

The Essential Basis of True Love and the Psychologically Healthy Interpersonal Relationship

Editorial Note by Barry Hammer:

The text of this article comes from an undated tape recorder audio tape recorded by my late father, Max Hammer. The text that appears in brackets [] in this article consists of interpretive editorial insertions by me, whereas the remainder of the text, outside of the brackets (i.e., sections of the text that are not within the brackets), comprises my transcription of the actual remarks by Max Hammer that were recorded on the original audio tape.

Opinion

Love is one's most Essential Self, or pure consciousness substance, and is one's unconditioned Being or consciousness. When one's self-acceptance is unconditional, i.e., when I non judgmentally accept that I am the author of all of my positive and negative experiential states, and accept all of those relative opposites with the attitude of, "This too is me," then whatever the world arouses in me will be totally acceptable to me, and I can then let it be, whatever it has to be, and I will accept it. Therefore, in essence, to love oneself unconditionally, meaning non judgmentally, is also to love the world unconditionally, or non judgmentally. This is because if I accept myself totally, whatever the world triggers in me will be acceptable to me [and, by the same token, whatever other individuals evoke in me will also be non judgmentally, unconditionally, and non-selectively acceptable to me, when I learn to welcome, embrace, include, or love all aspects of my own individual being and experience in the same manner]. Therefore, I am then free to let the world be all that it has to be, which is the essence of what love really means.

So it is really only the [psychologically healthy and] mature consciousness that is truly capable of loving, because it is only the mature consciousness that is fully able to take responsibility for oneself. What that means is to take responsibility for the creation of whatever experiential self we are [being] from moment to moment; in other words, accepting the fact that I am the author of my own feelings and experiences. When I do that, I am fully capable then of accepting all that I create, and through that full responsibility for myself, and full acceptance of myself, I have reached a stage of true self-love, which also enables me to maturely love others [in the same way that I love myself]. And [then I] have gone beyond the [psychologically unhealthy and] immature stage of narcissistic self-valuing, which is based upon value judgments [selectively] applied to only parts of my being, such as my intelligence, my attractiveness, my strength, [my] athletic ability, or whatever, whereas [true] love relates to the totality of the individual, rather than to the valuing or liking of any particular part of the total psychological or physical being [i.e., true love involves nonjudgmental unconditional acceptance of all aspects or experiential states of oneself and other individuals, which involves contacting the natural undivided wholeness of oneself and others, in contrast to the divisive, partisan,

Opinion

Volume 3 Issue 1 - 2015

Max Hammer and Barry Hammer*

The University of Maine, USA

*Corresponding author: Barry Hammer, The University of Maine, 15 Downeast Terrace, Apt. 2 Orono, Maine (ME) 04473, USA, Tel: 207-866-3223; Email: mhbj58@gmail.com

Received: June 10, 2015 | Published: June 17, 2015

unloving attitude of selectively valuing, approving, or conditionally accepting only particular desired aspects of self and others, and rejecting or disapproving other aspects, by selectively applying positive value judgments to the desired aspects and negative value judgments to the unwanted aspects].

Therefore, immature people, in feeling deficient, always seek to value some part of the other. They value that part of the other that they feel will gratify [assuage] their feelings of deficiency, whereas real love is not out of [i.e., does not arise from] feelings of deficiency, but [rather arises from] out of a sense of [inherent] wholeness already. Therefore, one unconditionally or non judgmentally [non-selectively] accepts all [genuine aspects] of the other person, because one has already unconditionally and non judgmentally accepted all of oneself first.

Therefore, it is truly not possible to maturely and constructively love another human being until one has [first] been able to love oneself, meaning, to unconditionally accept all of oneself, which means accepting the responsibility of being the author of all of one's positive and negative feelings, and therefore rejecting nothing that one has created, but only seeing why one has created those negative feelings, letting them speak for themselves, and then draining out. As soon as one accepts being both [the] positive and negative relative opposites [i.e., as soon as one accepts that one's own individual being includes, authors, and is naturally, inherently, unconditionally, non judgmentally, unified with the full range of relatively opposite pleasant and unpleasant feelings, or relatively comfortable and relatively uncomfortable experiential states], one then becomes [exclusively identified with, selectively attached to, and divisively partisan in siding for or against] neither [of them], but is [instead identified with] the [undifferentiated, undivided, all-inclusive] pure consciousness substance that underlies and composes [comprises] both relative opposite self-concept thought forms. That pure consciousness substance that underlies all thoughts and experiences is love itself.

Thus, to restate, essentially, the basic fact [is] that love is not a [conditional, selective, partial] valuing of the other, a judgmental liking to an extreme [degree] of the other. Love is not a relationship to only part of the other, but rather, in [involves] the total acceptance of the other [related to as an indivisible

wholeness], and in that sense of oneness [or non-dualistic intimate empathic communion] with the other, there is the release in one's own consciousness of one's own [separate] self-concept awareness. When one is not aware of one's own self-concepts [which are intrinsically or necessarily selective, and therefore partial, divisive, un-whole, narcissistically self-involved, and therefore function as a distancing barrier to investing one's conscious attention and feeling energy fully and deeply in caring or loving communion with other individuals], one is [then being undivided, undifferentiated, unified, holistic] pure consciousness substance, which is the release of love [of self and others, which are naturally interrelated, indivisible processes]. Therefore, the sacrifice of love is of one's own complete self-awareness, and being completely aware of the other. In that sense, one becomes in a state of oneness or union with the other, which is the love relationship.

Thus, love is not an emotion or an experience. Both emotion and experience arise out of an ego state of duality, the separation of subject and object, whereas love is a state of communion or a non-duality between oneself as the subject and the other as the object. Experience is always of some part of the other, and involves valuing [of only some exclusive aspects of oneself and another person, and rejection or ignoring of other aspects]. It is always relative [i.e., egocentric emotions and experiences filter and distort one's perception of oneself and other individuals through a barrier of selective, divisive, partisan, judgmental, expectations, demands, and predetermined interpretations]. Experience is always a half-truth because it is relative. It is always a reaction to some part of the individual that is conceptualized as positive or negative, such as a person's strength, or a person's aggressiveness, whereas love is not of the left side or the right side, meaning the negative or the positive. Instead, love is of the totality of the [other] individual, which includes both the negative and the positive, but also is beyond both the negative and the positive.

So experience is one-sided knowledge, whereas love is two-sided, including both the positive and the negative [i.e., true love includes both the relatively pleasant and unpleasant feelings, or the relatively comfortable and uncomfortable experiential aspects, of oneself and other individuals to whom one relates, whereas egocentric experience and emotion selectively focuses on, and conditionally approves or positively values, only some particular relative aspects of self and others, while selectively ignoring, rejecting, or conditionally disapproving other aspects. This selective way of relating to self and others prevents or blocks true love as nonjudgmental, impartial, unmediated, direct full contact with the natural undivided wholeness of self and others]. Experience is of half-truths only, the conceptual relative positive opposite, or the negative relative opposite [i.e., in an egocentric, judgmental, selective, or divisive way of relating to oneself and others, various personal traits are incorrectly viewed as being mutually exclusive and unrelated to one another, whereas, in actuality, they together comprise an indivisible whole continuum of interrelated, complementary, relative opposite polar aspects of self and other]. Therefore, when we experience one or the other [i.e., when we selectively overemphasize and exclusively overly value some particular aspects of self and other individuals, and underemphasize, ignore, or reject others], we have only half-knowledge, half-awareness, whereas love includes the totality of

the individual.

