

the
CHOICE
for
LOVE

*Entering into a New,
Enlightened Relationship with
Yourself, Others & the World*

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Love Is All There Is

Returning Home through the Exquisite Doorway of the Heart

“The heart is the hub of all sacred places. Go there, and roam.”

— Bhagawan Nityananda

From the moment we were born into this world, and perhaps even before, each of us has been traveling on a mysterious, miraculous soul journey. No matter where we believed we were going, wanted to go, or tried desperately not to go, no matter how many detours we’ve regrettably taken or unexpected delays we’ve encountered, that path has inevitably been leading us to one place: the exquisite doorway of the Heart. There, upon entering, we will have the astonishing revelation that the love we’ve been seeking in countless ways has been inside of us all along.

Your whole life has been a spectacular love story. Love is the most powerful force in our lives. It is invisible, immeasurable, and incomprehensible, drawing us toward itself with a gravitational pull that’s impossible to resist.

You were conceived and created from love, and as soon as you arrived here, you began reaching for more love and haven’t stopped since. As a child, your first act of will was to reach for your mother. You reached out for contact, for comfort, and for nourishment. As you grew you reached for toys and treats and things you loved and wanted. You reached for approval from your parents. You reached for friendships to keep you company. You reached for affection from lovers. You reached for a partner with whom you hoped to spend your life. You reached for the continuation of that love with your children and grandchildren.

My hope is that you’ve had many beautiful experiences of love. Ultimately, however, you must redirect your search from reaching out to reaching within, so you can retrieve the invaluable treasure that’s waiting there for you.

Here is a story for you about that journey home to the heart.

At the time before Time, the Supreme Source that we often call God created the Universe, and everything in it—all of the physical matter; the plants and animals; the stars, planets, and galaxies; and His masterpiece, the human beings. As soon as God saw the humans, He felt so much love for them, as you would love your own children, and so naturally, He wanted to give His precious human offspring the greatest gift He could think of, which was the remembrance of their own divinity. God made it so, and every human knew they were the ultimate love disguised in human form, and naturally they were all very happy. This made God happy, and He sat back, ready to enjoy the play of life.

God was just beginning to relax, when suddenly, a group of the higher lords, guides, and celestial creatures demanded an emergency meeting with Him:

“God, we have a real problem. You gave these human beings the knowledge of their true divine nature, and you know what’s happening? Every time one of them comes up against a challenge or hits a rough spot in their relationship, they say: *‘Wait a minute—don’t I remember being told that I am the same as the Source of All? If that’s so, then why should I have to deal with all this earthly nonsense? After all, I’m not really this human form I am living in. I’m one with God. I am pure love. These dramas are too annoying, not to mention exhausting. Why even bother having any relationships? I’ll just sit here by myself immersed in my own infinite presence.’*”

“And that’s what they’re doing,” the Council members confessed. “One by one, the humans are deciding they don’t see the point of pretending they’re not God, and as soon as they do, they stop doing everything. **They’re not learning any human lessons, they’re not growing, they’re not developing any compassion, and they’re not even speaking to each other. They’ve dropped out of the Cosmic Game.**”

“Well, this is very disturbing,” God admitted. “*The whole purpose of Creation was for these human beings to learn how to find their way through the obstacle course of their humanity back to their Divinity.* I wanted them to have the most precious thing in the Universe, which is the remembrance of their true supreme nature as love. Yet it seems by remembering it, they have no interest at all in living an earthly life.”

“This development calls for drastic measures. **We are going to have to hide the secret of who they really are so that they won’t be able to easily find it, and they’ll be motivated to keep searching.**”

“I have an idea,” one of the divine beings said. “There are some really tall mountains on Earth. We could hide it there.”

“That won’t work,” God replied. “Human beings have a wonderful quality of setting their minds to a task and accomplishing it no matter how difficult it may be. They will be resourceful and find a way to climb the mountains.”

Another being suggested, “Hide it at the bottom of the sea. They can’t breathe under the water.”

“They’re going to invent submarines,” God answered. “They’ll go down and they’ll find it.”

“I’ve got it—hide it in outer space!” an Angel offered. “They can’t get off the planet.” God shook His head. “Sorry—I created them to be smart and infinitely clever. They’ll advance scientifically, and one day they’ll design ships that will fly all over the solar system.”

“I know where you can hide it,” a soft voice offered. God looked up and saw a young female angel.

“Yes, my dear?” God asked. “Where do you think we should hide the secret of who they are?”

“Hide it deep within the human heart. They’ll never look for the divine love there.”

