the arrival of that tradition, in particular Buddhism, "may well prove to be the most important event of the twentieth century."

Nietzsche helped prepare the intellectual soil for that fruitful planting. How?

Nietzsche is the last major philosopher in our quick survey. It's interesting that Nietzsche's ideas on loving well are reminiscent of Aristotle's despite the fundamental differences in their worldviews. Aristotle's world is eternally fixed and static, whereas Nietzsche's is a continuous process.

For Nietzsche, it's not just love that is a creation, but human life itself is a creation. The best life is like the beautiful creation of an artist.

By way of background, yes, Nietzsche experienced falling in love and sex, but, no, he was never married.

The death of God, the recognition of the irrelevance of the Christian God, unfetters us: "the sea, *our sea*, lies open again; perhaps there has never yet been such an 'open sea.'" (From The Gay Science. All quotations from Nietzsche here are translations by Walter Kaufmann, except those from The Will to Power, which was translated by R. J. Hollingdale along with Kaufmann; Nietzsche's emphasis.) When we stop deceiving ourselves about how to live, we are on the true ground of morality. (In my blog, *Nietzsche's Evaluation of Christ*, I emphasize the important difference between Nietzsche's evaluation of Jesus from his evaluation of Christians.)

Nietzsche correctly thinks of falling in love as merely a "possessive craving of two people for each other" that ought to give way to friendship, which is "a shared higher thirst for an ideal above them" (quoted by Singer, The Nature of Love, III, 89.).

"Marriage as a long conversation. When marrying, one should ask oneself this question: Do you believe that you will be able to converse well with this woman into your old age? Everything else in marriage is transitory . . ." (from Human, All Too-Human).

Recall Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's well-known line that "Love does not consist of gazing at each other, but in looking outward together in the same direction."

Nietzsche would have used 'upward' rather than 'outward.' Looking upward toward what ideal? Simultaneously thirsting for what?

It's not looking toward something ordinary like the friendship of old lovers. "Love of *one* is a barbarism; for it is exercised at the expense of all others" (from Beyond Good and Evil).

It seems to be **the ideal of a sage as a superabundant source of love, an overflowing of goodness.** Achieving this state of creativity

requires not only self-understanding but also the freedom and power of a great philosopher.

“A philosopher may be recognized by the fact that he avoids three glittering and loud things: fame, princes, and women . . .” (from Genealogy of Morals).

A great philosopher is not only solitary and self-sufficient but also overflowing with love: “Indeed, a lake is within me, solitary and self-sufficient; but the river of my love carries it along, down to the sea” (from Thus Spoke Zarathustra). Similarly, “Life is a well of joy; but where the rabble drinks too, all wells are poisoned” (from Thus Spoke Zarathustra). The fact that this ideal is from *Zarathustra* is significant because he regarded it as his best work: “Among my writings my *Zarathustra* stands to my mind by itself” (from Ecce Homo).

Stillness and solitude are critical to this ideal. “. . . the greatest events – they are not our loudest but our stillest hours. Not around the inventors of new noise, but around the inventors of new values does the world revolve; it revolves *inaudibly*. . . *my stillest hour*: that is the name of my awesome mistress” (from Thus Spoke Zarathustra; Nietzsche’s emphasis). Those who are noble prefer silence to noise.

Freedom is also involved. He clearly distinguishes both types: “Free *from* what? . . . free *for* what?” (from Thus Spoke Zarathustra). He most frequently writes about the sage as wholly accepting responsibility for being a creator of values, which is in contrast to an ordinary person, a “herd human,” who is bound by traditional values. His emphasis on the transvaluation of values seems to me to be less focused on the values themselves than on taking responsibility for adopting whatever values we do adopt, in other words, for creating our own axiological interpretations.

This is where to locate his critique of Christianity. “What is wrong with Christianity is that it refrains from doing all those things that Christ commanded should be done. . . Christianity is still possible at any time . . . Christianity is a *way of life*, not a system of beliefs . . . The commandment to love one’s neighbor has never yet been extended to include one’s actual neighbor” (from The Will to Power; Nietzsche’s emphasis).

The problem with Christians is that, unlike Christ, they are not philosophers. “The really *royal* calling of the philosopher (as expressed by Alcuin the Anglo-Saxon): prava oorrigere, et recta corroborare, et sancta sublimare” (from The Will to Power; Nietzsche’s emphasis. The Latin means “To correct what is wrong, and strengthen the right, and raise what is holy.” Nietzsche lived philosophy; it was his way of life.).

