

Splendored Love

The Ten Great Loves of Lasting Relationships

By Robert Porter Lynch

Of all the words in the English language, the word “love” may be the most confounding and confusing. The reason is because English converged the meaning of at least a half dozen words from the Greek into one word. It’s like mixing many colors of paint into a bucket – the result is a muddy brown. In the 21st century, love seems to focus typically on a single form of *romantic* relationship, which makes love difficult to attain and sustain. It might be unrealistic to find a mate that understands the real richness of love.

By refining our desire to experience the diverse richness of the ten great loves, by building a strong multi-dimensional construct for splendored love, we have a heightened chance of attaining its magnificence.

Rather than try to resurrect the ancient Greek words (see endnotes) which, while often deeply inspiring, seem to have little meaning for us in our modern, digital age, I have referred to more contemporary expressions to illustrate the many facets of love.

Let’s explore how to grow love as a “splendored thing:”

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Why should I bother reading this?

Because understanding the *multi-dimensional beauty* of **Splendored Love**, you will have a gained a whole new, vibrant, and wondrous perspective on love and life itself.

- How you experience your world will shift.
- Your relationships with others will become elevated.
- You will have an “artist’s palette” to design a vibrant life.
- You will more readily experience the divine spirit in others, and in yourself.
- You will learn to “love thyself” in a healthy and exquisite way.

You can gain the benefits of Splendored Love immediately and they will provide both a pathway to great abundance, spiritual health, trusting relationships, and self-improvement.



“Love is a many splendored thing” is the song title of a romantic favorite from the 1950s. So, what does this really mean?

Splendor means: an *extraordinary brilliance*, a *lustrous glow*, a *glorious magnificence*.

Splendored Love refers to the multitude of types of love in relationships experienced over a broad range of people, including marriage partners, friends, family, strangers, community, and even with ourselves. Splendored Love is multi-dimensional and kaleidoscopic in nature – something marvelous – already embedded in your genetic coding.

How Shall I Love Thee?

*How shall I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of being and ideal grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for right.
I love thee purely, as they turn from praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints. I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life; and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.*

(Author's Note: I changed the title from "How Do I Love Thee" to "How Shall I Love Thee" to emphasize we get to choose how we love)

In this poem, we quickly get the sense that love is multi-dimensional, dynamic, spontaneous, and filled with harmony, peace, and an ever-evolving sense of spiritual energy.

Most people never really consider the magnitude of the meaning of this poem, nor do they think about how to energize its glory. It is, in all its right, a description of **Splendored Love**. Elizabeth Barrett Browning has conveyed the *description* of a grand form of love, but how do we *actualize it* in our everyday lives.

The first step in actualization is to *understand the inner design architecture* of **Splendored Love**, then, as the change in title implies, *turn the poem from a sublime description of a set of momentous feelings that have already happened, into a set of conscious choices in building a splendid relationship with others in your life in the immediate future*. This also applies to *transforming failing relationships*.

Not only will learning how to engage in **Splendored Love** to transform your relationships with God, the world around you, and improve your friendships, but you will also be transformed as you embark on a journey of self-discovery for the *real meaning of your life*. You will experience a deeper and more stable wisdom about what you *Believe, Perceive, Conceive, Achieve, and Receive* in return.

Let's start on this Spiritual Journey:



1. Spiritual Love

This is best described as “soulful” or “sacred” love; it has a powerful “holy” or “blessed” quality to it.

Spiritual love is the very deepest and exalting of all the forms of love, for it is the “divine thread of the Holy Spirit” that connects two lovers to their highest and most beloved selves and to unity with the divine – the Holy Spirit.¹

Spiritual love is both very “ethereal” and very practical, for it flows from above, transcending transgressions of the moment. It’s based on the strongest of foundations: belief and faith in a partner’s inherent goodness.

It is a deeply “soulful love” that transcends any physical attraction. Looking soulfully into another’s eyes, one sees something glorious, transcendent, and beautiful beyond just superficial looks.

Often mates refer to each other as “soul mates” who are embraced by the light of such a strong experience of love.

From this foundation, a wellspring of wonderful sustaining waters flow – such as graciousness, forgiveness, mercy, and joy (which are based not on the circumstances of the moment, but upon a soulful reverence and devotion to life itself).

Spiritual love has, at its core, divine connection.

To give an illustration of Spiritual Love the description of Elsa Brandström by Paul Tillich² gets to its essence.



“Elsa Brandström, the daughter of a former Swedish ambassador to Russia, was in the hearts of hundreds of thousands of prisoners of war during the First World War; she was known as the Angel of Siberia. Elsa was an irrefutable, living witness to the truth that love is the ultimate power of Being, even in a century which belongs to the darkest, most destructive and cruel of all centuries since the dawn of mankind.

“At the beginning of the First World War, at the age of twenty-four years, at the Swedish Embassy in St. Petersburg, she saw German prisoners of war being driven through the streets on their way to Siberia. From that moment on she could no longer endure the splendor of the diplomatic life of which, up to then, she had been a beautiful and vigorous center. She became a nurse and began visiting the prison

camps. There she saw unspeakable horrors and she, a girl of twenty-four, began, almost alone, the fight of love against cruelty, and she prevailed. She had to fight against the resistance and suspicion of the authorities and she prevailed.

She had to fight against the brutality and lawlessness of the prison guards and she prevailed. She had to fight against cold, hunger, dirt and illness, against the conditions of an undeveloped country and a destructive war, and she prevailed. Love gave her wisdom with innocence, and daring with foresight.

And whenever she appeared, despair was conquered and sorrow healed. She visited the hungry and gave them food. She saw the thirsty and gave them drink. She welcomed the strangers, clothed the naked, and strengthened the sick. She herself fell ill and was imprisoned, but God was abiding in her. I personally observed the creative genius and irresistible power of her love.”

Spiritual Love is fully enveloped by the four divine energies of the Holy Spirit: *Love, Wisdom, Creation, and Joy*. These know no limits or bounds, these energies are “self-regenerative.” When we unify and delight in the Four Divine Energies of the Holy Spirit, we experience a synergistic and transcendent wholeness and completeness that alleviates the invisible pain and yearning we sense but often cannot identify. The Holy Spirit’s Quadractive energies, when flourishing, will produce both spiritual and physical abundance through the activation of community – a common unity of friends and partners. A society that aligns the divine quadractive energies prospers in this world and strives to create an abundance “on earth as it is in heaven,” as the Lord’s prayer pledges. It is through these four divine energies that humanity – both as a society and as individuals – attain happiness and well-being. This is why Christ states in John 15 that *He is leaving this world so that the Great Counselor -- the Holy Spirit -- can come enable humans to do greater works than He; and to bring great joy to all humanity.*



2. Romantic Love

Often this is the dimension where love begins. The romance has many hues and flavors, combining the sensual with the imaginary. It can range widely in breadth of scope:

- physical (erotic³ such as sexual or erogenous interaction)
- fantasy (illusionary or imaginary delights, ethereal)
- passion (heightened emotions, elevated esteem, glorified feelings)
- enchantment (smitten, spell-bound, charmed, magical)
- euphoria (mesmerizing, spinning fascination, rapture)
- poetic and tender (such as lovely words and symbols)
- beauty (such as form, figure, proportion, and color)
- harmony (singing, music, a walk on the beach)
- stimulation (dancing, laughter, wittiness, humor, fun⁴)
- excitement (river rafting, risky feats, sky diving, scaling heights)
- adventure (traveling, exploring, delving into the unknown)
- surprise (unexpected, display of power or courage, unpredicted twists)
- creation (inventing, building, discovering, imagination)
- loss of control (making one vulnerable, inability to exert normal limits, lowering of normal boundaries)



The common attraction of all these forms of Romantic Love is the association with *pleasure, happiness, fun* and *excitement*. Thinking of our mate as a “pleasure provider” creates a memory-base that solidifies the relationship.

