

## LL27-Can You Love Two People Equally At the Same Time?

I'm Alvean Lyons,  
and I'm Doug Weiss and welcome to LoveLife.

So we have a juicy one today Douglas. So in the era of The Bachelor and Bachelorette, if you've ever seen them, these reality television shows where one person is dating multiple people they always have these triangle relationships which leads to the question, is it possible for you to love two people equally at the same time. I mean it's that classic struggle when you have feelings for more than one person and our audience wants to know.

There is that old rock and roll song, torn between two lovers.

I think it is possible to have strong feelings for more than one person at the same time. That said, it's a form of supreme self-indulgence to allow that circumstance to persist for any length of time. The question then becomes so how do you resolve that kind of circumstance, and where do you begin to divine your true feelings? I haven't personally been in this experience so I'm not going to try to speak out of experience, but out of a sense of conviction. When we are attracted to two people at the same time we create a kind of artificial tension. There's something perversely fulfilling about the idea that there are two people, it feeds the ego, it's narcissism and so if you allow it to persist then you're indulging in that narcissism in the extreme you're swimming in the attention. There are, I suspect, circumstances where you could walk yourself into the belief that you don't want to cause pain, but I'm going to be very blunt here and say that's a nice argument. But it's a cover, it's a cover up for the narcissism. Either let them both go or choose but to allow that to exist for any length of time is quite frankly self-indulgent at the least at the most it's reprehensible.

So I've spoken for the men about it and well I'm not sure all would agree with me but I am I'm a hard liner.

Well I think it's a very interesting question for me, because over the years in my life I have had as I referenced in one of our previous shows multiple guy friends. Admittedly, most of my guy friends are quite beautiful. I am fortunate to have

lots of beautiful friends in my life and when you have beautiful capable people, talented in their own right and rich in personality it's very easy for there to be attraction that's developed in those spaces. And when you have friendship and values that you share in common it's also very easy for you to find yourself developing these emotional attachments in these spaces too. So you have to be very very careful about what it is that you feed and nurture. There was a story that I think many of us have heard over the years and it was about two wolves basically. A wolf that is angry and a wolf that is love and they're in constant battle. The question is which one is going to win and the answer is whichever one you feed and that is true in a relationship as well. If you are serious about either of those relationships, really serious about them, especially if one of those relationships was in the context of a true commitment, monogamous commitment, then you owe it to that relationship to stop feeding the wolf of the other relationship. And if you're unable to do that effectively by dialing down, whatever you find kind of nurtures the emotion, the affirmation the internal applause you're getting from having this other person who just is so into you. If you're unable to be able to move that to a healthy place that could potentially be friendship, then it really is essential that you cut off that relationship because you cannot see both of them and expect that you're ever going to be able to have a healthy relationship with either one of them in the long term.

So Douglas, have you ever had friends that were in that scenario?

I have had that.

How do they resolve their issues?

Well there are two circumstances that come to mind and I would say that one ended well and one didn't. The one that ended well ....I was familiar with the woman in the relationship, one of the women in the relationship I should say, and she wasn't the chosen. But the fellow was a mature individual, emotionally secure, intelligent, and had a very honest conversation and said more or less, I care deeply about you but at the end of the day my life is with this other person. I should never have allowed my feelings for you to grow to the point where this was even a contest. I did a disservice to you. It takes a great emotional courage to face up to that and be honest about it and he obviously did her a great service by doing that. In the other circumstance it went on forever. I knew the guy in

question, this was a reverse situation and I wish I could say that it ended well but. The woman he was involved with was just not a strong person. She was a very nice person, and I think she was a good person but she wasn't strong enough and she agonized constantly and she drew both men into the dialogue and she made it clear to both of them that she was trying to decide. I put myself into that circumstance trying to understand what was going on and I had to sort of see myself in that scenario I've got to tell you my conclusion was that I would have been out of there in a heartbeat because I have too much selfrespect to allow that. I think my answer would have been, I care about you, but you need to decide and when you have let me know. Let me know, but I'm not going to harbor any kind of false hope here because I see that you're wrestling with this and that you're not capable of deciding.

What's so interesting about your conclusion and I think that it's very true when you're dealing with people, referencing some of the previous conversations that we've had and other shows, when you're dealing with people who have holes and how our holes fill each other. If I don't see myself as worthy, as one of the two partners who on the outside.....if the two men for instance who are wanting to be with this one woman if one or the other don't see themselves as worthy and the woman is naturally selfish they are actually feeding each other's issues. I need more and you don't deserve, you don't think you deserve more, so you're willing to put up with the fact that you are one of and I am willing to allow you to be two in my life because I need this thing to feed me our holes will feed each other It becomes almost a codependent experience, and someone ends up having to at least acknowledge that this is where we are and we're going to need to do something about it, because the emotions get very real.

In *life love and internet dating*, I told a story of a situation where I had been in an email dialogue with a woman and as it unfolded she made it clear to me that she had just started a relationship with someone and didn't know how things would work out. And then she kind of took up this insurance policy. She said would you be OK if.....I kind of put you on hold while I wait to see? I have to say that it didn't take very long for me to respond but I hope I responded in an affirming way. I said no thank you, thanks but no thanks. But I think people do that sometimes, they want to take out an emotional insurance policy and so I've got one in the wings just in case this doesn't work.

Love deserves commitment and honesty and sometimes that means we have to let go of the thing that makes us feel a little secure to invest in the thing that really deserves one hundred percent of ourselves.

That's another episode of love life. We hope you've enjoyed it, we've enjoyed being with you. If you have a question or a topic that you'd like to talk about, please write to us at [alvean@lovelife.digital](mailto:alvean@lovelife.digital), or [doug@lovelife.digital](mailto:doug@lovelife.digital) and we will be happy to take it up in a future episode.

Indeed we thank you for listening. We thank Barbara Hamm Lee, our producer and Todd Washburn our recording engineer, and we'll be back next week.