God smiled, for He knew they had found the perfect hiding place. And immediately God made it so, and everywhere human beings instantly forgot who they really were. *And since that time, people have been searching high and low for the love that is already there inside of them.*



This book is about entering into a new kind of enlightened relationship with the most powerful, extraordinary force in the Universe that will fill you, heal you, guide you, and awaken you—*the relationship with your own infinite field of love*. There in the spiritual heart, you discover this hidden, cosmic gift of love that is your own true source and original home.

What is love? We usually think of love as an emotion we experience, or a bond we share with someone close to us. In order to experience a

new, enlightened relationship with love, we have to open to a new, enlightened understanding of what love actually is:

Love isn't an emotion, a behavior, or even the connection you feel with another person—it's a supercharged, light-drenched, limitless vibrational field of infinite divine energy.

It is the source energy of everything that is, and the very essence of your being. It is dynamic and alive. It is the most essential vibration, and the glue of the Universe.

It's everything you've been searching for.

THE GREAT REUNION

*“Faith is not the clinging to a shrine
but an endless pilgrimage of the heart.”*

— Abraham Joshua Heschel

In so many religious and spiritual traditions throughout history, the circle with a divine center has been a symbol of oneness and wholeness that radiates out to form creation. Four thousand years ago, prehistoric peoples built stone circles. Many ancient cultures including the Egyptians, the Druids, the Celts, and the Mayans incorporated circular designs as a part of their spiritual rituals. Perhaps you've seen a picture of a mandala, a beautiful spiritual and ritualistic symbol common to Buddhism and Hinduism that represents the Universe. Mandalas depict the journey from the cosmic center out to the manifest world, as well as the journey from outside back in.

From the sacred space at the center of the circle, life emerges. This is actually the truth of our everyday existence. Emanating out from the center of our Sun is a tremendous power that creates light and heat, giving us life as it has for thousands of millions of years. Without it, we would not exist.

In the same way, out of the center of a cell, the nucleus, all living things manifest, including you. You grew out of a circle, a cell, into more and more cells, until you took the form you're in now. The sacred geometry of the circle is everywhere, from the cornea of your eye, to the crystals that make up water, the orange you ate for breakfast, a snowflake, and out

to the spiral of the galaxy. **Everything starts in the center and moves out from there.**

You can see this principle in action by taking a pebble and throwing it into a pond. A little circle forms around the pebble. That circle interacts with the water and forms another circle, and that circle forms another circle until there are many concentric circles spreading farther and farther from the center. What are these circles? *They are all just expressions of one vibration. That one vibration created everything that is emanating from it.*

This is the nature of who you are. **At your core is the same divine spark, the great cosmic intelligence that is at the core of everything else.** From that divine source, different expressions of creative intelligence rippled out until there was an embryo, and then your body, then your personality, and then the events in your life, and the things you do and experiences you have. You conclude: *“This is who I am—these ripples.”* **But who you really are is so much more.**

The original Source/Light/Consciousness/Divinity from which you expanded is still there at the very center of all the ripples, still creating those waves and pulsations like the pebble in the pond.

**The center of your center is the pulsation of pure love.
It is known as the Heart.**

When we think of our physical heart, we know it’s a muscle that is responsible for pumping blood through your body and keeping you alive. However, your true heart is a non-physical, metaphysical heart. **This inner heart is the seat of that ultimate reality. It serves as the entry point for the soul from the divine, unlimited, source energy into your physical individuality and form. It is the home from which all of the ripples of who you are originate.**

The spiritual heart is the vibrational space spoken about by mystics and referenced in ancient spiritual texts—*“the hub of all sacred places,”* as beautifully articulated by Bhagwan Nityananda, a renowned, enlightened Indian saint. It’s the connecting link between heaven and earth, and between the universal consciousness and your consciousness.

What is the nature of this vibrational heart? *It is an infinite ocean of love.* So your true soul journey is the journey back to the perfection and wholeness of that center, which is not far away, but is your very source and your very essence.

**The journey back to the center of the heart is the journey
back to your true birthplace, to the source of all love.
It is the Great Reunion.
It is the journey Home.**

This is the cosmic experience that has been written about in all religions. It reveals itself in different names and descriptions, but the message is the same:

From the Christian Bible:

"The Kingdom of God is within you." — Luke 17:21

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God." — Matthew 5:8

From the Zohar, the literature of Kabbalah:

"God conceals himself from the mind of man, but reveals himself to his heart."

From the Bhagavad Gita:

"I am the self seated in the hearts of all creatures."

From the Buddha:

"The way is not in the sky. The way is in the heart."

When great beings, saints, and mystics characterize their most transcendental experiences, they're almost never simply descriptions of a void or nothingness. *"It was just all love,"* they report. People who have near-death experiences, or temporarily leave the body and return back, share that they entered a place where there was love beyond anything we can comprehend.