Because love and wholeness are the same, love and truth are one and the same. Therefore, truth is beyond relativity, and love is beyond relativity [i.e., true love non judgmentally includes the undivided totality of all experiential aspects of self and other individuals to whom one relates, in contrast to the narcissistic ego's more selective, exclusive, divisive, partisan, partial mode of relating in terms of overly emphasizing and overly positively valuing some particular aspects of self and others, and underemphasizing and/or overly negatively devaluing or disapproving other aspects]. Because time and space are concepts of relativity, love and truth are transpersonal aspects, rather than personal or egotistical aspects, and therefore are also beyond time and space. [That is to say, truth, or undistorted, accurate, experiential understanding of self and others, is naturally derived from love or non-dualistic, nonselective, intimate communion with the undivided wholeness of self and others. Love, and truth as the natural byproduct of love, includes contact with various relative or personal aspects of self and others that are distinctively localized within time and space. Love and truth can also include polarization or differentiation in the sense of placing a greater distinctive emphasis upon some particular relative qualities or traits of self and other individuals to whom one relates, more so than other possible qualities or traits. However, the undivided, nonselective, wholeness of love and truth also includes contact with deeper non-polarized or non-relative, transpersonal, or spiritual aspects of self and others that are not necessarily exclusively localized or restricted to specific time-space positioning. In this natural unified wholeness of love and truth, various relative polar opposites sometimes tend to converge, or become harmoniously unified or integrated, in complementary or cooperative ways. Therefore, when one is functioning in the undivided holistic flow of love rather than in the momentum of egocentric, divisive, partial, or relative ways of viewing and relating to self and others, then one's way of viewing and relating to self and others can sometimes become less distinctively differentiated, or less precisely and rigidly defined in terms of specific individual identity, rather than relating to and viewing self and others, and their various personal traits or qualities, in mutually exclusive, partial, unrelated, antagonistic terms, as sometimes occurs in more egocentric, relative, divisive, differentiated, or precisely defined ways of viewing and relating to self and others. Love, and the truth or undistorted accurate experiential insight that comes from love, naturally includes various relatively differentiated or polarized aspects of self and others, but it is not exclusively, or necessarily, limited to those relative or polarized aspects. The connective unifying wholeness of love and truth also naturally includes more fluid, dynamic, holistic, integral, aspects that can sometimes blur or even completely efface, polarizing relative distinctions, contrasting conceptual definitions, and sharply differentiated identities].

Qualities of the other can only be liked a great deal, valued. Valuing and liking are relative. You can value a little or a lot. You can value some part more or less than another part. But love is absolute, and transcends liking or valuing. Therefore, anyone who values only the positive aspects of the other, but cannot non judgmentally or unconditionally accept the negative as well doesn't really love the other, or enter into a love relationship with the other. They may value those positive parts of the other,

but it is not a mature and constructive state of love [involving nonjudgmental, non-selective, unmediated or psychologically non-distanced, contact with the undivided wholeness of another individual]. If you reject the negative in the other, it is because that negative [or uncomfortable, disturbing, aspect of the other individual] triggers some negative feeling in yourself that you are unable to accept. Therefore, you reject that [experienced negativity] in the other as well. As a result, your acceptance of the other person is [only] conditional, meaning that your acceptance is limited to their being [or manifesting] only the positive traits that you value, and conditional upon the fact that they never express to you those negative traits that arouse in you negative feelings that you cannot accept in yourself, whereas real love is unconditional acceptance [of the natural undivided wholeness or the experiential totality of self and other]. Unconditional means that there is no judgment. It is nonjudgmental. There is no judge present, because there is no feeling of deficiency that requires you to judge whether the other person's traits are an advantage to you, or a disadvantage to you. Therefore, love is unconditional acceptance, nonjudgmental approval, and is unconditioned acceptance of the totality of the other.

This is in contrast to valuing or liking, which is relative and conditional upon the other person giving you what fills [i.e., assuages] your feelings of ego-deficiency. If the other does not meet that condition, then your valuing is removed. Under those circumstances, your valuing of the other is truly not a valuing at all, because it reflects a valuing of yourself, because you value in the other only what makes yourself feel good. When the other ceases to give you what makes you feel good about yourself, then the other ceases to have value to you.

Because there is no [conditional] valuing in love, there is greater security in the real love relationship. Where valuing exists, then the possibility of ceasing to value that particular trait, or finding that trait existing in someone else in a more valuable condition, is also possible. Therefore, we are always [feeling] insecure and frightened that the valuing of the particular trait that we have will someday cease, or that we will lose that particular trait in some quantity or quality. Therefore, we will no longer be valued. However, [when true] love [exists], because there is no value judgment, good or bad, of the other individual, therefore, there is no insecurity [in the relationship] because we know that whatever traits that we have, even if they change or alter, or [if] we lose some of them, that we are not being loved [or conditionally valued only] because those particular traits are being valued. In that sense, people mean, "Love is blind." What this means is that in a real love condition, the specific traits of the other are not especially valued or non-valued [i.e., devalued]. But in a sense, the person is able to make contact with all of the traits in the other, both positive and negative. In that contact and state of union, love is released, regardless of whether it is something positive or negative that is being shared or expressed.

Thus [for example], some men may value a woman's [physical] attractiveness, and when she loses that attractiveness, then the [conditional] valuing is gone, and therefore the love relationship is terminated. Some women may value what they feel is strength in men. Then if they show some signs of weakness then the valuing is also gone, and the love relationship is terminated. Therefore,

it is necessary that the reader recognize that one is never really valued [i.e., in a relationship based on selective conditional valuing of only some of our traits, the greater wholeness of our being is not being valued or appreciated for its own sake, beyond what the particular desired traits arouse, as desired experience, or valued feelings, in the other person who values them]. What we are really valuing are those traits in the other that enable us to value ourselves more. So if someone is strong and protects us, then we value the state of security that that brings. If someone is [perceived as] attractive and values us, then we feel more beautiful ourselves, or more masculine, which boosts that ego identity.

In the same way that you can only love the totality of the other [individual], and not value just a part of the other, so too because life is an infinite indivisible whole, if you [conditionally] value [only] some parts of life, and reject other parts of life, then you are not truly loving life. To love life is to relate to it as one relates to any beloved. To love life requires that we unconditionally accept the totality of life, not valuing or judging any of her forms [or experiences and expressions], but unconditionally accepting the totality of whatever life expresses. This is not to say that life does not bring troubles, pains, difficulties, but it does mean that all of these have to be accepted unconditionally as a [natural] part of life, and [have] to be used constructively for our own understanding and growth experience of ourselves, as well as understanding the relative and paradoxical nature of life itself.

What has to be understood if one is really to understand the essence of the love relationship, is to understand the concept of ecstasy. The word "ecstasy" comes from the [ancient] Greek [word] ex-stasis, meaning to stand outside of oneself. What that means, essentially, is that for ecstasy or love to arise in one's consciousness, one's conscious awareness has to stand outside of the awareness of one's own self-concepts. When you, as pure conscious awareness, love something so much that you care about knowing about it more than you care about shining the light of conscious awareness upon yourself, and knowing yourself, then you are in an ecstatic relationship, which is self-transcendent. Your consciousness is then [undifferentiated, undefined, uncluttered, undivided, holistic] pure consciousness substance, which is one with love. Thus love requires a sacrifice of conceptual awareness of one's sense of personal individuality [i.e., true love requires being willing to at least temporarily relinquish separate self-awareness, conceptual self-definition, biased predetermined conceptual interpretations of other individuals, and other self-preoccupied egocentric inner monologues or distancing mind-chatter], in order to put one's conscious awareness completely upon the consciousness of the other individual. So, at that point, when there is no longer any trace of [separate, distancing, distracting] self-conscious awareness, one is not aware of oneself conceptually or experientially in the slightest, at all, because one's conscious awareness is absorbed completely in the other; then the consciousness is free of one's own conceptual self-knowledge, self-consciousness, which releases love or ecstasy as one's natural [inherent, intrinsic, unmodified, undistorted] and most essential experiential reality.

