

LL14-Getting Over Heartbreak

I'm Alvean Lyons

And I'm Doug Weiss and this is Love Life.

So Douglas, today we're going to have a little bit of a conversation about something that I think almost every human being has experienced at some time in their life or another and that is heartbreak.

Yes, one of the toughest experiences we can have, one of the most harrowing experiences we can have, but one that you're almost guaranteed to have as we pursue finding the person for us. So my question for you, is how does one get over heartbreak? What do you think about that?

Well. As someone who can share this experience with every single one of our listeners I'm sure, as you said, it's not easy. And you know the whole graphical notion, for just a second, of the breaking heart, is actually quite accurate. You know people have quite literally fallen ill, gravely ill, in some cases even died as a consequence of a broken Heart. I know that sounds dramatic, but the emotional rigor, the pain, the implications of that pain are so severe and the intensity is so severe that it can in fact injury to our well being physically. But obviously we do get over it, we do get on with life and I have thought back in my own life what brought me up from that pit of depression, that bottom of the well feeling? And always and ultimately one thing. It was, and I know this sounds almost paradoxical, not thinking about myself but focusing my energies on the people around me. Trying to do something for other people made me feel better, and the more I did the more I turned outward into the world and thought about the people around me and what I could do, how I could be of service to them. How I could invest myself in their needs the better I felt. Now I'm going to come to this as I almost always do from a spiritual perspective and say that I think that this is when we are acting in a way that that we've been told we should, that we are acting out of a higher sense of self. That we are putting others needs ahead of our own and that in that selflessness we lose ourselves and we find ourselves. So heartbreak is the rejection of self, it is in a very real sense the most profound rejection of your self by someone else in whom you have invested in relationship, and so to recover yourself I would submit you first have to lose yourself.

That is such a profound response, and I realize as much as I'm sitting here listening to you that the one thing that I could say unequivocally about heartbreak is that on the other side of it you can get to a point that it's almost like you're talking about a best friend you had who has had an experience, but you can become so detached from that heartbreak as a byproduct of being healed that it almost doesn't feel real for you anymore. So let me let me explain what I mean. It's been so long since I have had the experience that I almost feel no direct connection to the emotion. Even though I know I have had severe heartbreak years ago, you can get so healed that today it is hard to remember that it feels like something I'd never get over. Tomorrow can be something that you can talk about in such a calm and matter of fact and even appreciative manner, that I know that (the heartbreak) was a byproduct of the things that did not work in my life. I am better as a woman, as a partner, as a friend, as a person, because of those things and I am so far past those. The difference is that they no longer have power over me anymore and I know a lot of times when people are in the midst of heartbreak it feels like you'll never get over it, that you'll never be whole again, that you're never going to find someone to love you the way that you want to be loved. We go through these cycles of scripting and lyrics that we play for ourselves that reinforce these notions of pain and what I can say unequivocally is that none of those things are true. This is not your forever, this is your right now, and even in the pain of this right now you can walk away from this experience a better human being than you were before you went into the experience. What you said previously Douglas, you're absolutely right. When we turn our perspective outward instead of inward there is such a richness and loving on others at the very moment that you want to be loved

You know there's a temporal dimension to this as well, which you just alluded to and that is this notion about living in the now. When we're heartbroken we have a tendency, in fact an awful lot in life we have a tendency to live in the past. When we're replaying that carefully prepared script and so we live in the past which is, what I had and lost. And we also live in a future, what will not happen: I will never find the right person and will never be loved again. This is an old and tired saw, I'm sure, but we all understand that this is a fiction. The past is over, there's nothing we can do even if we were still together with the person that we love. It's gone, those days are over. I have no idea whether we're going to have tomorrow, all I have is this moment. But instead of living in this moment, when

we're heartbroken we have a tendency to kind of skip over the now and either dwell on the past or concern ourselves with the future, fretting about a future that hasn't happened yet and projecting into it the same despondence, the same sense of imbalance and unhappiness that we're suffering about the past that we no longer have.

You know on the face of it when you put it out objectively like that it's really absurd. It doesn't feel right at the time. I mean we all know, as we opened the show we said this is one of the hardest things human beings navigate. But in fact. You know we need to get our sense of time a little more clear in our hearts, and I think that you know the whole point of focusing outward reminds me of a wonderful story by George MacDonald. He tells a story of a young acolyte who wants to become great and he asks this wizened leader how he could go about doing that, and the lesson that he gets is tonight when you go to bed you want to line up your shoes underneath your bed. And that's it, that's the great advice (he gets) and he doesn't understand it. It's not until later that we get the lesson in this story which is about taking charge of your will. Sometimes in life we have to go through the motions even when we don't believe this is going to help. You know it's like when you start a diet or you go to the gym or anything else in life that requires some effort on our part. I don't feel good today, I feel rotten about the world. I feel like I've been in my heart. Get up do something for other people. Go through your day and don't focus on what's happened, but focus on other people and that experience of going through with the motion of it carries you until it becomes a habit. And after a bit you're no longer focused on you.

The lessons learned can be applied in so many different ways, and to your beautiful point I remember at a point in my life when I had the least amount of liquid asset, when I was far less financially comfortable than I am now, the thing that would make me feel the most rich was to take my kids through the McDonald's fast food line and we would pay for the car behind us. We would drive off and I would let the kids take a look through the back window to see the reaction of the people in the car. We used to call it the five dollar millionaire. For basically five dollars you could feel like a millionaire, that feeling of being able to do something for somebody when you had so little. And you are so right that logically speaking it's when I had the least amount of money. By not making it about what I didn't have, but rather what I did and what I could do for someone else, that made me feel so full and so rich. I used to say I feel like a little Oprah car for you and a car for you and a Happy Meal for you. Just loved it and to think about that when it comes to when you're hurting because of something that you may have lost in your personal world and to turn that hurt into the opportunity to bring light and love into somebody else's life. The richness that comes from that. you become your own little millionaire. and that is the kind of things I mean, that it's the most amazing feeling ever. I love it, love it, love it and still we do it in random places. We learn a lot in little unexpected ways, and pain can end up being passion and passion can end up being pleasure when we stop making it about us and we make it about somebody else.

We hope that you're not suffering heartbreak yourself right now but if you are, and you'd like to talk about, it write to us. Write to alvean@lovelife.digital or doug@lovelife.digital and share your story with us. We want to be part of the process of helping you because we love you. And we want to thank Barbara Hamm Lee, our producer, Todd Washburn our engineer, and all of us together that love life wish you a great day we'll be back with you next week.