Romantic Love is uplifting because it is essentially created (or co-created) in the moment, based sometimes only in small measure on fact or reality. Without imagination intertwined with empathy and caring, romantic love falls flat. And it is the *quest*, not the *conquest*, that truly excites the romantic.

In so many ways, Romantic Love is an idealized interaction. When it is manifesting between two people, it feels so good that this peak experience becomes the ideal to which all other interaction is evaluated.

Most people think Romantic Love “just happens spontaneously.” While this is somewhat true, such a point of view can lead to great misunderstandings, terrible timing, and even real conflict. For example, on the list above, suppose you personally rank some of the types of romantic love very high, but your partner has a totally different perspective. Treating you partner to your top-of-list experience (such as and adventure like white river rafting) may be big turnoff to your partner who esteems harmonious or poetic love.

Understanding the elements of Romantic Love enables a better personal design of mutually romantic experiences, such as a special birthday gift. It is in adventure and mystery that romantic love blossoms.

Romantic love has a “soft underbelly” that makes it quite vulnerable to its own destruction over time. In the hands of people who are passionate but not compassionate, the negative side of romantic love can take on qualities of obtrusive obsession. These show up as intrusive thoughts, acute longing, moodiness if there is insufficient reciprocation, exclusion of all other people, irrational behavior for fear of rejection, over-protectionism, over-sensitivity to criticism, heartache to the point of physical debilitation, euphoria to the point diverting from taking care of life’s normal activities, or a failure to see any of the partners negative traits.

The rise and fall of romantic love bottoms-out when some people, after they’ve realized a “burnout” or “numbness” when they can no longer feel any heart-felt attachment with any person, and can only experience life in terms of either a “high” or “nothing at all.” The addition to the thrill means there is no reflection, no pause to rejoice, no calm. Strife can then replace the thrill. People then become numbed and incapable of feel any emotional intimacy they crave so deeply. One commentator expressed this feeling so tragically, “The funny thing is I would kill to feel the thrill of falling in love all over again but I just can’t get myself to feel that way.

*If you want the thrill of love,
I've been through the mill of love,
Old love, new love, every love
but true love.*

Love For Sale – Cole Porter

The harsh reality is that Romantic Love, being a “peak experience,” makes it difficult to sustain. When the interludes of reality set in, the relationship must be kept glued together by something of much greater substance. This is where the other loves must come into play. Romance cannot debase one’s partner into a struggle of control or dominance, but leave open the freedom of expression that happens in a true friendship.

3. Honorable Love

While most love affairs may start with Romantic Love, for the relationship to sustain itself, it must be built on something far more firm, stable, and consistent. Honorable Love is Trustworthy Love.⁵ Relationships that last are sustained on a rock-solid foundation of trust.

To love fully,⁶ partners must *first trust fully*. Without trust, all romance will eventually crash on the rocks of fear, run aground on the shoals of anger, or have its undercarriage torn out on the reefs of instability.



Ask any marriage counselor: “what percentage of couples going through a divorce have the lack of trust as a central theme causing the breakup?” They will tell you without hesitation: “100% of breakups involve a loss of trust.”

Trust is a word so bandied about, but so little understood. It’s not a single thing, it is *multifaceted* and *prismatic*, like a diamond. The facets can best be symbolized by key principles that engender trust. (Acronym: FARTHEST)

- **F**airness -- which insures equitability and reciprocity
- **A**ccountability -- which is the external display of internal integrity
- **R**espect for others -- which, in advanced form, becomes empathy
- **T**ruthfulness -- which requires solid commitment to be honest in your word
- **H**onourable Purpose -- which entails devotion to doing the best thing for the right reasons
- **E**thics & Excellence⁷ -- which promises doing the morally right thing with the highest standard
- **S**afety & Security -- which ensures your partner is physically safe and financially secure
- **T**ransparency & Openness -- which empowers your motives to be clear, noble, and obvious to others

When the FARTHEST qualities manifest *together* in the daily affairs of life, one becomes a far better partner ...

- First, by beholding *consistent* and *predictable values* -- critical qualities to maintain the stability of trust.
- Second, by adherence to these principles one is enabled to live in *integrity* -- their *words* match their *actions* -- they under-promise and over-deliver, thus honouring themselves and being whole.
- Third, by having a full commitment to Trustworthy Love, a person knows they can indeed *trust themselves*, providing a pathway to a *healthy self-love*⁸ and *self-respect*.⁹
- Fourth, by being able to *trust fully*, partners can *love fully*, without reservation or concern about risks.
- Fifth, by unifying the FARTHEST trust elements, one is empowered to have *courage* -- that heartfelt willingness to put oneself in the face of danger or stand strong for the honor of their partner, to overcome injustice, inequity, and provide security for others. Courage is *overcoming fear* because Love is more cherished than Self-Interest.¹⁰
- Sixth, by holding a holistic, interconnected approach to trust *creativity is triggered* by taking away fears and worries of betrayal, thus letting the mind and soul expand into imaginative realms, spurring Romantic Love.
- Seventh, by enabling deep trust, a strong, stalwart, positive *response to adversity* comes to bear, while acting as a powerful buffer to limit conflict and reduce stress in a relationship.

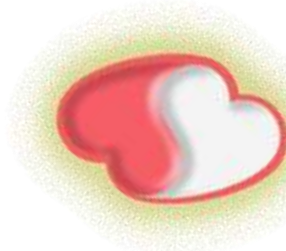
A wholeness emerges that strengthens the bonds of love by setting a standard of excellence, giving rise to gallantry, nobility, and moral admiration, which, in turn, enables a “fiduciary” relationship to emerge (which means “fidelity,” as in “Semper Fidelis” -- the Marine Corps motto: Always Faithful.)

People with strong character have a built-in basis for developing strong trust; conversely, people with poor character have extreme difficulty generating the trust to maintain the bonds of faith. To honor someone means never to intentionally belittle them, never demean them, never place yourself above them, never publicly chastise, never diminish them, and never put their mate’s self-esteem in jeopardy. For this reason, people of good character make stronger mates who use the glory of Honorable, Trustworthy Love for mutual advantage. Those who play by the rules of honor will cherish the greater good -- all for one, one for all -- thus being released from the bondage of fear of betrayal, released to explore the unknown together.

Whereas Romantic Love runs the risk of pushing to the extreme, elevating the other person onto a pedestal, making them godlike and infallible, Trustworthy Love is more solid and realistic, providing a consistency and predictability that releases the partners from the bonds of caution and protection, and enables a decisiveness and forth-righteousness to take mutually beneficial action in good times and bad.

4. Friendship & Partnering Love

Honorable Love sets the foundation for Partnering Love, which is the embodiment of both great *friendship*¹¹ and great *partnership* – two very different types of love flowing together interactively, making this form of love both *stable* and *dynamic* at the same time.



Let's first look at *friendship*. In Splendored Love, your mate is your very best, most trusted friend. We choose our friends because they are *like* us. A friend shares common experiences, has compatible values, and holds similar points of view.

When asked by a reporter: "What, in your opinion is the most important question facing humanity today?" Einstein thought for a bit then replied, "I think the most important question facing humanity is, 'Is the universe a friendly place?' This is the first and most basic question all people must answer for themselves."