This next section deals with love as conceptual ignorance.

That is the non-conceptual knowing of the other individual,

the non-labeling of the other individual, the non-valuing, the non-desiring of any particular part of the other individual, but [instead true love involves] the unconditional acceptance of the totality of the other individual. Lovers share a common reality, a mutually shared understanding, [i.e., lovers share an undistorted, accurate, experiential understanding or undisguised truth of themselves and of one another], which then unites them as one. In that state of union, love is released. What is essentially being said is that the human being is truly a whole [i.e., an undefinable, indivisible wholeness of being], and, therefore, [is much] more than any particular labelled part [or selectively, exclusively valued trait]. When we label an individual in terms of his or her parts, then our attempt is to secure the gratification of feelings of deficiency on our part, through having those particular parts of the other individual become shared with us. So, [for example], if I value the other person's strength because I have a feeling of deficiency in strength, that is, I feel weak, helpless, impotent, or vulnerable, then I have labeled that individual as [being a source of] strength, power, protection, or security, and [I] relate primarily to that part of the other individual, to the exclusion of the rest of the individual. That, as indicated earlier, reflects [selective, conditional] valuing arising out of ego-deficiency feelings, and is not [genuine] love. Love is an unconditional acceptance of the totality of the other individual, and, therefore, cannot conceptualize that individual or limit that individual in any way [i.e., true love does not divide, compartmentalize, and limit the natural wholeness of another individual by selectively judging, presumptively interpreting, and exclusively defining particular aspects or traits of another individual that one conditionally values/approves or devalues/disapproves. Instead, true love involves nonselective, unmediated direct contact with the natural undivided wholeness of another individual. That direct, full, unmediated or non-conceptually and non-egocentrically mediated, experiential contact of love is too immediate, intimate, vast, dynamic, inclusive, and multifaceted to be judged, interpreted, and defined in any exclusive, delimited, definitive, predetermined, selective manner].

The same is true when we relate to life as a whole. In order to live ecstatically with life, in order to love life, one cannot conceptually react and relate to only particular forms of life, valuing some and devaluing or rejecting others. In the same way that a single individual cannot love himself if he rejects part of himself, and values [only] other parts of himself, because then his acceptance of himself is [only] conditional rather than unconditional. For love to exist, we have to accept ourselves as [a] totality, rather than saying, "I love my eyes, but I hate my nose", and the like. In the same way, life, being an infinite essence, the totality of life, the indivisible unitary wholeness of life, has to be un-conceptually related to, unconditionally accepted. Only then does one have a true ecstatic love relationship with life. Thus love exists only when relativity, that is, value judgments of good versus bad, is transcended, and an absolute state of separation between subject and object, or what is called a state of duality, must also be transcended for one's consciousness to be in union with the other, in order for there to be a true love relationship established.

It is important to recognize that love, like beauty, does not reside in the object related to, but, rather, resides in the process itself, or the manner of relationship between oneself as the subject and whatever [or whoever] it is that one is relating to as the object.

The essence of that relationship, in which a sense of beauty and love arise, is what I have been calling the ecstatic or non-dualistic communion relationship, in which the subject is in a state of non-separation from the object, in that one's conscious awareness and attention is being totally invested in the object, so that there is not the slightest trace of self-consciousness. [That separate self-consciousness and other related kinds of egocentric self-preoccupation, or narcissistic mental/emotional/sensationalist self-seeking, impedes true love by keeping one's awareness and feeling energy predominantly recoiled upon oneself, which blocks deeply invested, undistorted, incisive, profoundly penetrating contact with another individual as the basis of developing loving experiential intimacy, or non-dualistic empathic communion].

The more common means of subject-object contact may not be called relationship, but merely [superficial egocentric] interaction between subject and object, in which there is a state of duality or psychological separation, distance, between the subject and the object, so that one feels absolutely distinct from or separate from the object that one is knowing or experiencing. Under those circumstances, there is never a release of a [genuine] sense of love or beauty. The ironical factor is that most people have been yearning for a sense of beauty and love, because that intrinsically exists within their own consciousness when one is completely absent of self-consciousness. However, one has been seeking that experience of love or beauty in some external object. So, for most of us, we seek beauty in a loved one, or we seek love in the loved one, and from the loved one, instead of recognizing that love and beauty is the experiential reality that arises when one's sense of subjectivity is completely transcended. That sense of subjectivity is completely transcended when one has lost self-consciousness completely, so that one's conscious awareness is completely absorbed in union with the consciousness or form of the other.

Self-consciousness, which requires the construction of self-concepts, and a state of internal duality, [between conflicting self-definitions, and positive as well as negative judgmental self-evaluations], is essentially the opposite of the process of love, and is called narcissism. Narcissism means, essentially, as it is used from the myth of Narcissus, that one is concerned with admiring oneself through [holding] an image of oneself [in one's own mind]. It is the self-concept that serves as the mirror image by which [means] the sense of subjectivity attempts to know itself. The sense of subjectivity pretends that the self-concept is its own true image being reflected back to him. However, it is ecstatic love that is the undoing, and the only undoing, of narcissism that is possible. Therefore, love is the transcendence of dualistic self-consciousness and is the transcendence of all self-concept identification, at least for that given moment, in which the ecstatic, non-dualistic communion relationship that releases love is established.

The Mystery of Love

Although we can experience love non-dualistically, rather than out of subject-object knowledge or experience, love is essentially a mystery, in that we can never know [or conceptually define] what it is, in the same way that one cannot know what pure life is, for love and pure life are essentially the same. We can say, basically, that both love and life are related to the [unmodified,

undifferentiated, undefined, holistic, relationally connective] pure consciousness substance that we are [inherently being and], that everyone is [intrinsically, unconditionally, and unalterably being]. But, still, that is not saying what love actually is. It cannot be conceptualized. Although we can say many things about love, we cannot say what love actually is. One can only be love, but one can never objectify it so as to know [or define] it conceptually. In the same way, we are pure consciousness, and we are pure life [energy], and, therefore, we cannot objectify these to know them either, because we cannot be any other subject by which [means] we can know this most subjective part of our nature. So, essentially, love is always unmanifest. One may say, "show me that you love me," but essentially that is not possible. One can express affection, which are the behavioral expressions of that subjective state of love, but love itself can never be expressed, demonstrated, or made manifest. It is, along with life and consciousness, the essential mystery [of being or reality]. Only things which can be limited and thereby conceptualized can be known [or exclusively defined]. Love, life, and consciousness, not being able to be limited or bounded in any way, can never be conceptualized or experientially known through subject-object duality.

Although we cannot talk about what love is, we can speak of the kind of relationship in which love, or our most essential self, can be released into [our] full conscious awareness. That relationship requires the total absorption in the other, or the full loss of [separate] self-consciousness, which means the full sacrifice of our self-concepts, because it is only our conceptual and experiential self that can be known [or exclusively defined]. Immature people are so terribly concerned about their self-concepts, because they lack the ego's basic need for a sense of identity, as well as lacking a clear sense of worth and security. [Therefore], the immature person is constantly self-conscious, preoccupied with himself, which makes his attention flow toward himself, and therefore, makes it impossible for him to lose self-consciousness totally in order to establish the ecstatic or non-dualistic love relationship [with another individual]. Therefore, psychologically immature people find that there are many things in life that they cannot appreciate, not because they are not available, but because the immature consciousness cannot avail itself of what is available. So, even though a love object may be available to an immature person, if one is constantly self-conscious and self-concerned, one will use that love object to fill one's feelings of deficiency, and be essentially unable to give oneself totally to the other, to lose one's [self-] awareness completely in the other. Therefore, the immature person will not be able to love, and thus will not be able to appreciate the sense of beauty, joy, and fulfillment that comes with a mature love relationship.

