

TEACH ONLY LOVE

Teach only love, for that is what you are.

A Course in Miracles

One single loving thought that you experience has the capacity to spark hope in someone who's feeling hopeless, someone who may, perhaps, be giving up on life. One single loving thought you hold today has the ability to invoke a sense of oneness in someone who's feeling alone and lonely. One single loving thought has the magnitude to affect another in ways you've never dreamed of, for your love transcends space and time. *A Course in Miracles* teaches us that we are joined through our thoughts and that those thoughts increase by being given away. Therefore, times that you felt a sense of purpose or hope when previously there was none, came to you as a blessing from someone else--perhaps someone you'll never meet.

Genuine love never seeks to "get" anything, only to give. It becomes natural for us to extend love to everyone and everything when we remember that our deepest Self is love. So, if you're feeling a need to be loved, try giving love with no conditions and no strings attached. Extending love produces immediate results; where earlier you felt empty, now you feel fulfilled, where before you felt lonely and incomplete, now you feel connected and whole. "Teach" means to "demonstrate." It is our function to remember that despite our mistakes, our true essence is love, and that our function is fulfilled as we teach only love.

I have a friend who lives his life extending love to others. Where his life used to consist of working long hours and accumulating money, he now spends his time building homes for people who are destitute. He purchases the materials for the homes and builds them, side-by-side, with the families in need. When I asked him, "How do you decide which families you're going to build a home for?" He replied, "I go to a local church and ask the minister about the families most in need. Then I drive around the area and use my intuition to select which family it will be." As I write this article, my friend is adding the last window to an adobe he built for a large family in Tecate, Mexico. He has sent pictures of the family--at least three generations in this particular family!--and the love that is being experienced by everyone emanates from their beaming faces. The true gift that has been given is not the home, but the extension of love. My friend experiences great joy from being of service and expects nothing in return; the love he feels from the people he reaches out to is the greatest gift he could ever desire. When he's in the process of giving, he feels complete, at peace, and purposeful, for he's doing what is inherent to his being.

Love's presence is omniscient. Anywhere you look, you will observe it if you truly desire. It's easy to focus on the negative and to see what's not working, what's not good, what's not of love and light. It takes courage to witness love and to extend it to, and receive it, from

others. For most of us, genuine love is a foreign feeling, something we're not totally comfortable with. It reminds me of a woman who once attended one of my programs and declared, "I never knew how afraid of love I was until this past year. I keep thinking I want it, then, when it's given to me by my partner, a big part of me wants to run away--as fast as I can!" Her statement deeply touched the entire group because each of us could appreciate her fear. Everyone, at one time or another, has sabotaged love's presence and blocked heartfelt intimacy with another. Yet once we taste true love—love without conditions—nothing less will ever suffice. Genuine love is our essence; it's the foundation of who we truly are. Once we've experienced this truth, there's no going back. Who wants to settle for mediocre, superficial encounters after we've known meaningful, authentic relationships that are *real*?

Let us remember that love is not about getting our needs met nor any of the things we've been taught by society. Below is a list of loving principles that will increase the amount of genuine love you experience in your relationships as you learn to teach only love:

~~I desire to join with you from the love in my heart. I commit to releasing the selfish needs I have had in the past and to give to you without conditions.

~~I care about you enough to be honest with you and to express my truth from my heart with compassion.

~~I accept that we are both going to make mistakes, so I ask that you be patient with me and forgive me, as I am willing to be patient and forgive you.

~~Out of my love for you, I am willing to listen from my heart and to listen to what is in yours. I commit to suspending judgment so that we may experience connection, not separation.

~~I'm willing to support you in your growth and accept you as you are.