

LL01-Alvean & Doug's Story

Hi I'm Doug Weiss, and I'm Alvean Lyons, and this is LoveLife.

Alvean,

I was thinking the other day about how you and I first met and it's kind of an interesting story I mean you know the serendipity of it was amazing.

I had just finished writing Life, Love and Internet Dating and I had this thought about a podcast that would talk about the same subjects... about relationships about how couples meet and how we find the people in our lives that we love, but also how we relate to that higher self you know. And I kept asking people: do you know someone that could do that with me? Do you know who would know about relationships and who would be willing to talk about things like God and who maybe might be a little bit different than me, because I'm a seventy year old white guy.

I mean how many people want to listen to....me you know, so do you know any millennial women who happen to be relationship experts and could do this and you know that's kind of like a very particular thing

Do we stick that in a package?

Can I order one up from Amazon?.

And everyone I talked to here said Oh well of course you mean Alvean and.

Really? Alvean that's a real person I mean there are really.....

And they said oh yeah and I said well how do..I meet this person? And our producer Barbara gave me your email address and it must have been weird when I sent you that first email and said Hi, you don't know me but come join this blind date for life with me.

And Barbara, of course, said to me in her inimitable fashion, Oh it'll be fine It'll just be fine don't worry about it, and so on the strength of that you know I felt....Oh well sure OK it's going to be OK. Now I'll just go ahead with this and so I wrote to you and then we set up this meeting at a restaurant in well.....

It was at Hampton

Well, don't forget the three hour phone call we had before we got together.

Oh that's right we did three hours. Well I should explain that that we almost never have phone calls that are less.

Even when we say I just want to talk about this really quick, really quick falls into a time zone that has no time and we find ourselves in a conversation just as effortless which is why we're doing this now on the air.

So.

Thinking about this I had never seen Alvean except one photograph on the web and she was dressed very beautifully in this lovely white top and she looked very crisp and professional and so I thought to myself, You know, what should I wear for this interview?

I don't even know who's being interviewed here you know whether you she was interviewing me to see whether she wanted to actually decide.

And so, I thought well you know I don't want be too formal so I'll just wear like a sports jacket. So here I am worrying about what I'm going to wear, a little like I'm going out on a date. Yeah I'm doing the girl thing you know, I think I'll wear the blue jacket.

So, I show up and of course Alvean has this amazing penchant, she really has her own personal sense of style and it's magnificent, and she's wearing this bright orange.... and I mean she looks like she's going to go out on the Riviera.

And here we are in this restaurant in Hampton.

An Irish pub, my own Irish pub. Actually neither of us was particularly... I mean you know most of the folks there were shall we say in shorts and flip flops except for us..... except for us you know, we're a little over dressed but that's OK, and we sit down in this place and we start to talk and just like the phone call we're talking and we're telling each other our story... our stories that's right, and like you wrote in life love and Internet dating this is the ritual when you go out on your first face to face date

Yeah, you know that's what happens, you tell stories and it's the way that we get to know each other, it's the way that we understand: is this person someone that I can invest in, that I really want?

Maybe to spend the rest of my life with.

Absolutely, and so we were telling each other.. not in the dating sense so much but in a very real way trying to figure out can we work together, can we do this thing together?

People greatly underestimate the fact that every connection has that experience on some level, particularly the chosen connections

I mean obviously you know when we're interviewing for a job things might be a little bit different and

dynamic but when we choose to spend time with someone we go through this peeling back process where you're sort of moving the curtains back and trying to figure out what's behind this first set of curtains and then what's behind the next set of curtains and can I do this with this person?

I like food a lot so I always use dessert references so Doug did mention that he's a seventy year old Vanilla man and for those of you who cannot tell from the soulfulness in my voice that I am a forty-two year old chocolate woman so it makes for an interesting visual when you put the two of us together

Well, I want to point out... and not in the form of flattery, but in honesty you may be forty-two but you look like you are in your thirties so this disparity between us is pretty great visually

Yeah, but might I also point out that Douglas looks a lot like Sean Connery so. It is an attractive coupling to say the least I think if only you know.

But you know you were saying about the stories... and it is always my experience that that's a very delicate Dance. There's so many ways for that to go wrong, and so you wander into it kind of on tiptoes kind of a very tepid fashion.

Yeah right, I mean you know you don't want to miss step, right, as there are landmines out there.

Oh absolutely, you can step on them without even knowing they're there and so you have to kind of approach this dance with a lot of good listening skills.