True Friendship is expansive, holding both deep affiliation and broad dimensions of the intellect and the soul – mind and heart.

Great friendship is multi-faceted. A true friend appreciates your unique qualities and character, believes in bringing out your "higher self," doesn't give up on you no matter how difficult you make it, envisions the whole of you, even the unfinished parts, forgives your mistakes, unless you've lost your moral compass, hears you, asks questions, and gives the right advice at the right moment, makes a positive difference in your life, never betrays confidences or gossips behind your back, opens up new insights, perspectives, and possibilities for your future, picks you up when you're down or stressed out, speaks to your soul's divinity, giving you the benefit of any doubt, tells you the truth when you need to hear it in a way you can hear it, and yanks you back to reality.

Great friends behold and cherish the wisdom, love, joy, and co-creation that emanates from each other's souls.

On the other hand, *partnership* is based not on similarities, but on *differences* – qualities we honor in our mate that we do not have in ourselves. Like magnets, the different polarities can be highly attractive, drawing people together. However, without trust, these differences, rather than being synergistic, can become conflicted, adversarial, and destructive, often ending in fighting, polarization, and divorce.

In a healthy relationship, it is both the *similarities* that draw each other together at first *and the differences* each holds dear in the other that energize their relationship – each capable of thinking, seeing, and doing something that the other is not skilled at. In this way, their differences enable their relationship to become a "whole" where the whole is greater than the sum of the individual parts.

What distinguishes the highest standard of Partnering Love is the *equality* and *mutuality* that best friends have for each other. My friend Jerry Watkins describes his relationship with his wife Susan in these words:

God blessed me with my best friend and partner, Susan. She is an absolute blessing daily. She is such a wonderful woman with all people. She gives of herself daily by working for far less than she is worth or could earn as a personal reward elsewhere but she knows her worth to those she serves and treats them as family. She is my inspiration!

Mates become "partners" when they *cherish the differences* between them, using each other's strengths and weaknesses to mutual advantage (not disadvantage!). They never manipulate each other to get what they want, nor do they become co-dependent upon each other.

Their level of trust is extraordinarily high; each knows the other will try to be fair, be accountable for their actions, respect each other, tell the truth, elevate their personal "mission" for honourable purpose, be ethical and set high standards of excellence, keep each other safe and secure, and be open and transparent. With trust as a consistent underpinning to Partnering Love, love can grow and sustain itself.

Partnering Love empowers mates to work together as a team, one for all, all for one; they realize that they are better together than separate; they build on each other's ideas, creating and performing as one. They engage in a "dance" where both are in tune to the music of life, but each dances with different movements, while keeping in rhythm with the other.

Inherently this means each partner is dedicated and devoted to bringing out the very best in each other, thus it is, at its core *synergistic love*. *The Holy Spirit becomes real, we feel this spirit in ourselves and in our partner.*



5. Parental Love

Parental love could just as easily be called Motherly¹² and Fatherly Love. Mates don't have to be raising children to fully express their motherly and fatherly instincts.

For example, my mother often said to me in her later years "once a mother, always a mother." She cared for me not as a doting mother, but by checking in regularly and unobtrusively to be sure I was fine.

Her motherly love was demonstrated in her care of my vibrant father for the entire time they were together. She was always looking out for his well-being, happiness, health, stress reduction, and nutrition. She hugged him several times a day to reinforce her commitment. Mom always had a smile.



Similarly, my father always looked out for my mom's personal safety (such as making sure her car was always in top maintenance, her kitchen was safe), her financial security, improving our home, and protecting her honorable name. His caring extended to his personal integrity (Honorable/Trustworthy Love) to help create a positive emotional and familial environment.

Paternal love is one of the stronger loves, because it is a devotional dedication to the well-being of another person, regardless of their level of dependency. As parents enter their last years, Parental Love does a reverse flip when children are called upon to care for elderly parents.

Parental Love also involves *guidance and direction* of any member of the family (young or old). Managing emotions is a key element -- when one gets frustrated, falls into depression or discord, or gets out of balance with life. Effective Parental Love provides values that engender family as solid community; building character, fostering learning, displaying respect, adhering to ethics and supporting personal maturation.

Motherly Love is something male partners want and need -- the maternal caring that sustains life -- balanced nutrition, caring emotionally, a loving home, an expression of beauty, tenderness, and sensitivity.

Fatherly Love is something female partners want and need -- the paternal security, safety, financial stability, emotional constancy, trustworthiness, integrity, firm guidance, and a positive response to adversity.¹³

In a marriage, Parental Love is healthy in moderation, but toxic if either or both the partners become co-dependent or a mother/son or father/daughter relationship develops between the partners.

For example, Richie, married to Belinda, expresses a domineering and authoritarian form of Fatherly Love. He spouts the words and behaviors of an ego-centric, self-aggrandizing bully. While he calls this "tough love," it's not. Why? Because his children don't grow in character, they grown in hatred, resentment, anger, and passive aggressiveness.

On Belinda's part, she takes Motherly Love to the extreme. She has become so loving that she fears exercising restraint and discipline upon her partner for fear of hurting or being hurt. Her co-dependency has flawed her judgment, building a cocoon around herself. Now she "sees no evil, speaks no evil, and hears no evil" from her husband, who, in turn, just got worse -- becoming an exploitive, manipulative, deceitful scoundrel. Belinda now lives in an unreal world where the boundaries between right-wrong, and good-evil are blurred and twisted. Unrestrained, Richie's behavior spins wildly into the eccentrically bizarre.

A true commitment to parental love also means each parent is working together to help their children build character, realize how to find mission and purpose in their lives, and, importantly, learn how to be great parents for the next generation.

The way children feel about their parents is one of respect, not friendship. Parents are authority figures, not equals to children. Intimate relationships are appropriate between parents, not between parents and children. Discipline is one-way directed, but in friendships it is interactive and reciprocal. The joy of friendship is given freely, but in parenting joy comes from commitment, obligation, and a love transmitted by authority -- a good form of aristocracy from the higher to the lesser.

6. Joyous Love

The art of bringing joy to a relationship is perhaps the most overlooked part of the "love paradigm."

My mother had perfected this form of love – nearly everyone who was in her presence felt “happier,” “more appreciated,” “uplifted,” or in a “higher state of well-being.” While she did it so naturally, she had such intention in her heart. She made it a habit, and a practice. She was always looking out for the best interests of others. She never gossiped and always advised me “If you can’t say something nice about someone, don’t say anything at all.”

Most people knew my mom as one of the most “gracious” people they had ever met. That grace came from the enlightened grace of the Holy Spirit flowing through her. She was just happy to bring joy to others. She once said “Just be easy to love; don’t judge, condemn, scold, or be cynical – try to bring out the best in everyone you meet.”

I noticed that it was always a lot easier to create joy with those who meld into the joyful experience, and revel in its Zen-like moments. Their expectations are not grandiose – they embrace a reverie with little things and multiply those moments into a whole world of wonder. I see it in the little things people do, their playfulness of spirit, the joy we create with a side-wise glance, a sparkle in our smile, a glint in our eye.

The Greek word *Ludus* was used to refer to “fun-loving” or “playful” qualities. The Greek idea of playful love referred to the affection between children or young lovers. Innocent fun, such as flirting and teasing in the early stages of a relationship are good examples. It can be as simple as sitting around in a bar bantering and laughing with friends, or when we go out dancing. Dancing with strangers may be the ultimate ludic activity, almost a playful substitute for sex itself. Social norms may frown on this kind of adult frivolity, but a little more *ludus* might be just what we need to spice up our love lives. There is certainly no reason for playfulness to end with adolescence.