He agrees with the conclusion of Plato's argument in *Euthyphro*. "In itself, religion has nothing to do with morality" (from The Will to Power).

Since there is no God to ground absolute morality, we must create our own values. "*My chief proposition: there are no moral phenomena, there is only a moral interpretation of these phenomena*" (from The Will to Power; Nietzsche's emphasis). To create values is to create interpretations.

In other words, there's no cognition about values. Facts are "precisely what there is not, only interpretations. We cannot establish any fact 'in itself'" (from The Will to Power).

Then we export our valuations into the world: "Our values are interpreted *into* things" (from The Will to Power; Nietzsche's emphasis).

There's no guidance about right and wrong actions: "But does one know its consequences? . . . Who can say what an action will stimulate, excite, provoke?" (from The Will to Power). This is an important point. Unless we take the absurd position that the consequences of our actions or inactions are irrelevant to their moral evaluation as right or wrong, since we cannot know those consequences, we cannot distinguish right actions from wrong ones.

Actually, there's no morally culpable actor either. **There is no self or person** who is choosing to act or not: "there is no 'being' behind doing, effecting, becoming; 'the doer' is merely a fiction added to the deed . . ." (from Genealogy of Morals).

Similarly, there's no thinker behind a thought. ". . . a thought comes when 'it' wishes, and not when 'I' wish . . . *It* thinks . . . Even the 'it' contains an *interpretation* of the process, and does not belong to the process itself. One infers here according to the grammatical habit . . . (from Beyond Good and Evil; Nietzsche's emphasis). There's no self or person doing the thinking. There's just a thought or judgment that happens. The delusion that selves are real comes at least in part from the structure of language.

Thoughts become beliefs when they're considered true. "What is a *belief*? How does it originate? Every belief is a considering-something-true" (from The Will to Power; Nietzsche's emphasis).

"The 'subject' is not something given, it is something added and invented and projected behind what there is" (from The Will to Power). It's not something that has will, either: ". . . there is no will . . ." (from The Will to Power. Permit me here to add that 'The Will to Power' is not the title of one of Nietzsche's own books; rather, it's a collection of notes that were put together and named by editors after his death.).

So, he agrees with Hume, Butchvarov, me, and many other western philosophers who fail to find a self (person, substratum, substance) and

refuse to posit one. Since this was an idea that, as far as we know, originated with the Buddha, this is an excellent example of how Nietzsche and Hume helped to prepare the groundwork for the western flourishing of Buddhist practice in the 20th century. I use ‘practice’ to emphasize that, properly understood, Buddhism is a practice or set of practices rather than a creed, which is a set of thoughts. In other words, if attaching to a creed is essential for being religious, it’s false that to be a Buddhist is to be religious. (My apologies to Huston Smith whose The World’s Religions actually contains an excellent introductory chapter on Buddhism.) To be a Buddhist is regularly to practice doing spiritual work of a certain kind. It’s not to attach to a creed, which is just a set of thoughts. Again, it’s impossible to think one’s way to nirvana (living well, spiritual awakening).

It’s an important mistake to believe that ultimately we are selves (persons, bodyminds, personalities); if so, there’s no self that is either a Buddhist or not a Buddhist anyway.

Nietzsche realizes that there’s more that follows. “If we give up the concept ‘subject’ and ‘object,’ then [we give up] also the concept ‘substance’ – and as a consequence also the various modifications of it, e.g., ‘matter,’ ‘spirit,’ and other hypothetical entities . . .” (from The Will to Power). This is so because we are relying on another misleading idea in addition to that of an individual self, namely, the idea of causation itself.

The distinction between the emotions and reasons made by Hume, Kant, and most philosophers from the western tradition is confused because they interpenetrate. “The misunderstanding of passion and reason, as if the latter were an independent entity and not rather a system of relations between various passions and desires; and as if every passion did not possess its quantum of reason” (from The Will to Power).