Absolutely, and there's a bit of caution, because what's natural to us as humans is the fear of rejection.

What happens when I start to peel back these layers and I reveal who I really am? I talked about it in the book. On this occasion.... and I had already exchanged a lot of information in the form of email - what had happened in my life what brought me to this point, why I was on an internet dating site and all of that sort of stuff that you do and so we're having just a wonderful time, we're bantering with our server, we're in a wonderful restaurant, we're enjoying our drinks, we're going to go to a play later, really a lovely time; and my date looks at me with a very, very serious expression and says: Tell me again why you are here? And as I wrote, all the energy kind of leaked out of me as in --is this going to be a question that I have to answer for the next three or four or five dates?

Absolutely.

You know it is the insecurity, but I am not being charitable. I want to be clear here that I think that that was a perfectly legitimate question for her to ask of me, but at the moment, in that precise moment all I wanted to do was be casual, get to know her, just kind of get into the flow of the evening

I really didn't want to have to answer that question one more time, not because I was defensive about it—right, but because it was kind of really do we have to do that right now?

And I bet are we going to really have the entree before we even had the salad.

Well she will say oh you're really going to do that just now. I was looking forward to the build up to you know, discovering who we really are and what our motivations and intentions are

Half of the fun of connection is that process that unveiling.

As you mentioned, I do all the relationship stuff for a living and I referenced a lot of things combine between food and intimacy and that there is a nakedness that comes with the unfolding of oneself to another and you want to be able to gently go through that process and you don't want to be stripped naked within the first five minutes of interaction but to know that it's safe to take off these layers with this person. So I understand you know completely what you mean when you say

See I love this

We should explain here, the expert on relationships is Alvean, I am anything but an expert I'm maintaining my amateur status .

Although if you read his book you would definitely think that he has been doing his due diligence and stuff

I got a lot of practice not necessarily a lot of lessons.

In any event, part of the beauty of what I think we discovered about each other is that in spite of the fact that Alvean is absolutely grounded in this discipline and truly understands in great depth the dynamics behind relationships, I come to it from a somewhat different perspective

I'm coming to it both out of my own personal experience and trying to discover in that some truths about how we all are in our lives and I think those truths are evident to us but sometimes we don't observe them and the other place that I'm coming from is more of.... a ...I hate to use this word, spiritual, but that's really the best way to say it from trying to understand how we think about ourselves in the context of our relationship to the world to the universe and to this being that sometimes we refer to as God

As I've said I don't care if you prefer Harry or Phil or any other name you want

Yeah but what if I just used a female name. Could it be she, be Sally ?

You know they did do the Shack and God was a black woman, which I thought was absolutely brilliant, absolutely brilliant to do that.... to shake our understanding because we keep trying to put God.... in the process we're trying to pin him down or pin her down. Whatever this being is, and I'm not sure that I know, I refer to as God, as he.

There's nothing wrong with your orientation it's the process of seeking and discovering and building intimacy with that which is true and to bring this back to these first dates, these stories, that's where we're trying to get to know.....

I don't mean by that, to be very blunt, that we're trying to get it to intimacy on the first date ...which is you know, let's jump into bed together.... I'm talking about the intimacy that you establish with another person that says: We are kindred spirits indeed

We're drawn to each other where we want to be with one another and there's also an intimacy in conversation there's an intimacy in the experience of being with another person that transcends anything that's physical, transcends even anything that's temporal.

It is in its own way a kind of spiritual experience of being two souls

It is, as I say all the time, that it's if people were to see us or to spend some time with us you know there's a romance in the friendship, that it's not about sexuality the way that some people interpret ..you know.. romance to be, but really about connection.

What romance is supposed to be about, and a connection that is a deep and profound friendship that almost feels like it's sort of predestined to be the way that our conversations have gone.

You know, the way that we have had the opportunity to sort of walk through each other's minds and not be concerned for there being landmines, so to speak, that we have safe space to be able to explore ideas and feelings and thoughts and what that means... you know... to be seen heard and still appreciated is something that we all seek as humans... to have a place where you can do that and feel that those are relationships that you hold on to for a lifetime because there's such a treasure and the chemistry of that makes for something just amazing

Well my litmus test is, do you get up every morning and look at that person and say I'm in love again.

This is LoveLife and we've been telling our story.

We want to hear your story. So if you've got a story about your lovelife or your love of life send them to us.

Alvean@lovelife.digital. or Doug@lovelife.digital
and we will respond to you and we'll put them on the air