Most people are seemingly unaware of such things -- it's their natural self: a *Magical Reverie* -- a rare and precious fragrance that comes from a unique dimension of their essence -- hearkening to a life lived in the embrace of spirit. Joyous love can be serene or highly energized. Some of Joyous Love is ephemeral, spontaneous, quick and serendipitous. And another part of Joyous Love is “designed,” conscious choices on how to perceive, interact, react, co-create, and make choices selecting among consequences Joyous Love can be whimsical, playful, humorous, self-deprecating. Singing, story-telling, honouring others, celebrating, embracing, memorializing, clean comedy, are all different dimensions of joyous love.

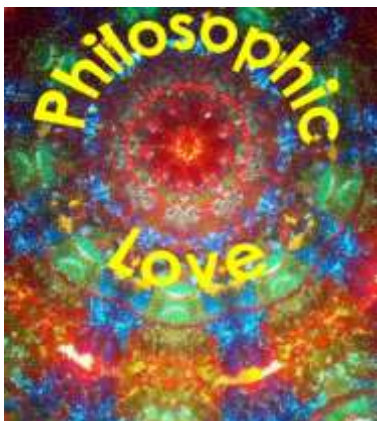


You'd be So Easy to Love

*I adore you, dear
But grant me just the same
I'm not entirely to blame
For love, Oh you'd be so easy to love
So easy to idolize All others above*

*So worth the yearning for
So swell to keep every home fire burning for
We'd be so grand at the game
So carefree together is our heart's exclaim
Cause you'd be oh, so easy to love
Cole Porter*

7. Philosophic Love [of Wisdom]



The word “Philosophy” literally means “Love of Wisdom.” (Greek *Philo*: Love + *Sophia*: Wisdom). Philosophic Love is not an academic abstraction; rather it’s a pragmatic¹⁴ application of deep understandings of interpersonal realities. It aims at propelling the evolutionary journey of the mind and the soul throughout life.

Philosophic Love is the crown jewel of all the loves for it is the ultimate *guidance system* that balances, aligns, integrates and rotates (like a kaleidoscope) the other nine loves -- knowing when you or your partner needs which one of the nine other loves at what moment. It also prevents love from becoming perverted, extreme, or obsessive.¹⁵

Wisdom combines emotional maturity, stability in a storm, courageous action, deep insight, empathy, sound judgment, prudent trust, use of truthful knowledge, and weighing facts/evidence with equanimity. It embraces the willingness to learn, inquire, thus being aware of changing conditions, prudence to control one’s emotions under stress, the ability to see through a paradox, and accept new frames of reference.

Philosophic Love expresses itself through continuous learning, personal and inter-personal growth, and integration of seemingly disparate or paradoxical events, ideals, and circumstances.

Wise Love can rely on the other five loves for sustenance while simultaneously nurturing the other five.

Romantic couples, who have been together for half their lives or more, experience a very simple, pragmatic, down-to-earth love as well. They experience love in every moment, in the simple joys – going to the grocery store together, making a meal for each other, doing something totally unexpected for the other, or giving each other a hug throughout the day. It’s about making something special inside the ordinary, finding meaning in the simple, unromantic tasks, appreciating the beauty of the moment, taking the time to “smell the roses.”

Let’s face it, couples will get angry with each other. Broken promises, different expectations, or stress, are a few of a myriad of causes. Wise Love enables one to see anger and bitterness as just the surface of deeper emotions.

When those angry moments arise (or in the early stages of a brewing argument), Wise Love lets us see what boils under the surface, embrace the other’s fear or anxiety (real or imagined), feel their hurt (physical or emotional), appreciate one’s sense of guilt (conscience), understand conflicting messages or values (standards), clarify confusion(uncertainty), rebuild broken trust (doubt, divisiveness, insecurity), realign expectations (broken promises), respond appropriately to the confusions of loss or death, relieve frustrations/stress/anxiety, and soothe feelings of depression/helplessness/victimization.

Philosophic Love is often long to develop, and forms the deepest foundations for love everlasting. It doesn’t appear as dramatically as Romantic Love, and to the outside observer may seem unimportant.

Gratitude/graciousness, forgiveness, and mercy are central to Wise Love –knowing that what is said or done under stress may be but a mere fleeting feeling or transgression. Stress from a myriad of things – like death, moving, illness, financial worries, or miscommunication – can cause a partner to momentarily lose their center of balance. Under these circumstances, a wise partner will express graciousness, mercy, and forgiveness. They never let their experience of reality conform to their fears, knowing that to do so would poison the soul of the relationship. Wisdom can buffer the ups and downs, bring the partner out of the dumps, and know when to give your partner a “kick in the pants” when they are wallowing in self-pity, when to admit you are wrong, and how to build co-creation into life itself.

I asked my friends Bob and Patty, who celebrated their fiftieth anniversary, to what they attributed their long marriage. They were quick to say:

We forgive each other for our transgressions. We have amnesia about the bad times we’ve been through; yet we have an excellent memory of the great things we’ve experienced.

Philosophic Love lets a couple or a team engage in healthy “give-and-take,” making tradeoffs and compromises, not to attain second best or lose power, but to attain balance, acceptance and mutual compatibility.

Roy Rogers, commenting on his long marriage to Dale Evans, remarked that a great marriage is not a 50-50 arrangement. Both partners have to give at least 100%. Rogers said both Dale and he were always willing to go beyond: giving 120%.

Wise Love also holds dear the ideal of virtue¹⁶ – the desire and willingness to do the right thing for the right reasons. A couple's commitment to virtue, family, and fidelity creates a bond that is nearly impossible to break.

Another important aspect of Wise Love is the significance of curiosity, continuous learning, and discovery. Philosophic Love holds the quality of linking together and integrating the very nature of life itself – great physical and mental health, bringing knowledge¹⁷ into the practical world, embracing the value of spiritual enlightenment, and being able to put all these into action in a wholesome manner. Wise Love propels couples to find meaning and purpose in every moment and to flourish in one's sense of mission in life. In this sense, Philosophic Love connects back and completes the circle with Spiritual Love.

We must cherish deep wisdom and pass it on to others as our gift, as an act of our love, our caring, and our commitment to our larger purpose. Probably the most vital part of Philosophic Love is that it gives us the wisdom to know how to “rotate the kaleidoscope” among all the various forms of love.

8. Labour of Love & the Art of Work

Mastery of the art melding identity with work is an art that is actually not about work itself.

Work can be transformed into art, and magnified into action, if our hearts and minds are conduits of a much greater and mightier purpose -- if we see ourselves as benefactors of the flow of the two divine energies – love and creation – and channel these energies through us into the building of our world. Kahlil Gibran probably understood this phenomenon best as he observed in *The Prophet*:

When you work you are a flute through whose heart the whispering of the hours turns to music.

*When you work you fulfill a part of earth's furthest dream assigned to you when that dream was born,
And in keeping yourself with labour you are in truth loving life.
And to love life through labour is to be intimate with life's inner most secret.*

All work is empty save when there is Love;

And when you work with love, you bind yourself to yourself, and to one another, and to God.

And what is it to work with love?

It is to weave the cloth with threads drawn from your heart; it is to build a house with affection;

It is to sow seeds with tenderness sad reap the harvest with joy;

It is to change all things you fashion with a breath of your own spirit,

Work is love made visible.

And if you cannot work with love but only with distaste, it is better that you should leave your work

For if you grudge the crushing of grapes, your grudge distills a poison in the wine.