Thus, the full potential for [deeply contacting], appreciating, and enjoying life comes not with money or material things, but with psychological maturity, for only then can the consciousness be what it [naturally] has the capacity to be. This [deeper contact with the inherent beauty, joyful vitality, and grandeur of life] is quite unavailable to the immature consciousness [because the narcissistically recoiled self-preoccupation of the immaturely developed consciousness can only superficially skim the surface of life experience, and therefore is unable to make deeper contact with life experience, and relates to oneself and others in a similarly shallow way. That rather shallow, distorted, egocentric

way of relating to life experience, other individuals, and oneself prevents the essential beauty, joyfulness, and grandeur of life from being deeply contacted, experienced, and appreciated]. The relatively mature consciousness [i.e., the individual consciousness that has made relatively deep, substantial, sustained, and undistorted contact with the experiential truth of oneself, other individuals, and life in the world] can establish an intimate and meaningful love relationship with another human being, as well as with nature, and thereby fully appreciate those forms of life. However, the fully and optimally mature consciousness can [also] go beyond even that [interpersonal] form of love, and establish an ecstatic relationship with infinite life itself, and thereby enter into [a] transpersonal love relationship. That is to say, [the maturely developed consciousness has the ability to establish] a love relationship between one's [own] individuality and the [Universal] Source of all of life, love, and consciousness, in other words, the Absolute [Divine Reality, the infinite connective energy substance, or the cohesive essence of life as love, that unifies individual forms of life in caring or loving relationships].

In the same way, as one matures, one learns how to love the representatives of pure life within oneself, which are one's feelings, that is, the energy inherent in one's feelings. So, for one to really love oneself is not narcissism, and is not a [conditional, exclusive, competitive or comparative, self-admiration, self-infatuation, or] self-valuing. [Instead], it is a state in which one's conscious awareness, in the mind, enters into an ecstatic, non-dualistic relationship [or intimate unitive communion] with one's feelings, in the stomach and chest area. In that state of union, the feelings speak for themselves and drain out. Then one is [naturally being unmodified, undistorted] pure feeling itself, which is the Transpersonal [Reality of spiritual or Divine] love, [i.e., when we fully liberate or thaw out the energy that has been formerly frozen, or blocked, in our negative and positive feelings by making full, direct, unmediated, undistorted, uncontrolled, uncensored, experiential contact with those feelings, then we are naturally being the undivided, unifying substance or universal essence level of life energy, as love, that connects individual life forms in relational contact or true love relationship].

Max Hammer's instructions to the secretary who originally transcribed this manuscript

Indicate that the title of the book will be, "*The Essence of Love and the Love Relationship*." Chapter one will deal with the mystery of love [as a connective relational energy, which is a spiritual or divine reality that includes but is also greater than, or beyond, the loving or caring relationships that abide within itself]. Section Two will deal with the meaning of love as the ecstatic relationship [between individuals]. Although we cannot define or know what love essentially is, a basic definition that points to love is that the essence of all personal love, which is Transpersonal love, is the uniting [i.e., love is a connective, unifying, universal, energy force. In the cassette tape, Dr. Max Hammer instructs the secretary to delete the word "uniting", but it is still included in the transcribed text because it seems highly significant and important]....Some people may call Transpersonal love Absolute love, or even Divine Love. It is the uniting or union of all [individual] life forms into their one commonly shared] underlying [connective energy] substance. It is the union of infinite pure consciousness with

infinite pure existence [i.e., the Transpersonal, spiritual, or Divine Reality of Love includes, and is inherently being, the full union of infinite subjectivity and infinite objectivity, or the unified integrated wholeness of the universal infinite knower, the Divine I, and the universal infinite Divine object, the Divine AM, together comprising the Divine I-AM, or the Divine Self, which has individual, relational or interpersonal, and universal or Transpersonal aspects, all indivisible or inseparable from one another within Love's greater, all-inclusive wholeness of being]. One can come to infinite pure existence [i.e., unmodified, undefined, infinite pure objectivity or undifferentiated, undivided, unbounded pure energy?] only through ecstatic love relationship with the various forms of [material?] existence. The same is true for consciousness. One can come to infinite pure consciousness [or infinite pure subjectivity] only through loving the various forms, the thoughts and feelings [experientially arising] within consciousness [from moment to moment]. Loving means not to value these, to judge them as good or bad, but [instead], to enter into a state of non-dualistic union with them, in terms of the substance of one's pure consciousness entering into union with these various thought forms and feelings.

When one enters into a love relationship, there is a sense of union in which the other person is in a sense [psychologically] incorporated into oneself. As a result, when that love relationship is terminated, it is necessary for those painful feelings related to the surrendering or giving up of that other individual within oneself, those feelings have to be faced. Many people experience this painful process almost like nausea, a need to vomit, or throw up. Often one becomes physically ill, as one goes through the process of surrendering a former loved one that has become embedded within oneself. This process, which is very similar to the grief or mourning reaction, when one dies, involves letting these feelings arise without attempting to escape from any of them. Let them express themselves with all of the hurt that is involved in them until they are fully drained. If one does not fully or completely eradicate the former love object from within the heart of one's feeling-life [energy, then], one is not truly free to ever really love another person. To really love another person requires giving all of yourself to the other. If the former love object remains embedded in us, we are not free to give all of ourselves to our new loved one [because much of our attention and attachment or feeling energy remains invested in the former love object, and is therefore not available to be invested in a new love object].

Another useful definition that I shall have to describe in more detail is that love is the essential truth, the essential condition, or the essential unity [i.e., love is the connective, unifying underlying substratum of undifferentiated wholeness, inclusive of], behind, or prior to, all subject-object knowledge...of any [particular differentiated] form or experience of the world. Unfortunately, we do not usually experience our own intrinsic loving nature except in those rare moments when we find someone whom we so deeply care about that we forget all concerns at self-consciousness, and place our awareness totally upon the other. Therefore, it is only at those relatively rare moments that our consciousness releases the intrinsic loving capacity that exists as the essence of our consciousness. Love is the great unifier, healer, teacher, and essential power underlying the entire universe, because it is out of the unity which love is that all truth and all creation arise. Love

is mystery, because it arises in us, and as us, only when the mind is silence, only when there is conceptual ignorance, that is the non-conceptualizing of ourselves or of the other person.

When an immature person loves, meaning values the other, the basic motivation of that kind of interaction or relationship is that the immature person is concerned essentially with his own self-enhancement. However, when a mature person loves, he is truly concerned about the wellbeing and enhancement of his loved one. Thus, love is always self-sacrifice, which is the sacrifice of one's own egotistical needs in order to be totally concerned, at least for that moment, with the wellbeing of the other person. Thus, ego and love are antithetical opposites to each other. Love is the mind or consciousness devoid of self-consciousness. When the mind is devoid of self-consciousness, love arises. [However], when the mind is in a state of self-consciousness, love is absent. When one is not generating concepts and thoughts about oneself, then one is [inherently being an undifferentiated, undivided] pure conscious awareness, which is pure consciousness substance. It is a non-conceptualizing, non-interpreting, consciousness, a non-conceptually reacting consciousness. One is just a pure silent witness of what is [i.e., one is just a non-reactive, non-interpreting, non-judgmental, non-distancing, non-controlling, non-interfering, pure silent witness of whatever experiential phenomena is arising within and/or around oneself].

