

The Travelers Within



Finding “The Life In Your Love”

“Where there is love there is life.”

— Mahatma Gandhi

When it comes to inquiries of the heart there is one question that just about everyone in the world asks, “Have you found the love of your life yet?” There is no doubt that answering “yes” to this question is a beautiful thing, yet I can’t help but ask a contradictory question that almost no one in the world asks, “Have you found the life in your love yet?”

At first glance the juxtaposition of words is confusing, but for those wise life travelers who take its contrary implications to heart, extraordinary value begins to emerge. I believe Gandhi knew about this value and actually pointed to it in his quote, “Where there is love there is life.”

Just because Gandhi placed the word, “love” before “life” doesn’t mean he believed love was life’s source. In fact, I suggest he meant exactly the opposite; that life is actually love’s source. But why does the order of words matter? Because those who ignore the value of the reverse order I’m suggesting are missing a fundamental truth about the source of love in their life.

If we look more deeply into the relationship between love and life we will find this hidden yet fundamental truth. It’s quite clear to me that while it may be difficult, life can indeed sustain itself in the absence of love. There are lots of unloving people in the world who are very much alive.

On the other hand, I do not believe that love, (or the experience of loving and being loved) can exist without the presence of life. In other words, only living beings possess the ability to experience love, or experience anything for that matter. While some may believe that both life and love exist after death, our focus in this week’s post is on the living so we’ll leave the afterlife debate for another time.

Anyone who wants love to be more abundant in their life ought to consider why life is love’s source. When we acknowledge life as the source of love we access a profoundly powerful force capable of bringing new love to us, especially when no love exists. In other words, when the

circumstances are against us, when we feel rejected, abandoned, isolated and alone we can call upon life's generative power to bring forth an abundance of love into our life.

This is a crucial distinction that should not be overlooked. Those who mistakenly believe that love is the generative source of life put themselves in a compromised position. The danger of placing love in the primary position over life is that when we lose love, we also believe we have lost life. And without being in touch with life's rejuvenating force, not only have we lost love, we have also lost the will to live. Considering the suicide statistics in the world I don't think I need to continue down this path in order to make my point.

So how do we effectively work with life as love's generative source? There are two key practices. The first is for us to always place life and the value of being alive above our need for love. Essentially we resolve within ourselves that no matter how much love we lose, (or who or what we lose that we love the most) we will never turn away from the sacred gift of life. Those who sanctify life in this way come to know a greater kind of love that never leaves them.

The second practice is that we must redefine our basic understanding of love itself. To love has less to do with nurturing feelings and more to do with generative capabilities. These capabilities are tied to life's essential relationship with the power of evolution, the driving force that compels life to endure and sustain itself. To clearly see this relationship all one need do is use the principle of reversal we started this post with and apply it to the word "love." If you reverse the order of the letters in "l-o-v-e" it spells "e-v-o-l (ve)."

When we hold love as an evolutionary force designed not to make us feel good or ensure our comfort or safety, but rather to enable us to grow, risk and adapt to change, love becomes a passionate motivator for life to honor itself and grow into its own fullness. For when we know that love is life's passion for evolving, growing and being fully alive we have truly found "the life in our love."



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