If so, we should ask, since it’s false that there is a continuant substratum under, say, all your experiences that clusters them, what, then, do they have in common? Notice at *all experiences occur now*, in the present moment. They always have. We never experience the past or the future. That context of consciousness, that context of present awareness or attention, is what clusters them. Furthermore, it itself is nontemporal. That’s why sages link consciousness with Being. That’s why they think of Being as unconditioned consciousness. They not infrequently identify Being with Mind to distinguish it from mind, which is a set of thoughts.

There no self or person who causes a thought or anything else: “. . . things . . . effect nothing: because they do not exist at all – that the concept of causality is completely useless . . . There are neither causes nor effects” (from The Will to Power).

If causation is the cement of the world, then the world just fell apart! That's exactly the kind of mind expansion that sometimes recent sages express. In other words, we should become skeptical about ideas such as self, substance, and causality. These abstract mentations are mere theory and no better than the physicists' ether.

For Nietzsche, "There exists neither 'spirit,' nor reason, nor thinking, nor consciousness, nor soul, nor will, nor truth: all are fictions that are of no use. . . The character of the world in a state of becoming as incapable of formulation . . . Language depends on the most naïve prejudices . . . we think *only* in the form of language" (from The Will to Power; Nietzsche's emphasis). He's correct that all thinking requires forms and they may all be linguistic forms.

The critical question is whether or not all consciousness is thinking. No, it's not. *All sages and sometimes nonsages, too, experience no-thought.* The fact that Nietzsche calibrates over 500 indicates that he realized that consciousness (awareness, attentiveness) is not necessarily only thought.

It's foolish to talk about human progress. "Mankind' does not advance, it does not even exist" (from The Will to Power).

Similarly with respect to causation, the recent sage with the highest personal calibration (namely, 996) was David R. Hawkins and he repeatedly wrote that causality is a delusion. "In Reality . . . Nothing is caused by anything else." (David R. Hawkins, I, p. 201. Cf. Paul Feyerabend's Against Method.)

The same holds for Hawkins's agreement with Nietzsche's radical subjectivity. "All reactions to life are subjective . . . One's reality is the context and not the content" (I, p. 260.). This is what all those whose personal calibrations never seem to rise above 499 never realize.

In terms of our inhumanity to each other, the 20th century was the worst century so far of our history. The estimates vary and cannot be known with precision, but the violence just to ourselves resulted in hundreds of millions of premature human deaths and even many more injuries than that. Apparently, we're not just satisfied with killing and injuring ourselves, but we're also hell-bent on degrading and destroying our environment as well, which is also the environment for other Earth-bound life forms. What gives rise to the horrible history of humankind?

Permit me to suggest that **Nietzsche identified the critical problem**: "We are altogether unable to think anything at all just as it is –" (from The Will to Power; Nietzsche's emphasis).

Is that so? If so, how should it be understood? How might we fix it?

To think is to conceptualize. All thoughts (judgments, propositions, statements) are conceptualizations. A concept is a principle of classification. There's no thought without concepts. Concepts do the important intellectual work of separating (classifying, sorting, dividing, categorizing). We sort objects, for example, into those that are edible and those that aren't, into those that can harm us and those that can help us, into those that we like and those that we don't like, and so on.

To evaluate is to think. Since all thinking occurs from a specific perspective and since evaluating is thinking, all evaluating occurs from a specific perspective. "Insight: all evaluation is made from a definite perspective . . ." (from The Will to Power). In other words, all thinking, including all evaluating, is perspectival (partial, incomplete, misleading).

That's why it's impossible to think everything. To think is to separate and to think a whole without separating it is impossible. Therefore, the content of any thought cannot be more than partial. At best, thoughts can only be partially true. No thought ever captures the whole truth. In that sense, all thoughts are distorted. If so, we never think anything the way it is in reality.

Since we prefer some values to others and export those values into reality, the values that we may pretend are real and objective are actually only subjective. There is no objective ground to morality. There are only preferences that are sometimes dressed up as being objective.

Importing mismatched or conflicting values into the world results in conflicts. We need to stop doing that in order to stop conflicts.

What happens when we *cease* exporting our subjective values into reality? We wind up with a world in which all different entities have the same value. In other words, there are no better or worse entities.

Nietzsche grasped this. Since events are entities, ultimately none are better than others. He mentioned in The Will to Power " . . . the homogeneity of all events." Exactly!

So?