Perhaps the God in our story was right—*our hearts were a great hiding place for the ultimate truth, because most of us look everywhere else but there for love.*

**You can't really "find" love anywhere else but inside of you.
You can find a relationship, but you can't find love.
Feeling love, then, isn't about feeling emotions.
It's about cultivating your inner connection to the divine
and to the ultimate field of love.**

**RELATIONSHIPS:
SOULS JOYFULLY SPLASHING TOGETHER**

*“All life is one. Differences are superficial.
They are only in the outer; they are only in the body.
But one great common Consciousness dwells as the Reality
within all names and forms, with all creatures,
not only all human beings, in all creatures.”*

— Ramanujan

Sometime today, you turned on a faucet in your home or apartment, and water emerged. You used that water to cook, to take a shower, to wash your dishes, and for many other purposes. You need that water. It allows you to experience more happiness, ease, and enjoyment in life.

How does water flow into your home? The water comes from an enormous original source and collects in a smaller reservoir assigned to your home. It's carried into your house by an intricate set of pipes that then connect you with the water. Are the pipes the same as the water? *“That’s a silly question!”* you think. *“Of course they’re not.”* **The pipes create the relationship between you and the water—they supply the water, but they are not the water.**

This metaphor will help us answer our next important question:

If love is a vibrational field of divine energy, what’s the difference between love and a relationship?

Love is like the water of life. It’s a divine, limitless source that nourishes us and supports us in so many ways. We need it to survive. Each of us has our own personal reservoir of that love called “the heart.” Our heart is the place where we collect and access that water from the source.

When two people have a relationship, they’re each accessing that love from their own separate, individual heart reservoir. You have your own personal set of “pipes” that connects you to your love, and the other person has their pipes connecting them to their love.

All of the components of a relationship—affection, communication, shared activities, and so on—*serve as vehicles for your love to flow out and interact with someone else’s love*, kind of like two streams of energy

interacting together. (Visualize two streams of water dancing and splashing.) **But the source of that love is inside of you.**

A relationship is not the same as love.

Love is a vibrational field of sublime, life-enhancing energy.

A relationship is a vehicle through which you can experience love.

Another person is also a vehicle through which you can experience love.

But they're not the source of the love.

Love doesn't come from the outside of your life in.

Love comes from the inside out.

So what is it that we're feeling when we feel love?

What we call the "feeling" of love is the vibrational experience of the limitless field of cosmic energy as it moves into us and through us. That means any love we're feeling is divine love!

Why is it that you feel more love in one moment than you do in another?

Here's the best way I know how to describe it:

Remember that you have your own individual reservoir of love—your heart. You can imagine your heart like your personal ocean filled with the energy of love.

1. Someone comes along—your mate, your child, your friend—and does something or says something that is sweet, kind, and caring.
2. Their loving energy is like the wind: it stirs your vibrational ocean of love energy to rise up in waves.
3. The stronger the wind of the other person's vibrational energy, the bigger the waves of your own love that you feel rising up in your heart.

Isn't this an illuminating way to understand what we mean by "love"? When you "feel" love, you're actually experiencing the movement of that life force rising up within you, like a quiet ocean suddenly rising up in waves. The same amount of water is always there in the ocean, but when it moves into waves, it seems like something greater has happened, as if the ocean itself has become bigger. **Love is always there within you, but sometimes it rises up in waves, and suddenly, you "feel" love.**

So perhaps some new, enlightened translations of the phrase “I love you” are:

“My love is rising up in waves.”

or

“Your wind makes wonderful waves on the ocean of my heart!”

Once we gain this new, enlightened understanding of love and relationships, something else instantly becomes clear:

**When we feel love, we’re never falling in love.
We’re always rising in love.**

IT’S ALWAYS YOUR OWN LOVE

Have you ever wondered: *“How does someone else’s love get into me?”* The answer is: “It doesn’t!” No one gives you a transfusion of love, or provides bottles of love for you to drink every day. No one shoots a big stream of love at you with a special hose. *When you register that you’re feeling love, nothing has been added to you that can be measured.* That’s because nothing has been added at all. **It’s always just your own love.**

Think back on the relationships you’ve ever had. Whether they turned out horribly or turned out wonderfully, *it was always your own love you were feeling.* Someone would do or say the right things that gave your love permission to rise up. **But the other person didn’t actually put something substantial into your heart. Nothing they did added to the volume of your love. You simply decided to allow yourself to feel your love, opened the valve, and your own love began to flow out and rise up. But it was your love.**

Love isn’t something we can actually “get” from anyone else.

No one can give you any love you don’t already have.

No one can fill you with anything you don’t already possess.