And if you sing though as Angels, and Love not the singing,

You muffle man's ears to the voices of the day and the voices of the night.

St. Francis of Assisi explained this divine process as creative energy:



How does the entrepreneur regard the commitment of time and money and the risks involved when it comes to the daily grind of working intense hours? Susan Fowler Woodring said it well:

*The master in the Art of Living
Draws no distinction between
His work and his play,
His labor and his leisure,
His mind and his body,
His education and his recreation,
His love and his religion.
He hardly knows which is which.
He simply pursues his vision of
excellence through whatever he
is doing and leaves it to others
to determine whether he is
working or playing.
To himself, he is always doing
both.*

*The person who works with their hands is simply a laborer;
the person with their hands and minds a craftsman; and
with their hands, mind, and heart, a true artist.*

The laborer “work hard,” the craftsman “works with refinement,” the artist “works in wonder.” Our lives and our work can be a sacred art, one for which we need to take the time and to make the effort to become masters.

Aristotle commented that:

The aim of true art is to represent not the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance.

In other words, life itself can be -- and the building of character is -- a sacred art. We mold and shape and design the moments which collectively represent our day, tuning our perceptions and awareness to see and hear what others do not, then amplify and configure these small signals into a larger tapestry of meaning, upon which we become empowered to create action.

However, love and creativity alone are not enough; no work of art can be created without two other key ingredients: devotion and commitment.

In the building of character, one’s work and one’s experience can be creatively transformed into art and then magnified into action, if our hearts and minds are conduits of a much greater and mightier purpose -- if we see ourselves as benefactors of a conscience ordained by divine order; in this way we meld love into work as we express our character – thus manifesting our identity with our destiny.

Devotion

Never should devotion and commitment be confused with “working hard.” Devotion is sourced from the soul; a love and dedication for something higher than ourselves, an ideal, a beauty, a goodness that transcends the mundane. St. Francis knew:

“It is in forgetting oneself that one is found.”

The devoted person sees themselves not as the cause of anything, but as an instrument or vehicle or conduit through which some greater power can be exerted to achieve a greater purpose. Devotion gives us the zen-like presence to be “in the moment,” never to be enslaved by our discipline, but to be set free by discipline.

Devotion allows the master to see past the dogma and prescriptions of the discipline, to touch the hearts and souls of the group, to transcend the dictums and feel the pain, to touch the heart, to manifest the vision of those who seek guidance. Thus, the master is never above and never below, but always by one’s side.

In building our personal character, we mold and shape and design the moments which collectively represent our day.

We, as humans, are endowed with a gift to tune our perceptions and awareness to see and hear what others do not, then amplify and configure these small signals into a larger tapestry of meaning, upon which we can be empowered to create daily action demonstrating our devotion, our caring, and our commitment to our larger purpose. That is the formation of character, identity, and ultimately, destiny.

Commitment

It’s been said: commitment is what transforms a promise into reality; it is the words that speak boldly of our intentions, and the actions which speak louder than the words; it is making the time when there is none, coming through time after time after time, year after year after year.

Commitment is the daily triumph of integrity over skepticism, of vision over fear. Commitment gives us the discipline to attain a mastery of our lives, of our own personal duty to build our character.

If we keep in the forefront of our mind that every moment in business presents a unique opportunity for a precious fruit to ripen, for an idea whose time has come, for a river to flow, for separate voices to unite into one song, we can truly make our work a synergistic endeavor.

Being a “Person of Value”

When Albert Einstein said: *Try not to become a person of success, but rather ... become a person of value...*

What did he really mean? It means, when faced with a problem or adversity, the basic principle is always to:

Add Value to whatever it is that you are thinking, doing, experiencing, or feeling.

Adding Value is the first step to excellence. It engages your imagination and your spirit.

If you are not Adding Value, you are either in mediocrity mode or destructive mode.

9. Courageous Love

*Greater Love hath no man
than to lay down his life for his friend.*

-- Jesus Christ, John 15

The deepest of love brings forth courage. It is based on the French word "Coeur" which means "Heart."

The brave are fools for they are fearless; the courageous are heroic for they conquer their fears.

"Courage" is quite different from "bravery."

Courage is the belief or commitment in something larger than your fear.

Bravery is the absence of fear or just overcoming fear.



*I offer a life not of privilege, but of service.
A man who fears nothing, loves nothing,
So if you love nothing, there is no joy to your life.
In serving each other, we become free.*

King Arthur to His Knight: (Sean Connery to Richard Gere)
From the movie *First Knight*

This is an important distinction, because if you are committed to nothing, you can have no courage, regardless of your bravery. Anyone who lacks fear is a fool. Anyone who spouts phony platitudes like: "Be fearless!" should be spurned as a callous and unobservant deadhead.

Fear is natural in humans. We are only born with two "natural" fears – fear of falling and fear of loud noises – every other fear is "learned" from either our culture or our peers or media broadcasts.

Fear will bring out the worst in many people. But in the few for whom character prevails, fear becomes a catalyst for courage. Courage is not the absence of fear, but the rising above fear by embracing a more powerful commitment and love for friends, family, and principle. Fear is the root of distrust, thus it will pervasively undermine the innovative spirit in each of us. Panic is a sudden succumbing to our fears, becoming swamped by a flood-tide of negativity and darkness, extinguishing the glow of possibility. Fear is a dangerous weapon because it has a boomerang effect, often multiplying on its way back in ways we can neither predict nor control.

Courage is never born from a disengaged heart. Courage is not expendable, like a tank of gasoline, rather it's "expandable" like love, trust, and creativity. One never runs out of courage; one can only become "dis-couraged" when the world around them is filled with negativity and when courage is punished again and again by those who want to diminish those who champion causes. Courage is the trigger that ignites abundance:

Courage enlarges, cowardice diminishes resources.

In dangerous straits, the fears of the timid

aggravate the dangers that imperil the brave. – Christian Neville Bouvee (1820-1904)

Courage is regenerative, bestowing its rewards back onto those who manifest it, inspiring others; expanding, becoming regenerative.

Making Commitment Larger than Fear

There can be no courage without the love, devotion, and commitment to something larger than oneself.

Lack of courage implies a lack of commitment, and this is the crux of our problem today. As a society, we are suffering from a collapse of trust because people lack character, commitment, and courage. Where there is no trust, there can be no solid foundation for love.

It is not circumstances that determines our fate, but our vision and courage to turn the tide. For anyone to love courageously, it only takes being committed to a vision and values far larger and more powerful than our fears.

The Greatest Courage is to fully commit yourself to the highest purpose God has put you on the earth to fulfill; and to manifest Destiny's Dream every day of your life. It is on destiny's pathway that the deepest and truest happiness will be found.

Listen to any Congressional Medal of Honor recipient who saved the life of a fellow soldier or sailor. They all say they were scared, but their commitment to their comrade was larger than their fear for their personal safety. These heroes put the greater good ahead of their self-interest. That's Honorable Purpose in action.

10. Neighborly Love

The Golden Rule – Do unto others as you want done unto you – is the core of civilization. The New Testament is filled with commands to Love Thy Neighbor¹⁸ as the means of enabling our connection with the divine.

Being a good neighbor means we are kindly, considerate, and exhibit mutual friendliness. Koinonia creates a brethren bond which builds trust and overcomes two of humanity's deepest fears and insecurities: being betrayed and being demeaned.

Humans are creatures of community. We live in neighborhoods. We work in organizations which are, when functioning well, a collaborative (co-labor = working together) community.