Despite some radical and seemingly gloomy conclusions, Nietzsche near the end of his time writes that he remains hopeful. "From my childhood I have pondered the conditions for the existence of the sage, and I will not conceal my joyous conviction that he is again becoming *possible in Europe* . . . such philosophers are cheerful." (from The Will to Power; Nietzsche's emphasis).

When we do sufficient spiritual work and reduce egocentricity to the point at which we become capable of genuine love, we begin to identify with what is essential in others. The further that identification process goes, the

more we realize that when we harm others we are actually harming ourselves. In fact, ultimately there are no others to harm.

At least if we include North American civilization as an offshoot of European civilization, the good news is that his prediction has come true in the sense that, at least after a couple of decades into the 21st century, some cheerful sages such as David R. Hawkins and Eckhart Tolle have appeared here in the West.

The bad news is that they are still few and far between. Still, how has it happened? If we are able to understand that answer, perhaps we could somehow stimulate its happening more frequently.

I've some ideas about that. Permit me to introduce them.

Most of us spend considerable time, energy, and effort trying to improve our interpersonal relationships, our love lives. How well is that going for you?

Thinking well about love is helpful but insufficient. Loving well is what counts. As Aristotle understood and as Nietzsche puts it: “Learning is not enough! The scholar is the herd animal in the realm of knowledge . . .” (from The Will to Power).

Fundamentally, mastering is a 2-step process: learn what to do and do it.

Learn from greatest masters. **Who are those who have mastered the art of loving?** To whom should we turn?

Those with personal calibrations of 950 and above.

Many have died such as the Buddha (personal calibration of 1000), Jesus (1000), David R. Hawkins (996), Nagarjuna (980), and Baso (950). Some such as Eckhart Tolle (952) are still living. More may arise.

Learn from the greatest spiritual works such as Hawkin’s I (999.8), Nagarjuna’s Mulamadhyamakakarika (980; I recommend the English translation and commentary by Jay L. Garfield.), the Upanishads (970), and the Vedas (970).

Ultimately, you must rely on yourself and teach yourself.

A common and important mistake is paying too much attention to any teacher or teaching that calibrates at 499 or lower. Similarly, nearly all the major philosophers from the western tradition calibrate in the 400s, including all the major ones from the 20th century, which is my second justification for mostly ignoring them here.

Intellectuals have a tendency to slip from methodological materialism into metaphysical materialism. **Methodological materialism** is the method of proceeding to investigate the world by ignoring consciousness, by pretending that it doesn’t exist. Although it cannot be denied that it’s unclear why it works so well, this has been the method of modern science and it’s had a lot of practical success.

As Hume argues, future regularities need not even resemble past ones. Sometimes they do; sometimes they don’t. The problem is that we cannot tell the difference. Again, we don’t understand nondemonstrative evidence.

Metaphysical materialism is grounded on the simple thesis that to be an entity is to be material; nothing immaterial is real. Nobody with a personal calibration of 500 or higher holds such a preposterous view.

Ultimately everyone who calibrates at 499 or lower (including even great scientists like Newton and Einstein) is trapped in their bodies, their thoughts, and their emotions, i.e., their experiences. Since all physical forms or bodies are temporary, fleeting like soap bubbles, if you identify only with your bodymind you will fear death, and that fear seems to spawn all other fears. In that sense, to believe that you are nothing but matter is to be fearful.

Sustained genuine love, which breaks the back of fear, becomes possible only at a personal calibration of 500 or higher. All those who would be wise and loving should raise their personal calibrations at least that high. That's a good goal for everyone. There's no reason known to me why everyone cannot do it. It's not a matter of gaining understanding so much as it's a matter of dropping delusion.

Sustained unconditional love, which is highly valued but infrequently practiced, becomes possible only at a personal calibration of 540 or higher. All those who would master the art of loving should raise their personal calibrations at least that high. That's a good goal for everyone who is serious about loving well.

But how?

Although it's almost never easy in practice, it's simple in theory: **drop all egocentric attachments**. That means letting go of attachment to thinking. Why?

Again, thinking is conceptualizing, which is using concepts to separate. That's sometimes a very useful ability. Mother Nature gave us the ability to think because it can enable us to survive and reproduce. Since thinking is so slow, she also gave us emotions to prompt usually beneficial actions in situations that might otherwise get us killed or injured. If you notice that you are standing too close to a deadly snake, jump away instantly instead of thinking about what to do.