Sometimes you feel it, and sometimes you don’t,

but all the love you ever feel is yours,

rising up from within you from the source of all love.

Love is its own source.

We usually assign our own experiences of love to another person, as if they’re the source of what we’re feeling—but they never truly are. Of course, relationships give you the experience of delight, enjoyment,

comfort, camaraderie, and much more. The other person can be a great “wave-maker.” But it’s your love, and your ocean.

In the same way, your love doesn’t leave your heart and flood into someone else’s, filling them up and removing their emptiness. *Your love can call out to someone else’s love, but it can’t give them love they don’t already have.* Each of us must learn how to move through the gateway of our own heart and access the treasure trove of love that is there before we can even experience love in anyone else’s presence.

Here’s a suggestion of how you can begin to notice these moments of your own love rising up the next time you’re with someone you love:

Perhaps you’re hugging your partner, or meeting a friend for lunch, or watching one of your children play, or observing your dog or cat do something adorable.

Simply become aware of the vibration of energy—that feeling you call love—rising up from your own heart. Allow yourself to feel it. Notice the waves of that love moving higher as you experience the energy of the other person.

Don’t try to think anything to make yourself feel more loving.

In that moment, just recognize that what you’re feeling is your own love. No one actually gave anything to you. Your own love is rising.

You can quietly acknowledge this and say to yourself:

Right now, I can feel my love rising.

In the presence of your heart, the waves of my ocean of love rise high.

My waves really love splashing against your waves.

But it is still my love.

WHAT IS THE CHOICE FOR LOVE?

“We are already one. But we imagine that we are not.

And what we have to recover is our original unity.

What we have to be is what we are.”

— Thomas Merton

What if you could experience the fullness of your own love rising up in every moment of your life?

What if you could learn how to be “in love” all the time?

What if you could become a powerful field of overflowing love that uplifted and blessed everyone you met?

This is what awaits you when you make the choice for love.

The choice for love is a revolutionary and revelatory shift in your relationship with the energy of love itself. It invites you into a new, enlightened experience of love as a vibrational state of being.

It's the choice to allow yourself to feel the innate, limitless fullness of your heart.

It's the choice to invite love in its limitlessness to flow through you, work through you, express itself through you, and serve others through you.

It's the choice to have a totally conscious, committed, dynamic relationship with the field of love that dwells within you, as you.

As we'll see, the choice for love isn't a choice to simply be more loving toward others, perform more kind and loving acts, or remind yourself to think more loving thoughts. That book would be titled *The Choice to Love*. It's also not a manual to teach you how to look for love, or to figure out how to get other people to give you more love. Of course, that book would be *The Chase for Love!*

We all want love. However, we mistakenly believe that we need to wait until something happens from the outside to give us an experience of love.

We wait for someone to behave in a certain way so we can feel love.

We wait for something to happen that inspires us to feel loving.

We wait to see how we perform or what we accomplish so we can feel love for ourselves.

What this means is that we're waiting for love to choose us. We wait for love to reveal itself in some way that we recognize, and then we *give ourselves permission to feel our love*. The choice for love does just the opposite.

Love is a choice that we make from moment to moment.

Don't wait for Love to choose you.

In each moment, you can choose Love.

This is such a profound understanding. We don't have to wait to feel love, as if we hope it will be arriving at any moment. We know that love is the Prime Condition—in fact, *our* Prime Condition, and our true nature. *So there's nothing to wait for. There's simply a new kind of choice to make. Instead of looking for it, or waiting to receive it or to feel it, we learn how to choose it, to find that highest frequency of love and connect ourselves with it.*

So the choice for love means the choice to recognize, reconnect with, and swim in the unlimited and enormous field of love that is your most essential vibration.

The choice for love is the outward movement of the vibrational field of love that exists within you.

You choose to bring that inner field of love out, giving it a direction and destination.

When you feel that love moving from inside of you out, you're experiencing the movement of the life force itself.

When we make the choice for love, we will be recalibrating ourselves to that most elevated vibration and allowing that energy to take form in our life. How does that unlimited energy of love express itself? It manifests as *delight, passion, compassion, connectedness, creativity, consciousness, wisdom, integrity, service, and the list goes on and on!*

**You may or may not have the relationship you want.
You may or may not feel good about yourself or your life.
But you don't have to wait to feel love.
You can make the choice for love.**

Expanding into this new understanding of love radically transforms and expands the possibilities for the way we experience love. It is a shift from *"I am loving"* to *"I love."*

Love usually means:

I AM LOVING (*fill in the blank*).

I am loving my husband, my daughter, my dog, my garden, my new car, etc.

When we make the choice for love, we begin to have a new experience:

I AM LOVE.

I am love, and love is rising up in me and expressing itself through me, flowing toward that person/object/experience.