It is true that love is the essential substance of the whole universe, the glue, so to speak, that [cohesively] holds the universe together, as well as the [connective] psychological glue that holds two human beings together. Love is like the background canvass that we can't see, but....

The First Side of the Cassette Tape Ends Here Side Two of the Tape Begins Here:

To continue [the discussion of] the point that was being made from the other side of the tape, love is similar to the canvass of a painting, which is the background of that painting, and is the essential substance that holds all of the forms of the painting together. In the same way, love is that basic energy which unifies, as its basic background, all of the [varied individual] forms in the universe. Love is always drawing objects or forms into unity, whereas egotism is always designed to bring about a perception of absolute separateness, independence, or autonomy. In a sense or manner of speaking, love is never [exclusively] personal, but always Transpersonal. It may be that a particular person may be the object that we use for transcending our personal ego, and, so to speak, falling into love, but when true mature love exists, at that given moment, both persons have surrendered their personal beings, and are immersed in that Transpersonal being which is love. So, although love is always truly Transpersonal, or what some people call Divine, it does and can manifest through a personal relationship if that is a true state of relationship or relatedness to each other, and not just mere [egocentric] interaction. A true relationship means that there is some kind of a [experiential] bond or a [n energetic] unity that relates the two individuals. That bond or unity is the mutual shared understanding that each possesses, in any given moment, as a result of being in the self-sacrificing non-dualistic ecstatic relationship with the other.

Real love concerns itself with how much I can give to the other of myself, whereas egotistical “love” concerns itself with how much can I get from the other, or how much can I use the other as a means of enhancing myself or gratifying my basic egotistical needs for a sense of security, worth, and conceptual or experiential identity. The person who is not yet mature enough and ready to reveal and give all of who [inaudible??]...ecstatic love relationship...One has to be free to share and reveal one’s entire being, all that one is physically, intellectually, emotionally, psychologically, spiritually, all that makes up the totality of the human being must be revealed and given to the other if one is to be able to conduct a real love relationship, for whatever aspect of oneself is withheld, at that point, love is withheld. Whatever you hold back of yourself becomes like a barrier or a psychological wall that prevents love from being aroused in you. You become self-conscious, conceptually and experientially self-aware, which destroys your capacity for establishing the ecstatic communion or non-dualistic relationship with the other.

Anima and Animus

The anima or animus is that opposite sex element or part of our psyche, within ourselves, that reflects to us, at least, what would be for us a perfect male or female love object. Thus, we tend to fall in love with that person who closely reflects or resembles our anima or animus. Thus, we tend to love that person who, in our perception, consciously or unconsciously, resembles our most deep inner being. Love is not under the ego domain, and, therefore, love is not a [n entirely] voluntary process. You cannot volitionally decide who you shall love. The attraction that you have toward someone arises basically as a function of that unconscious perception of the other person being what most represents your anima or animus. That is what some people call “chemistry,” that which draws two people together, even beyond what appears on the surface to be reasonable or volitional. If, to you, the other person does not represent what you would like to be as a male or a female, meaning, as a member of the opposite sex, then you will not be able to give all of yourself to the other [person], incorporate the other into you, and, therefore, [you] will not be able to establish a love relationship. It is as though we already have an unconscious picture of what the opposite sex person will be like, and that serves as an inner mold that is empty [i.e., initially vacant] within us, and when we meet that person who we see fits that mold, then we psychologically incorporate that other into ourselves, at the same time that we give all of ourselves to the other. If it seems to be a near-perfect fit, that is what commits us to then give all of ourselves to the other, and to fully incorporate the other into ourselves [in a psychological sense], which produces the depth of the love relationship.

Having done that, if we then [later] lose that love relationship [with an opposite sex partner who feels just right for us, consciously or subconsciously experienced at a deep core level of our individual being, then], it is a very difficult experience to expel the other person from within us. It is almost as though we are losing a [naturally closely related] part of our own self, a part of our own inner substance [i.e., it is as if we are losing the opposite sex complementary counterpart, “twin flame”, or ‘soul-mate,” who naturally belongs with us, as a closely related part or inherently interconnected aspect of our own individual being, and who is

uniquely able to provide us with the experience of full wholeness and optimal fulfillment, as the “other half” of the whole couple that we were originally created or designed to be. At a deep level of our being, not necessarily experienced fully consciously, it seems as if we and our rightful partner can experience true wholeness and joyful fulfillment only together, and not apart from one another. Our rightful partner seems irreplaceable and indispensable because other prospective opposite sex partners are not naturally fully compatible with us in term of their distinctive energy “pulse” or their particular vibratory life energy presence, and, therefore, they are not naturally designed to provide that experience of true wholeness, beauty, and ecstatic fulfillment for us, and therefore they cannot really provide that for us. {Although Max Hammer focused almost exclusively on intimate relationships between two people of the opposite gender, this dynamic and the other principles discussed in this article, as well as similar ideas presented in our other writings, should also be applicable to developing genuinely caring or loving intimate relationships between two or more persons of the same gender}. Therefore, when we lose a love relationship partner who feels just right for us. we “vomit” up the other person, so to speak, psychologically, and we feel incredibly empty and hollow, substance-less within ourselves [i.e., we feel like an empty hole, not filled with our natural true inner substance of love-life energy, and not completed or made whole by our true counterpart or the “other half” who naturally belongs with us], because the other person, in some sense, psychologically, was being used to fill that inner emptiness within us.

The more that we make conscious our anima or animus, rather than permitting it to remain unconscious, the more likely are we to make realistic and constructive choices in our love relationship. When the anima remains predominantly unconscious, then the choice that we make is quite often an irregular fit, and in the attempt to make that irregular and inappropriate fit a perfect fit, great conflict and agitation, as well as demanding-ness and manipulation arises, which only creates hostility and great pain in a relationship. Indicate that one thing that I will have to describe in much more detail is the relationship between love and understanding, in the sense that love arises only out of understanding, and understanding arises only out of love, or a non-dualistic relationship. If we want to understand anything about ourselves, we have to enter into an integrative, unitive, or oneness relationship with those feelings that we are trying to understand. And in that state of true self-love, understanding will come by itself, creatively, in the same way that when we enter into an ecstatic communion relationship with the other, we gain understanding of the other individual. And the deeper the understanding, the deeper the love relationship, and the deeper the love relationship, the deeper the understanding. So those two related elements have to be discussed in much more detail.

When immature people seek or enter into love relationships, what they are essentially seeking is a state of egotistical elation, based upon a boost to their ego in terms of one of the ego’s basic needs for a sense of security, worth, and identity being met, in some degree. However, the psychological adult, when he or she enters into a love relationship, gains not just relative egoic elation, but the true ecstasy that arises with egoic self-transcendence, as a function of giving all of oneself to the other, especially all of

one's attention, in any given moment, toward the other, which releases one totally from one's own self-consciousness. Sexual relationships without love are therefore also without true ecstasy, but are merely [arousing vacuous, superficial] physical sensation, which one quickly adapts to, and relatively soon tires of. Therefore, one looks for a new love object to engage sexually with. However, in mature love relationships, sexuality is part of the ecstatic process, part of the means by which one loses oneself completely in the other, and in trying to please the other. Therefore, the sense of release and ecstasy is much greater. One relatively quickly tires of sensation, but one never tires of ecstatic love. Ecstatic love, [regardless of] whether it involves sexuality or not, is always a creatively new event, whereas purely physical love or sexuality involves the mind, fantasy, ego need gratification, and therefore is essentially a repetitive experience, and ultimately a boring experience.