Community is a forum for group action. Today's idea of teamwork had a deep meaning for the Greeks and early Christians, because it enables a group of people to produce something unique and potent. For this, the idea of synergy¹⁹ came into being. The word synergy means:

The joint alignment or interaction of two or more energies, agents, or forces so that their combined effect is greater than the sum of their individual effects.

Cooperative interaction among groups, that creates an enhanced combined effect.

The ancients understood working together would produce an effect far greater than the sum of each individual. This is a critical meaning, because it transcends issues of conflict, dissention, polarization and factionalism.

When a group adopts the values of honor, virtue, and wisdom, a synergistic effect occurs.

Koinonia

This Greek word has such a multitude of meanings that no single English word is adequate to express its depth and richness. *Koinonia*, is a complex, rich, and thoroughly fascinating Greek approach to building community or teamwork – an *inner* goodness toward individual virtue, and an *outer* goodness toward positive social relationships.

There are many connotations because the word used in a variety of related contexts:

Generous Sharing: As in to share with one another in a possession held in common, implying the spirit of generous sharing or the act of giving as contrasted with selfish getting. The spirit of sharing and giving is not an abstract ideal, but a demonstrable action resulting in a tangible and realistic expression of giving. It can mean "going shares" with others, thereby having "business dealings," such as joint ownership of a ship. It can also imply "sharing an opinion" with someone, and therefore agreeing with him, or disagreeing in a congenial way. Participation is vital because as the members are sharing in what others have. What is shared, received or given becomes the common ground through which Koinonia becomes real.

The Greeks seemed to have known what we know now: "*Sharing Expands, Hording Contracts.*"

Partnership: A companion, a partner or a joint-owner. Koinonia implies an association, common effort, or a partnership. The common ground by which the two parties are joined together creates aligned relationship. ²⁰

Marriage: Two people may enter into marriage in order to have "koinonia of life", that is to say, to live together in which everything is shared, suggesting a powerful common interest that could hold two or more persons together.

Spiritual Relationship: Meaning something that is held and shared jointly with others for God; one's "personal relationship with God". The Ancients often regarded this as a relationship with the Holy Spirit -- a higher purpose or mission that benefits the greater good of the members as a whole. The term *enthusiasm* is connected to this meaning of koinonia for it signifies "*God in Us,*"²¹ or *one's participation in the Divine.*

Fellowship²²: To create a bond between comrades is the meaning of koinonia when people are recognized, share their joy and pains together, and are united because of their common experiences, interests and goals. Fellowship creates a mutual bond making it easier for sharing and generosity to flow -- which overrides each individual's pride, vanity, and individualism -- fulfilling the human yearning with fraternity, belonging, and companionship. When combined with the spiritual implications of koinonia, fellowship provides a joint participation in the Divine's graces and denotes that common possession of spiritual values. Fellowship is never passive in the meaning of koinonia, it is always linked to action, not just *being* together, but also *doing* together.

With fellowship comes a close and intimate relationship embracing ideas, communication, and frankness, as in a true, blessed interdependent friendship among multiple group members.



Community²³: The idea of community denotes a “common unity” of purpose and interests. By engaging in this united relationship, a new level of consciousness and conscience emerges that spurs the group to higher order thinking and action, thus empowering and encouraging its members to exist in a mutually beneficial relationship.

Thus, community and family become closely intertwined, because aiming at a common unity strives to overcome brokenness, divisiveness, and, ultimately gaining wholeness: with each of the members, with their environment, and with their God. *By giving mutual support, fellowship, friendship and family merge.* Both fellowship and community imply an inner and outer unity. Nowhere in the framework of community is there implied a hierarchy of command and control. The leader’s task²⁴ is focusing energy, aligning interests, to propel their community forward, to share their understanding with others so that “all ships would rise on a rising tide.” Thus, loftier goals and dreams are more easily manifested in the mind and achieved in reality. The team’s sense of Purpose became manifest.

Covenant* of Cooperation and Community Spirit

We hereby pledge to:

- 1. Build a Spirit of Cooperation among our Community**
 - Work for the Greater Good: “All for One, One for All”
 - From Chaos Seek Unity, From Discord Find Harmony
 - Tolerate No Divisiveness, No Polarization, No Back-Biting
- 2. Engage & Embrace all Members with Respect**
 - Respect Everyone’s Need for Solitude, Peace, and Tranquility
 - Respect and Listen to those with a Different View
 - Seek Always to Bring Out the Best in Others
- 3. Build Relationships based on Trust, Integrity, and Ethics**
 - Speak only the Truth, Otherwise be Silent
 - Give People the Benefit of the Doubt
 - When wrong, Acknowledge, Apologize, then take Corrective Action
- 4. Speak Only the Language of Cooperation:**
 - Seek Solutions, Not Blame
 - Neither Speak nor Spread any Gossip
 - Forgive those who Apologize for their Transgressions
- 5. Disagree without being Disagreeable**
 - Be Critical without Criticizing; Be Respectful of others.
 - Never Threaten, Attack Issues but not People
 - Do whatever Can Be Done, and Gracefully Accept what Can't
- 6. Try to Bring a Spirit of Joy to All**
 - Dwell Not in Negativity
 - Complain Not about Petty Things
 - Receive Everyone with a Cheerful Face and Open Arms
- 7. Keep a Positive and Caring Attitude**
 - Listen with Empathy and Compassion
 - Hold our Responsibilities as Dearly as our Rights
 - Respect the Minority’s Needs, even though the Majority Rule
- 8. Live by the Spirit, not just the Letter, of Just Rules & Laws**
 - Live with the Intention of Peace & Harmony
 - Live to Create Advantage for Everyone, not to take advantage just for yourself
 - Respect the Community’s Rules the Guidance they gives, not for loopholes that may create an advantage for one over others

*An agreement of spirit made between people to uphold standards and values

Kaleidoscopic Love

Those who know the wonder of being enraptured in a ball-room dancing – synergy with the music and your partner – realize they have entered into another ethereal dimension of time and space where all the Ten Dimensions of Splendored Love merge into one *synergistic spiral*.

This is *Kaleidoscopic Love*, we feel whole, dynamic, and complete, as though the deepest yearning of the soul has been fulfilled – that seemingly missing part of our psyche has been given to us from our loved one – life itself is being sourced from an energy greater than ourselves.

This sense of synergy and transcendence is enervating, uplifting, and extraordinarily empowering, leading us into an ever-expanding and rising spiral of higher and higher forms of love -- each level opening a pathway to the next as the Kaleidoscope blossoms.

Mastery is a Journey

Mastering all Ten Dimensions is a journey -- not an event -- that will continue through one's end of days. It also takes a discipline to stop and assess every circumstance in life and determine how to apply the artist's palate of the Ten Loves to each circumstance. The return on the investment of time and critical evaluation of reality is truly how to create true abundance in life itself. It is in the alignment, balance, and integration of the ten dimensions that makes self-control natural, not imposed or debilitating.

Combating Narcissism

Today, depression, along with suicide and drug addiction (the ultimate escapes), are major concerns for civilization.

Psychologists call upon people to learn to love themselves; revulsion and self-hate are cited as the cause of people traversing into their dark abyss.

However, we also know that the process of self-love can result in a selfish narcissism that implodes destructively on every relationship. One counselor told me that he is finding young people, in particular, have grown so numb to the possibility of loving relationships that there is no longer a desire nor dream to connect with the intimacy that might bring them joy, limiting them only transactional relationships on social media.

Given the basis of the Ten Loves, telling a person to love themselves is such a gross generalization as to be at the edge of absurd. It's as superficial as telling a hungry person they should eat.