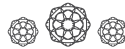
Love becomes the way we relate to the entire world, and not just to a particular person or experience. We don't need a specific object of love for the energy of love to rise up.

I LOVE . . . and whatever is in my path will experience that love. I am a walking field of love.

We can take this one step further: It's not even that *your* love is rising up, or that *your* love is flowing out. **The truth is, it's THE love. There's only one love. THE love is rising up within you, and moving out through you.**



This is the journey we're taking together in these pages. As you'll learn in the upcoming chapters, making the choice for love requires learning how find your way back to the innermost part of yourself, your divine essence, beyond your personality and beyond your circumstances. You'll discover how to unblock the channels between yourself and that unlimited cosmic force, and increase your capacity to hold and transmit more of that source energy out to the world. Reuniting with your own immense field of love, you'll be free to make new, enlightened choices about how you relate to yourself and to others. Your shimmering, overflowing heart will bless the planet with love.



YOU ARE ALWAYS IN LOVE

“He who is filled with love is filled with God Himself.”

— St. Augustine

As we begin to recognize what love truly is, it's easier to understand the overwhelming desire that can draw us to other human beings—we are being pulled toward a mirror of our own formless self in another form. We find delight in gazing at the heart-ocean of another human being in whom love is dancing and feeling our own love rise up and join in.

**Love is the highest spiritual practice.
The boundaries between ourselves and others melt,
and we experience the true “We” and true Oneness.
Love is the way the Divine manifests and flows
in a tangible form from human to human.
That's how we get to experience heaven on earth—
through loving each other.**

Haven't you experienced this looking into someone else's eyes? You know the two of you are different beings, and yet there is oneness flowing between you. The sense of boundaries melts, and something that is neither you nor them reveals itself. This is the sacred “we,” which we'll talk more about.

When your ocean of love and someone else's ocean of love rise up together, love gets to dance with itself.

**This is an enlightened relationship:
both of you agree to feel your own love at the same time.
That love resonates back and forth like a joyous bridge
connecting your two hearts.
Side by side, you celebrate the miracle of the love
that is dancing within each of you and between you.**



All of us love the idea and experience of being “in love.” *“I wish I was in love,”* we dream when we're single. Then later, when we have a *relationship*, we complain: *“I remember when we first fell in love, and wish we were more in love now.”*

Here is the astounding truth: The highest part of you is that place that reverberates with love. The essence of you *is* that love. Therefore, you are always, already *in* love!

**Right now, you *are* IN love.
You have always been IN love.
You can't *not* be IN love.
You can cut yourself off from feeling it,
or have a difficult time accessing it.
But you will still be IN love.
Love is all there is.
It is everywhere. It's everything.
It's limitless.
Therefore, love is all you are.
It's an unlimited ocean of divine energy
You're already *in* it.
In fact, you *are* it.**

As we'll see, we have to be in the state of love before we can have any kind of meaningful relationship. Learning how to be “in love” by ourselves, with ourselves, will allow us to experience true love for the first time.

**THE ENLIGHTENED SOLUTION:
LEARNING HOW TO MAKE THE CHOICE FOR LOVE**

“I will fill the world with love and create Heaven on Earth.”

— Maharishi Mahesh Yogi

We are living in a vibrational Universe. Modern science tells us that everything in the Universe—all sound, light, and matter, including you—is simply pure energy vibrating at different frequencies. What we see as solid matter just appears to be solid, but when one looks at that matter on a sub-atomic level, it isn't matter at all, but pure energy. We are all vibrating consciousness.

Love is the supreme and highest vibration in the Universe. **When you're in the space and vibration of love, you spontaneously align with your highest. You're vibrating at your highest possible frequency. When you make the choice for love, you're choosing your highest.**

For this reason, learning how to make the choice for love is the ultimate solution and the ultimate vibrational remedy. There is no situation that will not benefit from being met with more Love:

**No matter what you're faced with, the solution is Love.
More love, not less love.
More love for yourself.
More love for others.
More love for the Journey.
More love for your humanness.
More love for your challenges.
More love for your pain.
More love for your fear.
More love for your battles.
More love for the part of you
that doesn't want to give more Love.
Love is always the missing ingredient in every dilemma.**

When it's dark and you bring in just a little bit of light, the darkness instantly disappears. There is no more darkness. **Love is like that, because the nature of that divine field of energy is light. If you bring love to something, the darkness will vanish.** That's why when someone is vibrating with a lot of love, we say, "*She's just glowing!*" They look as if they're illuminated from within—and they are. When you are feeling love, the world looks brighter, and it's easier to see the light in others because your own vision is infused with more light.