The egotistical person has a great deal of difficulty in engaging in the mature ecstatic love relationship because they cannot feel free to share their feelings with their loved one. They are frightened that their feelings and self-concepts will be disconfirmed by the other person, or invalidated in some way, which makes the egotistical person feel unaffirmed and unreal, which is how they already feel. Therefore, when that sense of insubstantial-ness [insubstantiality] or unrealness is affirmed, it is almost like a complete psychological wipe-out for them. Hence, they are very fearful of sharing their feelings for fear that the other person will not support the reality of those feelings, and thus not support the person's sense of identity and basic reality.

True understanding that does not arise out of value judgments invariably leads to real compassion, which is, along with empathy, a fundamental ingredient in a love relationship. Thus, if one understands oneself fully, no matter what one has done, there is no longer any self-hate or self-judgment. There is only true [self-] compassion, which is the essence of [true] self-love. The same is true for the other person. If we really deeply understand what the other person has done, or why they have done it, then judgment is no longer possible with that complete understanding, and compassion naturally arises. Judgment of like or dislike can arise only where understanding is partial or incomplete. Then, compassion will be lacking, as well. Thus, there is no real love [for oneself or for other individuals] without full understanding, compassion, and ecstasy. When love is immature, understanding is incomplete, true compassion is lacking, empathy is lacking, understanding is lacking, ecstasy is lacking, and therefore a true love relationship is also lacking. In an egotistical relationship, there is primary self-concern, self-centeredness, rather than concern or centeredness in the other. The egotistical or immature person feels basically worthless, or at least has doubts about his worth, and therefore tries to compensate for that feeling of worthlessness by trying to gain a sense of worth, which he hopes to achieve by being valued by the other person. Therefore, to the egotistical person, being valued is really what is important, and being valued for some particular trait is the only means [by which] that can be achieved. Therefore, the egotistical person is always emphasizing and over-exaggerating his particular traits that he hopes to have valued by the loved one. If those traits are recognized and valued by the loved one, then he feels, in some

way, that he has gained a sense of value, which will diminish his basic doubts about his sense of worth, or his feelings of worthlessness. As a result, if the egotistical person, somewhere along the way, ceases to be valued for those particular traits, then he invariably will feel very angry, and perhaps [may] even become very destructive, because he feels, at some level, that when his traits are no longer being valued, that he, in some way, is being destroyed, because his sense of worth has now been destroyed, or put another way, his long-held feelings of worthlessness have now resurfaced to his conscious awareness.

Those persons who constantly ask the other, "Do you love me?," are really egotistically people who are asking, "Do you value me?" They need to know that in order to give themselves a boost to their own ego in terms of its sense of security, worth, and identity. The person who is mature enough to be able to love in a true sense is not so much concerned with whether he is being loved [or valued], but more so, with having opportunities to give of himself so that he can love the other, because it is in loving the other that a real sense of ecstasy or joy is released, whereas for the ego, in being loved, he is affirmed in his sense of value, which creates a relative state of elation. Therefore, the egotist seeks to be loved, meaning, valued, whereas the psychologically mature person prefers to be loving. Although he would also enjoy being loved, it would not be because he would gain a sense of personal or egotistical value, but because he would know that therefore his loved one is also ecstatically happy, and because he loves the other, he enjoys making the other happy.

Those who hold back their feelings from the other, those who hold back their experiential self, make it impossible for the other to relate to, or understand, those feelings, and, therefore, in preventing a state of understanding from arising, it also prevents a true love relationship, or [a psychological] sense of relatedness, or a[n empathic experiential]tie between them, from being established. That holding back of self, that inability to let go of all of one's feelings, invariably also in some measure at least, affects the sexual relationship as well, especially the sexual orgasm, in some way. For if one is not giving all of oneself to the other, the sexual orgasm is never as deep and as fully released as it psychologically as well as physically can be. When's one's feelings are blocked, then love or ecstasy is always also blocked. For love is the last feeling that is given, when all other feelings have already been surrendered [i.e., fully disclosed, and, thereby, fully discharged or released]. So, when ecstasy or love is blocked, that energy turns to what is called destrudo or destructive energy, and becomes feelings of hate or resentment toward the other individual. Therefore, one becomes very hostile toward the other individual, in the attempt to drain the tension of those blocked feelings. Therefore, they will find some means of expressing hostility toward the other person, justified or not, in the attempt to drain all of the pent-up tension that results from blocked feelings, and underneath that, the blocked energy of love.

The person who is freest in revealing and sharing , openly and honestly, his or her feelings, is the one who is easiest to love, because that person is the easiest to make psychological contact with. A person is not easy to love just because they are physically attractive, or because they act in a nice, kind, manner. A person can be loved only when their real feelings are being communicated,

shared openly and honestly. Therefore, no matter how attractive one may be, [and no matter how polite or tactful one may be], if one does not offer oneself up to the other, one's real feelings shared with the other, that person becomes very, very difficult to love, because it becomes impossible to make psychological contact with what they are being experientially. To love another person, one has to be fully content with the other person. As long as you are judging them, and finding certain deficiencies, you will then desire certain things from the other, or desire that the other be something that they are not, and in that state of desire, one is extremely egotistical, attempting to fill feelings of deficiency, which prevents the ecstatic or loving relationship from developing. This ecstatic love arises only out of a state of self-contentedness and full contentedness with the other person. True love is unconditional or nonjudgmental acceptance of the other, whereas valuing of the other is intrinsically conditional, because if the other does not continue to be what it is that you value, for example strength, or attractiveness, then the valuing of the other ceases. Thus, real love is not a matter of having the other person be certain kinds of traits and qualities that you value, in order to enhance your own ego, but, rather, a matter of psychologically contacting the other individual. Therefore, in an egotistical relationship, if you want to feel "good", you value the other person only when they are feeling high or positive, and you reject their negative or depressed feelings. However, at that point, you cannot make contact with their depressed feelings, and, therefore, real love is not possible, a sense of union and understanding [i.e., a sense of experiential communion and genuine empathic understanding] is not possible.

In a mature love relationship, we don't care if the other person is angry or depressed. We just ask the other person to share those feelings [openly and honestly with us] so that we can make contact with those feelings, so that we can understand those feelings, and in that sense, gain a state of psychological union, and self-release, which is ecstasy. Thus, even if one gives us their most negative feelings, ecstatic love is still possible. But if one gives us only their positive feelings, when they really are basically feeling negatively, then, although valuing may be possible, no real contact, communion, or ecstatic love relationship is possible.

Need Relationships, or Complementarity Relationships, Versus Real Love Relationship

In the complementarity relationship, we seek somebody who is our relative opposite, someone who represents the things that we lack, and, therefore, we feel more whole by incorporating the things that we lack [or believe that we lack] through the relationship with the other person. Thus, [for example], if we feel weak, and we feel that the other has strength, and we lack strength, and value that strength, then we will engage in that kind of complementarity need relationship. However, we are basically different kinds of people, and, therefore, real understanding is very, very difficult to accomplish. In a real love relationship, the people share a basic compatibility of values. In other words, in the essential areas of who they are, they are basically similar. As a function of that basic similarity, understanding and communication between the two of them is very easy, and comes easily. Therefore, a sense of intimacy and closeness is very easily

and naturally established, because they are basically, in essence, so much like each other, even if the more surface interests are quite different. That is the essence [basis] of a real love relationship, that is, that the two [individuals] have a basic similarity in terms of who they are, essentially, which is what produces the easy [experiential] contact, the easy [unimpeded] communication, the easy [undistorted, clear] understanding, and therefore the easy ecstatic release of one's sense of self [i.e., the surrender of one's sense of separate self-awareness], which is real love.