The problem is not with thinking itself; the problem is with compulsive thinking. We become so addicted to it that it can seem as if it's impossible to be awake and conscious without thinking. However, no-thought is not only possible but it's required for living and loving well.

Practicing no-thought is required if your personal calibration is in the 300s or 400s and you'd like to raise your personal calibration to 500 or above and, so, become happier and live better. The benefit of spiritual work such as meditation is to cultivate very alert consciousness without thinking.

No-thought spawns other benefits such as being able to dissolve prolonged, unwanted emotions. At least temporarily letting go of your favorite self-centered thoughts is required for alert, thoughtless awareness.

This may be why nearly all the greatest philosophers and scientists in the western tradition calibrate at 499 or lower. They may have gotten stuck thinking and, so, lived without cultivating the critical experience of no-thought that wisdom requires.

Sages have been saying this in different ways for thousands of years. For example, the Buddha said it repeatedly. Recent sages are no different. For example, to escape addiction to thinking “it is necessary to go beyond duality” (from Hawkins’s I). Enjoying the direct experience of Being requires dropping all dualistic thinking, which traps us in partiality.

Since our essence or nature is formless, timeless Being, remaining trapped in partiality prevents us from experiencing unity (wholeness, oneness). The result is that the only experiences of fulfillment open to us are fleeting. Even when they are experienced spontaneously, we typically just ignore them because don’t realize their value. We unintentionally cut ourselves off from lasting fulfillment.

Actually, Being is beyond conceptions like unity/non-unity. All language uses forms and, so, using language to describe formless Being is impossible. The limited cannot capture the unlimited. Please do yourself a favor and don’t get hung up on words or on small-minded logic-chopping.

This is why those who identify God with Being often rely on stating what it is not rather than what it is. Instead of saying it’s eternal, they say it’s timeless. Instead of saying it’s unlimited, they say it’s limitless. At best, words are just pointers.

In case it helps, Being is often identified with Life or Consciousness or Presence or Love or Spirit or Truth; there are many other words (e.g., ‘Mu’) that are used to refer to it as well. What matters, of course, is the direct apprehension of Being and not the words.

Being is the foundation of love. Without sufficiently dropping compulsive thinking, there’s really insufficient opening to Being for genuine love. In that sense, genuine love is grounded upon spirituality. It is not grounded on thinking well or even on being literate. Sufficient opening to Being for genuine love begins at 500 and increases as personal calibrations rise above that level.

500 is the point at which materiality opens to immateriality, at which objectivity yields to subjectivity. Currently, about 86% of humans never make it. If so, that explains a lot of the damage human beings have done to each other and to the planet, doesn’t it? Instead of living in love, most

people live in fear and act accordingly. Doesn't that explain our nearly incessant inhumanity and cruelty to each other?

Your essence is Being. You can be loved well only by those who recognize what you essentially are. Very few people are able to do that, which may explain why your love life has likely been so turbulent, frustrating, unsatisfactory, and unfulfilling.

What are we able to do about that?

Here's a relevant and supposedly true story about Gandhi, whose personal calibration was 760. A woman brought her young son to the ashram to speak to Gandhi. She complained to him about her child's addiction to sugar. "My son won't stop eating sugar. Please tell him to stop." After listening to her, Gandhi asked her to return with her son in two weeks. Puzzled, the woman left. Two weeks later she and her son were again sitting in front of Gandhi, who said to the boy, "Stop eating sugar." In her perplexity the woman asked, "Why couldn't you have told him that two weeks ago?" He replied, "Madam, two weeks ago I was still eating sugar."

Instead of trying to change the world, change yourself.

Do you love well?

Loving well requires being able to recognize Being as the so-called other's essence. That's love's prerequisite. If you calibrate at 499 or lower, you are incapable of doing that, at least in a sustained way. Since currently only about 14% of humans are able to do that, realizing that may help to explain why your love life has been without lasting fulfillment.

Unless you have sufficiently opened to Being, you cannot recognize Being in another – or in yourself. That means that you are unable to love well. (Of course, you may believe that you are able to love well even if your personal calibration is below 499, but that belief is false.)

If you've sufficiently opened to Being, you're able to recognize Being in another and in yourself. What you're able to cognize is that your essence is the same as "the other's" essence. That means that you're able to love well. You've attained the requisite state. You've identified yourself with the essential oneness.