My telling of an old Sufi fable:

There was once a dark Cave who lived deep down in the ground where no one ever ventured. The Cave had never seen any light, and therefore never imagined that it existed.

One day, the great Sun decided to send an invitation to the Cave, beckoning it up into the sky to visit and see the light. The Cave didn't understand what the word "light" meant, but, not wanting to be rude to the Sun, who seemed very important, accepted the invitation. When the Cave arrived high up in the heavens, it was astonished at what it beheld. It had never seen light before, and it became overwhelmed by its magnificence, so much that it didn't want to leave.

The Cave decided that it was only fair to return the kindness, and so it invited the Sun to come down to where it lived deep in the earth so the Sun could experience the darkness. The Sun had never seen this “darkness,” and actually had no idea what the word meant, but gladly accepted the Cave’s invitation.

The next day came, and as promised, the Sun entered the Cave. It began searching for this “darkness” the Cave had described, but no matter where the Sun looked, all it saw was light. The Sun turned to the Cave and said, “Excuse me, Cave. I don’t mean to be rude, but where is the darkness that you described that exists here with you? This looks just like where I live—all I see is Light.”

**Love carries its own light.
It illuminates any space it touches.**



How do we begin making the choice for love?

We make the choice for loving ourselves no matter what we are going through, and no matter what we are facing.

We make the choice for loving ourselves no matter how many times we’ve fallen or faltered.

We make the choice for loving ourselves compassionately, even when we see so much else about us that is not love.

We make the choice for bringing love to our relationships, even when there is difficulty, discord, and so many reasons to shut down, shut off, turn away, and not love.

We make the choice for seeing the existence of the highest in others, even when they themselves have forgotten or forsaken it.

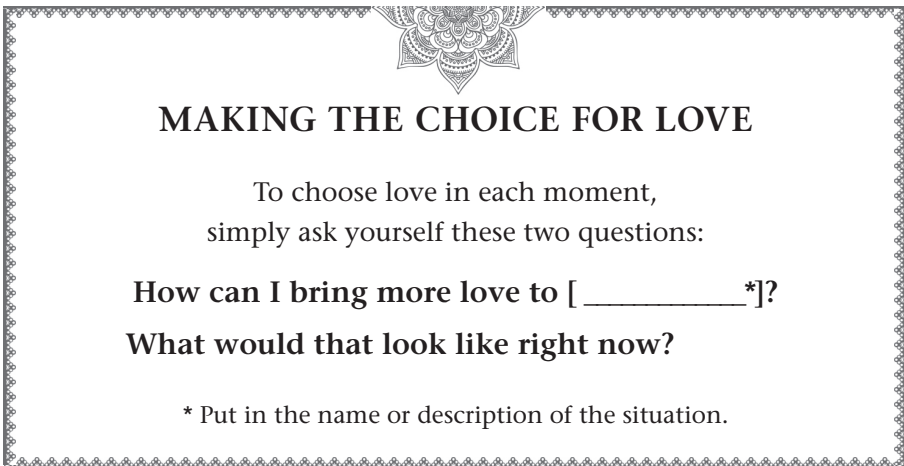
We make the choice for bringing love to the challenging and painful situations with which we’re faced, even as our mind says, “There’s nothing to love there. There is no way to be loving.”

For me, making the choice for love has been the cornerstone of my own spiritual path, and love has been and still is my most essential spiritual practice. *Every time in my life I’ve been unsure of what to do, how to proceed; every time I’ve been weighed down by my own fears, anxieties, or concerns; every time someone else hurt me, disappointed me, wounded me, or betrayed me, I would call on love. I would decide that I was going to make*

the choice for love, even if, at first, I didn't know what that meant, or how it would even be possible.

We have an exciting, powerful, and transformative journey ahead of us on these pages. Along with teachings and wisdom, I'll be offering you many Choice for Love Practices that are designed to help you align with your own highest vibration of love, and connect you with your most expanded heart, moment by moment.

To help you begin, here's the most basic and powerful Choice for Love Practice.



MAKING THE CHOICE FOR LOVE

To choose love in each moment,
simply ask yourself these two questions:

How can I bring more love to [_____]*?

What would that look like right now?

* Put in the name or description of the situation.

This is an essential practice that instantly raises your vibration, expands your consciousness, and moves the energy of love from inside of you out. I use this many times a day in my own life, and have taught this to thousands of students, who say that it has changed everything about how they live and love.

The power of these questions is **that you're not asking yourself:**

"How do I fix the other person in this situation?"

or

"What can I do to manage/control/manipulate/avoid the situation?"

or

"What could someone else do to bring more love to this situation?"

Rather, you're invoking your highest self, and by doing that, you've already made the choice for love.

The moment you ask: "How can I bring love to this situation?"

you've already shifted into the vibration of love.