Understanding the Ten Loves gives us guidance on how to begin "loving oneself" in a way that does not border on narcissism. The foundation of loving oneself starts with loving life, loving God, loving others, and seeing oneself as an expression of the divine energies of the Holy Spirit.



Janet is passionate and energized acquaintance. But for her, emotions are vivid, real, and drive her actions, to the point that whenever she is irritated by the smallest, most ephemeral transgression, she will blow it totally out of proportion, target a perpetrator, take aim, and deliver a withering tongue-lashing with vituperative intent. Neither reason, nor logic, nor compassion for others, nor consideration of consequences of her actions can deter her from jumping into her destructive abyss. Janet cannot put anything in perspective, she is always front and center in every scene on the stage of life -- her perspective, opinion, and judgement prevails over everything else. She believes she should attack as the first line of defense. She lacks all other forms of love in her life, although paradoxically she is married to a kind, gentle, and considerate husband who is unable to channel her energies productively. To others, her behavior looks mentally unstable, but I'm sure she views herself as totally consistent and morally justified. But the consequences are that no one trusts her, because she can't engage in Honourable Love.

END NOTES

¹ Spiritual Love is closely akin to the Greek concept of Agape Love. *Agápe* (ἀγάπη *agape*) Means “the love of God for man and of man for God.” Agape is used by Christians to express the unconditional love of God for His *children*. It also means love for everyone or selfless love. This was a love is extended to all people, whether family members or distant strangers. *Agape* was later translated into Latin as *caritas*, which is the origin of our word “charity.” It also appears in other religious traditions, such as the idea of *mettā* or “universal loving kindness” in Theravāda Buddhism.

There is growing evidence that *agape* is in a dangerous decline in many countries. Empathy levels in the U.S. have declined sharply over the past 40 years, with the steepest fall occurring in the past decade. We urgently need to revive our capacity to care about strangers.

² Paul Tillich is generally considered one of the century's outstanding and influential theological thinkers. After teaching theology and philosophy at various German universities, he came to the United States in 1933. For many years he was Professor of Philosophical Theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York City, then University Professor at Harvard University. His books include *Systematic Theology*; *The Courage to Be*; *Dynamics of Faith*; *Love, Power and Justice*; *Morality and Beyond*; and *Theology of Culture*. This story comes from *Shaking the Foundations* Chapter 3 – the Power of Love, published 1948. Elsa was married to Robert Ullrich, who also fled Germany when Hitler grabbed power. Ullrich was an esteemed professor at Harvard, and wrote the influential book *Crisis and Hope in American Education* among others. The version of the story presented here has been abridged for brevity

³ *Eros* – named after the Greek god of fertility, represents the idea of sexual passion and desire. But the Greeks didn't always think of it as something positive (as we tend to do today.) In the ancient context, *eros* was often viewed as a dangerous, fiery, and irrational form of love that could take hold of you and possess you. *Eros* involved a loss of control – falling madly in love – which frightened the Greeks.

The problem occurs especially when there is a lack of balance between the 6 loves. When Erotic love overwhelms the others, sex becomes preeminent, diminishing the others. The result is nearly invariable – a failure to establish a foundation of trust, which will collapse any semblance of real, sustainable love.]

Eros is obviously the root word for “erotic,” but it does not describe sexual love only, it actually describes all emotional love; the feeling of love. Eros love is that insatiable desire to be near the target of this love. The exciting, passionate, nervous feelings that sweep over people in the appropriate circumstances. This is the love that says “I love how you make me feel.”

As an emotion, Eros changes, sometimes suddenly. Remember that it is entirely based on circumstances and on the target of its emotion. As an emotion, alone it is morally neutral, however, it can just as easily lead to lust (sinful desire) as it can passion. It is also a good picture to think of Eros as the fruit and flowers of a new relationship. Eros is not a bad thing, but it is also not a “good” thing.

Author Allan Bloom, in his book “Love & Friendship” looks at love through the lens of *eros* and it's many dimensions. This theme has been incorporated into the concept of “Romantic Love.”

⁴ The Greek word *Ludus* was used to refer to “fun-loving” or “playful” qualities. The Greek idea of playful love referred to the affection between children or young lovers. Innocent fun, such as flirting and teasing in the early stages of a relationship are good examples. It can be as simple as sitting around in a bar bantering and laughing with friends, or when we go out dancing. Dancing with strangers may be the ultimate ludic activity, almost a playful substitute for sex itself. Social norms may frown on this kind of adult frivolity, but a little more *ludus* might be just what we need to spice up our love lives. There is certainly no reason for playfulness to end with adolescence.

⁵ In the Greek, this was known as the “Love of Honour” (Philo + Atimo) was complex but essential to the functioning of the culture. In ancient times, there was great public pressure to behave uprightly -- without integrity (honesty, justice, truthfulness). The term “philotimo” may be translated as an internalized inclination to do good, with a strong sense of social responsibility. (Etymologically, *philotimo* means “love of honor” =philos+timi, although the honor referred to is not merely external, or for “show” purposes, but a psychologically internalized yardstick of goodness, as in the ancient “kalos k agathos.” (see later footnote for definition)

“By making them confront the possibility of their “aphilotimia” (=lack of philotimo, or integrity), they are at once chastised, or, worse, threatened with virtual exclusion from civilized company. Furthermore, and perhaps most painful, to be branded as “aphilotimos” is sometimes even equated as being dispossessed of your true “Greek [culture].” The power of Philotimos was extraordinary in that it bound the individual to a very high standard of behavior. Philatimo was not just an admired trait among Greek citizens, it was expected of them. The expectation was that all members of the society or community would first act in the interests of the greater good of the whole, not in their self-interest. Anyone who violated the honor code of Philatimos would be branded a heretic, labeled with the scarlet letter “A” for Atimia - which means unscrupulous, dishonest, dishonorable, like a weasel and a fox etc.. The consequences of atima were severe: excommunication – to be ostracized or exiled from one's community for violating the “common unity.” As my colleague Ninon Prozonc says:

"In ancient Greece - the very worst thing that could happen to a man was to lose his 'timiotita' (from the word 'atimia') meaning lose his honesty. Moral values were far more important to ancient Greeks than anything else. They believed that if they lived and acted honorably, would reach a superior 'level' of virtue, which would give them happiness."

⁶ Love and Trust are controlled by the same neuro-transmitting chemical in the brain: Oxytocin

⁷ In the ancient Greek, the ideal of ethics was characterized by virtue – Arete, known in Latin and English as virtue (or excellence), was also a pivotal value the co-creative spirit in ancient Greece. It meant to do the right thing, the best thing, to be the best person. One could not perfect one's soul unless virtue was a continual pursuit.

Virtue was dependent upon one's commitment to act in accordance with the dictates of the higher soul, and not forsake oneself to the more prurient, lower level vices such as lust, greed, anger, or revenge. While no one then, nor today, could be expected to be perfect at the practice of virtue, holding this standard as a goal enabled higher order teamwork, intellectual interaction, and co-creativity to take place.

Socrates and Plato introduced the concept of the soul in a profound manner to the Greeks. The soul became a universal connection between people, enabling the sparks of creative energy to flow between individuals without the fear or concern of betrayal⁷, who got the credit, or loss of ownership. Ideas were owned collectively and thus shared and built upon by a group, who cherished the value of regenerative energy.

But virtue could never be achieved unless one practiced honor, sought wisdom, and built community. As Ninon Prozonice observes:

"Arête (virtue) was not a moral virtue only, but it was more an aspiration and endowment of qualities that would result in practical efficiency and public fame. Most young Athenians wanted virtue more than anything."