That does *not* require creating any kind of a relationship. Sages love well without having any compulsions. It's traditionally said that they are friends with everyone. Even brief, one-time encounters that last mere seconds are enough. There's nothing sticky or clinging or possessive about genuine love. On the other hand, sages are also free to create enduring relationships and many have done so.

In The Will to Power Nietzsche writes: “I seek an eternity for everything.” Since eternal Being is the essence of others, perhaps what he was expressing was a desire to feel completely at home in the world, to find himself in everything. At least sages do find themselves completely at home in the world. Nietzsche was not a sage.

The requirement for loving well is getting outside *all* thoughts and realizing that *my self is another*, that “we” are one Self. Satisfying encounters or enduring relationships based on that identity are the foundation of masterful loving. In reality, there is one Self, not two selves.

Genuine love is primarily a spiritual connection in which one identifies with the beloved’s essence and all the beloved’s other characteristics are taken as secondary. That’s being in love.

We all desire deeply satisfying relationships, but few are willing to open sufficiently to Being, which is what all such relationships require. To open sufficiently, we must release all identifications with all bodily sensations and perceptions, all thoughts and beliefs, and all emotions. We must drop all attachments to our past experiences. We must drop the past with all its conditioning in order to realize the unconditioned. We must let go of the manifest and encounter the unmanifest.

We should realize (and not just think) that the same Being that is essentially what I am is essentially what all others also essentially are.

Without that, there’s no genuine love. Nietzsche: “. . . where one can no longer love, there one should *pass by*” (from Thus Spoke Zarathustra; Nietzsche’s emphasis).

There’s a whole industry of people including some certified as psychologists who advertise themselves as being able to teach us how to gain genuine love. There are lots of well-known teachers who make money teaching pick-up such as, for example, David DeAngelo [Eben Pagan], Mystery, Neil Strauss, Swingcat, Grant Adams, John Gray, Leil Lowndes, Kevin Bates, and Savoy. Sometimes their attraction or dating techniques seem to work in the sense that their students are enabled to get dates or sex or married.

My advice? Save your time and money. Why? *There’s nothing that it’s possible to gain that will enable you to transition from living poorly to living well.* Living well doesn’t come from gaining more; instead, it comes from dropping obstructions to Being. Nobody except you can enable you to begin to open to Being, which, again, is the prerequisite for genuine love.

Don’t believe me? It’s alright to be skeptical; after all, you’ve been conned before. However, being negative will just result in your staying stuck. Investigate for yourself. Boost your personal calibration to 500, 540,

or even higher and watch what happens. What you essentially are is Being. Realizing that is the only requirement for sagehood.

“Everything fulfills its purpose by merely being what it is” (from I).

Yet you may feel an urge to do something. You may think that gaining something will yield lasting fulfillment. It won't.

If you have only tried doing or having things so far, how well has that worked? If you believe that living well may occur in the future, if you are deeply attached to the someday syndrome (namely, “If only I had X, then I'd live well”), you'll just remain stuck in dissatisfaction.

Again, living well is only available now. Stop treating the present moment only as a stepping stone to some better future time. Why? There is no future time. It's always now. Except as now, we've never experienced the future because it's nothing but a set of imagined thoughts and, so, can never be experienced except as now. The future is never experienced until it arrives in the present moment.

There's no need for us to gain something else. We already have everything required for loving well and living well right now. Attaining the great way of nonattachment requires losing rather than gaining. The reason we don't think so is because our forceful egocentric attachments to what we think matters (namely, again, our bodily sensations and perceptions, our thoughts and beliefs, our emotions, in other words, to our usual experiences) are obstructing us.

We don't even need more time. How much time does letting go take? It doesn't.

Another way to put this is favored by Dr. Hawkins who frequently teaches that what matters is context whereas we are stuck attached to content. Again, “One's reality is the context and not the content.” Similarly, again from I: “Spiritual work involves withdrawing attachment to or identification with content and then progressively realizing that one's reality is context.”

He means by 'content' all the usual objects of consciousness, all mental content. That's all self. It's all temporary and focusing only on it cannot yield lasting fulfillment or happiness. “In reality, the source of happiness is the Self, and not the self” (from I). The Self, Being, is both timeless and formless.