You're already bringing more love to the situation.

The moment you ask: "What would that look like right now?"

you've already opened your vision to a new possibility,

**and invited your higher consciousness to show you
some more enlightened options.**

It's important to understand that these questions aren't meant to act like a token you put in a machine and out pops a prize. *They are vibrational questions, designed to recalibrate you by just your asking them.* You may ask: "How can I bring the most love to this situation?" and at first receive the answer "I have absolutely no idea!" Don't worry. It's normal for your intellect to answer first. Continue to ask until a choice or direction reveals itself, and it will. *Just by asking, you've called on love to show itself to you. The moment you start working with these questions, you've already made the choice for love.*

When you ask, it can be helpful to replace the word *situation* with the specifics. Here are some examples:

How can I bring more love to the challenge I'm facing with my project at work? What would that look like right now? (*Ask for more help. Celebrate the progress I've already made instead of beating myself up. Make a list of past challenges I've overcome. Stop gossiping about my project partner and undermining him by not including him in my research.*)

How can I bring more love to this argument I'm having with my husband right now? (*Tell him I appreciate the fact that he's willing to discuss this issue instead of making him wrong for not agreeing with me. Give him a hug. Suggest we take a break and go out for a walk. Remind myself of why I love him instead of focusing on how much I dislike this part of him.*)

**How can I bring more love to: my impatience with my child/
this event I don't want to attend/the difficult conversation I'm about
to have with my employee/anything? What would that look like
right now?**

You can also use this slightly adjusted version of the Choice for Love Questions that may help you go even deeper into the answers.

“How can I bring *the most* love to this situation?”

When you're in the space and vibration of Love, you spontaneously align with your highest. You're vibrating at your highest. *Choosing love, you can live in your highest. If you have nothing else to guide you, allow these questions to be your compass and your map. They will take you deep into the very center of your heart, and up to the very heights of your most enlightened consciousness.*

OPENING YOURSELF TO THE PRESENCE OF LOVE

“We are more than just physical beings, we are whispers of love dancing in the breeze.”

— Micheal Teal

We are all seeking the most exalted spiritual experiences, and I believe the most sacred of those is love. Love offers us an opportunity to have a living experience of the divine. It is the only activity in which we rise above our separateness and glimpse the indivisible unity that is the truth of who we each and all are.

Love between yourself and another person is perhaps the most intimate way you can participate in the great mystery. You have the experience in which your boundaries and the other person's boundaries melt.

For a moment, you transcend the illusion of separation, and merge into oneness, not just with one another, but with everything.

You become love.

Over the course of my lifetime, I've spent many months on very long meditation retreats, initially in my younger days with my first teacher, and then, several decades after he went into seclusion, at the ashram of my second teacher. These were exquisite periods during which I could completely immerse myself in the depths of consciousness, practicing 12–15 hours of meditation a day, sometimes for six months or more, and

living in almost total silence. I know that for most people, this probably sounds like a nightmare, but for me, it was bliss.

It was during one of these extended six-month retreats in the early 1970s that I experienced what I consider my spiritual initiation into love. This is a very personal story, one I've never shared publicly, but it belongs in this chapter about our return home to the heart.

One afternoon, I was meditating in my room, deep in a very silent and unbounded state. Suddenly I began to expand, and expand, and expand. All boundaries of time, space, and reality melted, and I completely left this body, this world, and this plane of existence.

Any sense of Barbara, any sense of individuality, any sense of anything but oneness did not exist. I (*although there was no "I" left*) was just in the great All. *It wasn't that "I" was feeling the Love. The "I" had melted into the Love. It was just Love. Love was everything.*

In that state, there was an awareness that everything in the Universe was created out of love, and everything that didn't look like love was still love. Everything that appeared separate from love was also love. There was nothing else, for how could there be? It was all love.

This was a knowingness, and even that knowingness was just love. It wasn't exciting. There were no thoughts like *"Wow, I'm having an outrageous spiritual experience,"* for there was no Barbara to think the thoughts. **I was love being aware of itself as love.**

I was in this state for what I later would come to realize was several hours, and at some point in that infinite Love, the tiniest fluctuation emerged, the glimmer of a consciousness of "I." *I am. I exist.* Slowly, that "I" began to become more conscious of itself: *"I am in a body living on the planet Earth. I need to return to that body now."* Even then, the experience was of love returning to a body, love breathing, love putting back on the costume of Barbara, love taking on a form.

Eventually, I found myself back inside of Barbara, in this body, sitting in my room.

When I emerged from that experience, I was permanently transformed. **For the first time in my life, I knew who I was. I had experienced my true lineage, and that changed everything—I was love. And I knew that everyone else was also love.**

When I left my room later that evening to go to dinner, nothing looked the same or felt the same, and it hasn't ever since.