Differences in opinions can be handled virtuously with compassion, understanding, and acceptance, or, conversely, arrogantly with condemnation, derision, and denial.

⁸ Philautia, was the term the Greeks used to refer to self-love. They realized there were two types -- one an unhealthy variety associated with *narcissism*, becoming self-obsessed and focused on personal fame and fortune – and a healthier version that enhanced your wider capacity to love.

⁹ Those who cannot trust themselves are likely to have low self-esteem, or the opposite – Narcissistic behavior. Poor integrity will also manifest itself in conflict with others, constant drama, personal attacks, and "fish tailing" behavior.

¹⁰ note: *bravery* is the absence of fear, which is not as prized as *courage*.

The Greeks valued *philia* far more than the sexuality of *eros*. Unlike Eros, which pulses up and down like waves on the ocean, Philos steadily grows, like a building being constructed stone by stone.

Philos is half about the circumstances, and half about the commitment of two people to one another; it says "I love who we are together". Philos love generally grows over time except in the case of some kind of betrayal. It is commonly used in the New Testament, as in Matt. 10:37, John 12:25, and Revelation 3:19. In the New Testament, this is the meaning of "Greater love hath no man than to lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:13)

We should all ask ourselves how much of this comradely *philia* we have in our lives. It's an important question in an age when we attempt to amass "friends" on Facebook or "followers" on Twitter—achievements that would have hardly impressed the Greeks.

¹² The Greek word (commonly called "motherly love") is *Storgy* –the love one has for a dependent. When the child is no longer dependent, this love remains only in its emotional memories. If motherly love becomes obsessive in later years it becomes unhealthy.

¹³ A woman who does not experience the strength of real Fatherly Love can begin to lose her feminine qualities and become more "masculine." ¹³ *Philia* (φιλία *philia*) means "affectionate regard, friendship," usually between equals. *Philia* is expressed as loyalty to friends (specifically, "brotherly love"), family, and community, and requires virtue, equality, and familiarity. Furthermore, in the same text *philos* denotes a general type of love, used for love between family, between friends, a desire or enjoyment of an activity, as well as between lovers. *Philia* concerned the deep comradely friendship that developed between brothers in arms who had fought side by side on the battlefield. It was about showing loyalty to your friends, sacrificing for them, as well as sharing your emotions with them.

¹⁴ *Pragma* is the Greek term for long-standing, practical, mature love. This was the deep understanding that developed between long-married couples. *Pragma* was about making compromises to help the relationship work over time, and showing patience and tolerance.

The psychoanalyst Erich Fromm said that we expend too much energy on "falling in love" and need to learn more how to "stand in love." *Pragma* is precisely about standing in love—making an effort to give love rather than just receive it. With about a third of first marriages in the U.S. ending through divorce or separation in the first 10 years, the Greeks would surely think we should bring a serious dose of *pragma* into our relationships.

¹⁵ All the seven loves can be perverted in several ways:

2. By twisting a love into a something deceitful, overbearing, or even evil, such as how cult leaders or con artists twist meanings and intentions.
3. By turning love into Mania – Manic love is almost not a love at all. It is more like “obsession.” This is the love of possession and obsessive desire to own, limit, or control. It is generally seen as taking over the “lover” like insanity – thus the connection to modern concepts of madness (kleptomania, pyromania). “Mania” is “madness” and “beside yourself.” Manic love is based on fear, obsession, or lack of empathy. It can be an expression of excessive (too much) self-love (narcissism) or the opposite – too little self-love, which creates an empty hole in one’s psyche. It is this empty hole that becomes filled, in a misguided way, with excessive, passionate obsession.
4. The absence of balance – such as love of self without love of others – is all-too-often the result of lack of trust of oneself. Self-trust comes from personal integrity and accountability for one’s *thoughts, values/principles, words, and actions*. Without a deep adherence to the FARTHEST Principles, there may be no construct in the mind for how to build self-trust. For, without trust, there is no foundation for love – they are based on the same neurochemical in the brain – oxytocin.]

¹⁶ This emphasis on goodness is encapsulated in the ancient inscription “kalos k’ agathos” on numerous Greek artifacts. Kalos k’ agathos means, literally, “good and good,” referring to both:

- the *outward*, social and personal “beauty” of the person looking outwardly to the quality of a person’s social relations and
- the other to *inner* moral and humanitarian excellence, looking to personal improvement, the formation of character” to build a good and virtuous person (see footnote above on Excellence & Virtue)

¹⁷ The Greeks understood that an active mind could bring deep knowledge. But knowledge alone is often empty of real, valuable learning, and can carry with it conceit and narrowness. Knowledge exists primarily in answers, wisdom in questions and revelations, uniting ideas/ideals with action. Knowledge is intrinsically self-fulfilling, while wisdom creates higher order purposes and new destinies. The pursuit of wisdom created the challenge to grow upward with a spiritual yearning. Wisdom, thus, was sacred. As written in the Wisdom of Solomon from the Apocrypha:

“Wisdom – Sophia -- the fashioner of all things, taught me. For there is in Sophia’s spirit qualities that are intelligent, holy, unique, manifold, subtle, mobile, clear, undefiled, distinct, beyond harm, loving the good, keen, unhindered, beneficent, philanthropic, firm, sure, free from care, all powerful, all seeing, and interpenetrating all spirits that are intelligent, pure, and most subtle. For wisdom is more mobile than any motion, and she penetrates and permeates everything, because she is so pure; for she is the breath of the power of God....”

It is this sacred journey that so excited and empowered the Greeks. Wisdom combined knowledge with spiritual transcendence and human compassion and passionate action. Wisdom was not dry like knowledge, but it was dynamic, engaging, vital, and soulful.

¹⁸ Matthew 22:36 Which commandment is most important to God? “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. ‘ This is the greatest and first commandment. Love God above all else. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.”

¹⁹¹⁹ The word itself is derived from the Greek *sunergi*, meaning *cooperative work or unified energy*, and from *sunergos*, meaning *working together in fellowship*

²⁰ such as a ‘fellowship’ or ‘partnership.’ In the New Testament, (Luke 5:10) James, John, and Simon are called “partners” (*koinonia*). The joint participation was a shared fishing business.

²¹ Definition: The source of the word is the Greek *enthousiasmos*, which ultimately comes from the adjective *entheos*, “having the god within,” formed from *en*, “in, within,” and *theos*, “god.” **Word History:** “Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm,” said the very quotable Ralph Waldo Emerson.

²² Definition: Fellow is from the Anglo-Saxon and Old Norse ‘felagi’, comrade or partner.. ‘Ship’ is a suffix indicating state or condition. Fellowship is a state in which we share as fellows, that is as partners or peers. Fellowship addresses the relationship between people, not between material objects. One doesn’t have a fellowship with a house, a companionship with a tree, or a comradeship with a bed. It relates to a state or condition in which such persons interact, thus we speak of friendship, partnership, and fellowship.

²³ Definition: from Latin *communitas*, *fellowship*, from *communis*, *common*; **a.** A group of people having common interests. **b.** A group viewed as forming a distinct segment of society. **c.** Similarity or identity: a community of interests. **d.** Sharing, participation, and fellowship.

²⁴ The leader imposes control first by holding a clear vision and a strong set of values. In a well-functioning, trustworthy community, these are more powerful than draconian rules and regulations. Strong control only becomes necessary when there are threats and actions are needed to prevent destruction of the community’s highest interests -- the greater good of the whole.