This is why “spiritual work is essentially the letting go of attachments to thoughts and cherished positionalities, opinions, and memories, the value of which has been inflated and over-esteemed by narcissistic identification. The core of 'ego' is narcissism.”

Do you choose to be narcissistic or loving? If narcissistic and you want to remain that way, don't begin spiritual work and your love life will simply remain unsatisfactory and unfulfilling. If loving, begin spiritual work if you haven't already.

If you want to begin spiritual work, what should you do? I don't know. Nobody else does either. Why? It's because the consequences of our actions and inactions are relevant to their moral evaluation and it's impossible to know what they will be (cf. Butchvarov's Skepticism in Ethics). The only alternative we have is to hope that past connections continue to hold in the future even though it's impossible to know that they will. As human beings we're responsible for what we do while lacking the ability to know that what we're doing is right, which is why we all make mistakes.

At least for western adults, the fact is that the chief reason why most people who begin spiritual work do so because of an important loss. In my case, it was because of a divorce. For others, it may be the death of a loved one, the loss of a career, the loss of a home, the loss of a great deal of money, the loss of religious faith, the loss of bodily integrity, and so on.

If that describes you, assuming that you don't already practice them, I recommend **two techniques**. *First*, learn how to dissolve any prolonged, unwanted emotion. In the short term, sometimes emotions can be helpful; however, that's not the case with long-term buried emotions. The good news is that *all* can (and should) be dissolved. *Second*, learn how to diminish the frequency with which they arise in the first place.

If you learn and master them, instead of dragging heavy emotions through life sometimes for years, you'll quickly feel much lighter and enjoy life more. You'll live with more ease and less stress. Furthermore, you'll lose the fear of trying new things because of their potential negative emotional impact.

It's not necessary to wait for an important loss to occur to begin spiritual work. Even if you have escaped many or even any so far, such losses are inevitable as you age. For example, you'll lose your youth and your health. Sages advise not to wait until you are old and tears are running down your cheeks to begin the work of ego reduction.

Here are four options worth considering.

You could learn the techniques from recognized sages such as David R. Hawkins or Eckhart Tolle. Buy and study their books and courses. Watch their talks on YouTube. If possible, attend their retreats. It's not one-on-one guidance, but it may be that all that you ever require is impersonal guidance from someone whose personal calibration is 600 or

higher. On the other hand, finding the techniques in their works is not easy.

You could join a spiritual center if there happens to be a suitable one near you that is run by a sage. You may be able to join it and go there to benefit from its teachings and practice sessions. It may or may not require the payment of fees or dues. It may even offer you some one-on-one guidance. On the other hand, there may not be a suitable one within an easy distance, you may not be able to afford it, or you may prefer to practice at home rather than with others.

You could hire a certified life coach as a personal guide to get you started. Don't risk wasting your money by hiring someone whose personal calibration is 499 or lower or who doesn't specialize in spiritual guidance and its resulting emotional well-being. Many coaches offer either a free or low-cost session to determine if there's a good rapport. On the other hand, since such qualified coaches are few and far between, they are not easy to find and you may not be able to afford to hire one if you do find someone suitable and with whom you quickly develop a good rapport.

You could learn from me for free. I am a certified life coach with a sufficiently high personal calibration, namely, 596. What should you do if you like this option? Go to:

<https://event.webinarjam.com/register/2/452gmug>

Simple sign up and watch the training at the appropriate time. It'll take about 40 minutes and you'll understand the easy, enjoyable technique that will allow you to diminish or eliminate the arising of prolonged unwanted emotions. To learn how to dissolve any prolonged unwanted emotion that you already have or that nevertheless arises anyway, there are instructions at the end of the training on how to learn that important skill. If you find the training valuable, please don't hesitate to recommend it to others.

The training includes additional resources in case you want more help or have questions.

If you would like to enjoy greater emotional well-being and live better and do not already have an effective spiritual practice, in the strongest possible terms I recommend that you begin immediately. There's nothing more important for you to be doing to become happier, to live better, and to love better.

Have you found reading this interesting, stimulating, or helpful? If it has helped you with respect to genuine love, please share the webpage where it may be downloaded for free with no strings attached, namely, <https://endfearfast.com/love/> (It calibrates at 561.)

May you realize your true nature!

21 Jul 2022





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We are one Self,
united in Being,
at one with every aspect of reality,
and limitless in power, peace, and joy.