This experience changed my life. Now that I knew that love was the only and prime condition, and the source of everything, including me, I began looking for love everywhere, recognizing love everywhere, tuning into the vibration of love everywhere, and figuring out how to find my way back to love in all circumstances.

One of the other immeasurable gifts this experience offered me was the truly expansive and thrilling understanding that *when we tap into love even for a second, we tap into all of it*. When we plug into love for a brief moment, we plug into the wholeness and the source of love. This is why I've shared my story, because it reveals why our choice for love will be even more profound than we can imagine.

Love is love.

The full force of love is available in each drop of love.

Love you experience in one moment is love with everything.

Love you experience with one person is love with everyone.

Love with anything is love with God, Spirit, and the Great Source.

You've probably had a special moment similar to this, when your normal reality dropped away, and you suddenly felt an enormous wave of Love. Maybe you were holding your partner, or watching your sleeping child, or worshipping at church, or deep in prayer, or outside experiencing the mysterious beauty of nature. In that instant, you realized that everything you'd been telling yourself about being unloved or not good enough, and all of your stories and patterns were absolutely an illusion. In that instant, the limited ego, with all of its papers, affidavits, evidence, and reasons to prove that you're disconnected from spirit, looks like a foolish, annoying clown who's interrupting your bliss with stupidity! In that moment, you *know* love is real.

Making the choice for love is nothing less than a spiritual path that leads us back to wholeness. We learn first to feel our own love without limitation, to open to it, surrender to it, and bathe our wounds in its healing presence so we can become a pure vessel to receive and carry that love.

We emerge then from the temple of our heart to bring that love out to the world.

When you discover your own, inexhaustible love inside, you will begin to experience an intoxicating freedom. It's the freedom to be *in* love, no matter who is or who isn't loving you. It's the freedom to drink and fill up your own love, to celebrate the mysterious miracle of its presence in your heart.

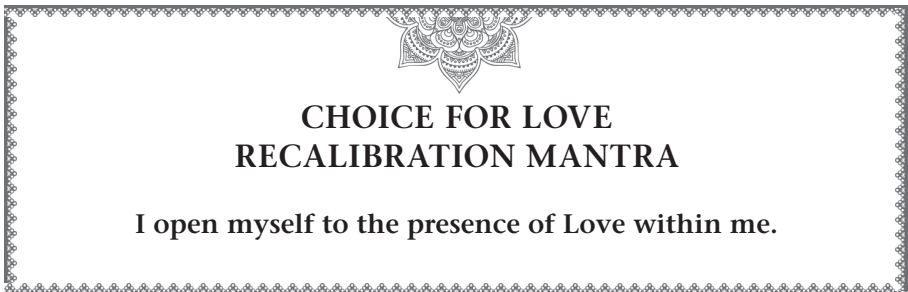
**Love that no one can take away
emerges from your own self.**

**Invite others to enter into that state of your own love.
You are the source of the love.**

**Remember: someone may come to swim in your ocean,
but it's your water!**

OPENING TO THE PRESENCE OF LOVE

I want to offer you one more *wisdom souvenir* from this first part of our journey. It's the Choice for Love Recalibration Mantra:



Introduce this phrase into your awareness any time you like. You may want to gently hold it in your consciousness when sitting with your eyes closed, taking a walk, right before you go to sleep, or whenever you

need to feel more centered and expanded. You can write the words down and place reminders on your refrigerator, on your computer, in your car, or on your bathroom mirror.

This is *not* the same as an affirmation. It's a vibrational gateway designed to create an opening in your heart, and not just an impression on your mind.

"Opening" means you are creating energetic space for something to happen. You're making the choice to experience love inside of you. You aren't waiting for love to do something—you're *choosing love*.

"Presence" means it is already there in you. It doesn't have to arrive from anywhere. It's waiting for you to experience it. You're not waiting for love, hoping it will show up. *Love is already, always waiting for you.*

"Within me" reminds you that you're not looking for the presence of love outside of yourself. It is the love inside of you, at the source of you.

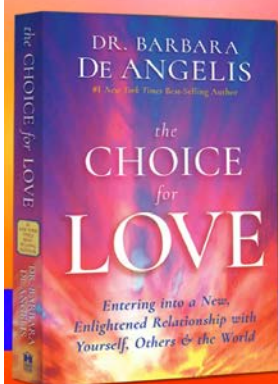
Honor this presence of love as your own love, as *the love*.

Remember: you are that love . . .

**I open myself to the presence of love that is within me.
May it reveal itself to me now.
May it rise up in magnificent, glorious waves.
May it welcome me home.**



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