In any given relationship, where one [individual] truly loves, and the other does not, the one who is being loved, but does not love in return, is invariably the more unhappy of the two, whereas the one who is truly loving, even though they are not being loved in return, is essentially the more happy of the two, because in that loving experience, the ecstasy of loss of self is what contributes to their basic sense of happiness, in being very concerned about the other person, [unselfishly] caring about the other person, serving the other person, sacrificing for the other person, there results a self-forgetfulness which releases one to ecstatic love, which makes one very happy. Of course, that happiness is intensified even more if the other also loves you, but between two, being loved does not make one nearly as happy as the one who is [doing the] loving. So, essentially, from a psychological point of view, those who seek to be valued-loved are still fixated at the childhood level of psychological development. Their ego is very weak [i.e., their basic sense of psychological security and self-sufficiency, or their level of inner strength of character, self-efficacy, self-responsibility, and self-understanding, is still relatively meager or poorly developed], and they are psychologically still immature, and still trying to get their basic ego needs, for security, worth, and identity, met, through some means or through somebody else other than through themselves. Whereas the more mature person generates a sense of security, worth, and identity from within themselves, and does not have to use the other person to gratify those basic [psychological deficiency] needs. The basic [psychologically healthy, natural] human need, rather than egotistical need, that is being met, is for the mature person to have an opportunity to love somebody so that he can release himself from his own self-consciousness, so that he can be that ecstatic experience of real love. The egotistical person still remains fixated in [psychological] childhood, because never having been gratified sufficiently in terms of a sense of security, worth, and identity, they still continue to remain the child, and still insist that somebody, in parent-like fashion, must gratify those childlike basic needs for an egotistical sense of security, worth, and identity.

A Kind of More Surfacey Definition of Love

Love is the profound emotional energy of attention, radiated toward the object of our attention and attraction, and radiated with such ardor that we forget ourselves and become completely, ecstatically, radiant. In a love relationship, there can be a kind of constructive conflict, or a struggling with the other person, in the attempt to understand the other person. But it is not a struggling against the other person, which is what exists in most egotistical relationships, where one or the other person insists on some kind of [domineering] "victory" or [psychological] conquest over the other person. Therefore, in a real love relationship, some kind of constructive conflict is to be expected, because it is through

that conflict that the two [individuals] explore each other as the means of gaining a deeper understanding of each other. If one person does not express themselves, so that there is no conflict, then the other has a very difficult time gaining the necessary understanding of the other that will solidify a sense of contact, communion, understanding, and closeness [between them, which is], necessary for the construction of a real love relationship. Hence, it is not a matter of conflict or the absence of conflict, but, [rather], the kind of conflict [that is engaged, in, that is the key to developing a psychologically healthy and fulfilling real love relationship]. A real love relationship will [naturally] include some measure of constructive conflict, but be free of non-constructive conflict, in which some kind of psychological abuse or egotistical attempt to gain a sense of victory exists. In other cases where there is destructive conflict, there is not a love relationship, or where there is the complete absence of conflict, there is no love relationship, because [at least] one person is withholding themselves in order to refrain from entering into conflict, and, therefore, no real contact is possible, and no real love relationship and understanding can be established. The immature person has a very weak ego, and because of that weak ego, has very little tolerance for [emotional or psychological] pain. As a consequence of that low tolerance for pain, they have very poor empathic ability, because if they empathize with the other person's pain, then their own pain will become aroused, and will overwhelm them. As a result, they refrain from real empathy with the other person, so as not to experience their [own psychological] pain. And because of that diminished empathic ability, there is also a diminished capacity for [experiential] contact and understanding the other person, which seriously impairs their capacity for mature loving.

In addition, the immature person often enters into non-constructive conflict, and because of misunderstanding of the other person. The reason for the misunderstanding is that they do not listen very attentively to their loved one, because their attention is so strongly immersed in their own thoughts and needs, or desires. That is the reason why, in order to establish a mature love relationship, one has to be relatively free of the [psychologically] child [like] and adolescent-like egotistical needs, for those needs absorb the mind, and prevent one from giving all of one's attention to the loved one, which prevents the ecstatic release of love. As a result of their attention not being [fully] invested in the other person, they do not listen very attentively, and, therefore, do not hear very clearly [and accurately] what the other person is saying [and intending to communicate]. As a consequence, [they] will often mistake what they have heard, which creates non-constructive conflict in relationships. An immature relationship is constantly marked by misunderstandings, where one person says, "I never said that", and the other person insists, "But I heard you say that," and that goes on back and forth, with no real [attentive experiential] contact between them, and, therefore, no real communication or understanding between them, and, therefore, no bond or sense of relatedness between them. Therefore, there is no true relationship, and, therefore, no sense of union or the possibility of ecstatic release of love.

Again, a mature relationship involves openness and honesty. If one is not being open about what one feels, contact is not possible. If one is not being honest about what one feels, then no real

[experiential] contact, union, or understanding is possible, and, therefore, no [psychological] closeness or love relationship can be established. That closeness has got to exist at all levels of one's functioning. Two people have to feel close physically, or sexually, in terms of the affection that is shared, the physical caresses, and the like, that is mutually gratifying to both [of them]. They [also] have to be psychologically intimate, in the sense of sharing their most basic thoughts and feelings with the other person, and feel that these thoughts and feelings are not only understood, but the basic values inherent in them are shared mutually by [them] both.

Love is not an [an egocentrically self-serving] emotion, but, [rather], the ecstatic release [of deeply invested, connective, caring, attention and feeling energy] that takes place in a particular kind of non-dualistic communion relationship. Therefore, love is not the opposite of hate. All emotions are related to the egotistical [pseudo-] self, whereas love exists only when all other emotions do not. Therefore, if those particular emotions exist in one's consciousness, one has to share them, and have them [be] fully understood, and fully drained, and then love flows on the heels of all of those [egocentric] feelings, [which have been fully disclosed, fully revealed, so that the energy in them is then fully released, and thereby becomes fully available for caring empathic communion or true love relationship]. All emotions produce self-awareness, and prevent [one from] having [deeply invested experiential] contact with the other person, which prevents ecstatic release of love. Thus, love is a process of relationship [involving a connective flow of caring energy investment directed to another individual], and [is] not an emotion, as such [i.e., true love does not involve a narcissistically self-serving or self-preoccupied emotional reaction to another individual]. Love is the result of a [n uncluttered, undistracted] pure awareness, rather than an awareness that is tied up into a particular self-thought or [self-seeking] emotion. Therefore, only when one is free of [egocentric] emotion is one's awareness pure [or unencumbered, i.e., unimpeded by a process of recoil into any kind of extraneous narcissistic mind chatter and self-serving emotional agendas], and [then] it naturally flows away from oneself into non-dualistic communion with the other person.

Love is the result of the process of relationship in which the two people psychologically feel as though they achieve a state of oneness or union, which is the result of the mutual understanding that they share in any given moment, which is the mutual [experiential] reality that they share in any given moment. In sharing that mutual reality, it is as though the two [individuals] were truly one. When that sense of separateness, and two-ness, or duality is transcended, then love is the natural condition that arises. Love is not the subject valuing the object greatly, but rather, is the absence of the subject-object sense of duality or separateness between subject and object. Therefore, it is the absence of valuing of any quality [i.e., true love does not involve conditionally valuing another individual for having any particular traits, nor does it involve any kind of egocentric self-serving agendas that one seeks to gratify through one's interactions with the other individual], but, rather, is the [process of self-forgetful communion or] subject-object non-duality, or union [with the undivided inherent wholeness of another individual, beyond all of their specific qualities or traits], which releases a state of ecstasy,

and a loss of self-consciousness. If even the slightest degree of [separate] self-consciousness remains, ecstasy is not released, love is not released, because ecstasy means ex-stasis, or standing completely outside of oneself and in the midst of the other. So, one loves only when desire and feelings of deficiency are absent, meaning that one loves only out of a state of wholeness, never out of deficiency needs [seeking egocentric self-gratification through the other individual]. Therefore, love is the unconditional acceptance of the un-conceptualized whole of the other person.

Ecstasy results because of the forgetfulness of one's sense of subjectivity [or separate self-awareness]. As long as there is a subject-object state of duality, one's sense of subjectivity [or narcissistic self-preoccupation, and incessant distracting, distancing mind chatter] is affirmed. That is the essential self-awareness. In ecstasy, one is so much aware of the other person that the sense of subjectivity has been transcended. Because the sense of subjectivity is the ego itself, when that [distancing] sense of being a [separate] subjective knower, judge, observer, is absent, then the ego is transcended, and ecstatic love is the natural result. Immature people, or those with very weak egos, are frightened of self-forgetfulness for fear that if they should forget themselves [in deeply invested, deeply caring, empathic communion with another individual, even briefly], the sense of self will disappear, and perhaps never return. Therefore, they are constantly self-aware, which makes it impossible [for them] to be fully immersed in awareness of the other individual. As a result, the ecstatic love relationship cannot be established [because the continuous recoil of one's conscious attention and feeling energies in various kinds of egocentric self-involvement will prevent or block one's investment in the other individual from exceeding a relatively shallow level of experiential contact, at best, or at worst, can even lead to a complete breakdown of genuine, undistorted experiential contact in the relationship]. The egotist is always concerned with affirming his sense of subjectivity, and, therefore, always resists entering into a non-dualistic relationship, where that sense of subjectivity will be lost [or at least temporarily relinquished]. He therefore always collects different kinds of love objects in order to affirm his [own self-generated, extraneous, distracting] experience and the [egocentric] sense of subjectivity as the [separate, distanced] experienter.

A basic principle of love is, that which you sacrifice your self-awareness to, you become, in a sense, psychologically, and that is what you love. That object, be it a person, nature, Deity, or whatever, that object to which you completely sacrifice your [separate sense of] self-awareness, you love, and in some sense, psychologically speaking, you become [meaning that when you find experiential contact with the genuine, undistorted, living energy presence of another individual to be more attractive than any kind of egocentric self-involvement, then your conscious attention and caring feeling energies flow fully away from yourself into unmediated {non-conceptually, non-narcissistically, mediated} direct contact with the other individual, and that unimpeded, undistorted, fully invested contact is what enables the lover to experientially abide in the beloved. Furthermore, that kind of self-forgetful communion is also what enables the unitive, connective, relational energy substance of life as love to arise and grow ever more deeply and substantially developed in

the relationship].

Love is a process of relatedness or oneness, unification or attunement, not with your self-concept of the other, or the other's self-concept of himself, but rather, with the other person's moment to moment experiential reality [arising] in his consciousness. Real love is ecstatic because you, that is, your conscious awareness, is standing in unity with the consciousness of the other person, and not [abiding] in your own narcissistic mirror image. [When we use our relationship partner as a narcissistic mirror or tool for generating, validating, and enhancing our own self-images, or our own positively and negatively value judged self-definitions, as well as using our partner for other related kinds of egocentric self-infatuation, and self-gratification, then that narcissistic mirror image distorts our perception of our partner, and makes our experiential contact with them much more superficial than it would otherwise be, which diminishes the quality, depth, beauty, frequency, and duration of love that can arise in such an egocentric relationship]. Love is the release of all [narcissistic, egocentric] self-contraction of consciousness. Therefore, [the] life energy force flows fully into our consciousness, which makes us feel fully alive, fully substantial, blissful, and fulfilled.

To be in love is to be submitted into the radiance of divine or cosmic consciousness, or [to abide in] the [expansively ecstatic] Transpersonal consciousness [involving full release from egocentric self-confinement, or self-contraction of one's conscious attention and feeling energy investment. That ecstatic full release of our conscious attention and feeling energies from all self-confinement in narcissistic self-preoccupation enables our inwardly empty, receptive, individual conscious life energy and material existence form to be filled with, and fully immersed in, the connective relational life energy substance of love. When we are filled with the relational energy substance of life as love, in that way, it provides us with a much greater, deeper, more genuine, satisfying, and beautiful experience of psychological security and inner substantiality or inner fullness of being, far beyond what the narcissistic ego's grandiose self-infatuated self-definitions and hedonistic self-indulgences can provide, as pseudo imitations of those qualities of divine grandeur that are inherent to our real being, or our true self, as love]. Love is the native [inherent, original, undistorted, natural] state of man's [humanity's] consciousness, and that is our connection to the cosmic or the Divine [Reality]. The Divine is love, perfect unity, and when we are in love, we are, in that sense, [abiding] in the [connective, relational] Divine [reality]. That is why it is fully ecstatic or blissful and fulfilling. Real love is the most blissful and fulfilling condition of consciousness possible for the human being, yet love is the most profound and difficult activity to perform, and the one that we resist the most, in order to preserve our egotistical sense of being a separate and independent self, of which we are constantly self-conscious.

Sex is not nearly as threatening as love, because sexuality can be conducted out of egotistical motivation, and kept as an egotistical experience. The reason why one is constantly obsessed with the desire to be released and consoled by experience, is that one has fallen [away] from love, from connectedness to our Source, the cosmic, the Divine. It is egotistical self-awareness that costs us our true security, or secured-ness, or connectedness to the

Divine, and Source of fulfillment. To be really living, fully alive, is to love; otherwise, one's life is a mere existing, and a seeking of artificial euphorics to experience in order to console us against the loss of love and our connectedness to real life[energy], which comes either by loving one human being, or for some, loving the infinite whole of life. We can be ecstatically lost in life, in loving communion with life, even if our personal beloved is absent.

Be by love possessed, not by self possessed that is, [be] not possessed by thoughts [and] feelings of one's egotistical self. There are times when it is quite necessary to have these emotions, as part of our survival mechanism, in the way like the physical body uses pain as a danger signal and means of survival. Anger can also arise out of love, as well as out of egotism. Anger helps us to deal with things in this world that have to be changed. But most anger is egotistical, that is, defense of the self-concept, rather than expressing anger as a true reaction to caring about other

individual, and an attempt to communicate with that individual. In the egotistical relation [ship]....

The Second Side of the Cassette Tape Ends abruptly at this point. I [Barry Hammer] Do Not Know if this Discussion Continues on another Cassette Tape or Not.

For more extensive discussions of the authors' insights, please see their two published books. The primary author of the books is Dr. Max Hammer, with secondary contributing authors Dr. Barry Hammer and Dr. Alan C. Butler. The titles of our books are as follows: 1) Psychological Healing Through Creative Self-Understanding and Self-Transformation. (ISBN 978-1-62857-075-5). 2) Deepening Your Personal Relationships: Developing Emotional Intimacy and Good Communication. (ISBN: 978-1-6198-590-4).