

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

Doug
Alvean my dear, I love you just the way you are.

Alvean
The lies we tell each other

Doug
We were laughing about this as we were getting ready for this week's episode. Because if there was ever a line that is fraught with peril. That's it. Because the truth is that the best of us in our weakest moments, fall prey to the just incredibly destructive behavior of trying to change the very people that we love, just the way that they are. So we fall in love with somebody. They are everything that we could have hoped for in our life. And the first bit of business that we enter into is trying to make them over into somebody else. Why? What in the name of all is sacred, is possessing us to do this Alvean?

Alvean
I think it's Eve's fault, I think she did it

You know that you and I work very hard not to generalize things based on gender. But I will say that there are some commonalities that exist amongst genders and we women specialize in picking really good raw material with the intention of crafting you all into something else. We look at you, we think I could, I could work with that. Definitely. I could do something with that he's intelligent, he's capable, he can't dress worth a darn. So I will just take him shot thing. I hate the way that he choose. But I'm pretty sure I can train him out of that one. You know, there are little things that we just already decide we're going to fix about you when we meet you. Assuming that we're not completely drunk with, you know, the infatuation. If there's that those of us who believe in love at first sight, and all that lovely romantic stuff. But I think the nature of humans, particularly female humans, is to look for ways in which we can craft and fix and change and tweak and I say to women all the time, please know something. If he was pretty rotten when you were dating him. He's going to be awful when you marry him. And the reason I say that is because when we are dating, we're often showing our best self because we're still trying to get you to buy us. But after we get married, you have already bought us so we are less likely not impossible, because we always say nobody ever does anything always endeavors. But more often than not, it is not going to get better after marriage if it was not good during the dating phase. So you need to be pretty sure when you invest in a relationship that you really do like someone the way they are, that you really do or can love them for who they are. Because in many ways, that's exactly what you're going to get. evolutions, perhaps maturity, absolutely, we hope for that. But the people pretty much are what you got from the beginning, What say you?

Doug

Well, I agree with absolutely everything you said. That's not a surprise. But I don't know, I'm struck by the fact that

that our human trait, of trying to achieve some seeming perfection in a relationship rears its ugly head with uncanny frequency.

Things that we don't even take notice of don't care about, you know, often get amplified in the intensity of a relationship and become the, the stumbling block and we commit ourselves then to altering that, that course of trying to change the other person. And I'm not talking here so much about the, you know, control issues, which is a totally different subject, I'm talking about what you were talking about, which is that you know, the makeover. I'm going to turn that person into somebody more to my liking.

And I don't think people do this consciously Don't get me wrong, I I don't think most people actually spend the mental energy to sort of sit down and and calculating ways say I'm going to change that person. I think it's an interaction that occurs out of a kind of understated desire or unstated unhappiness or unstated issue and I hate sometimes subtle, sometimes not so subtle pressure on the other person to conform with our desires.

And I think we can all agree that that's not likely to end successfully if it does, because someone allows you to shape them to that degree, I think many people would grow bored or, or get, you know, just the lack of resistance in itself might be stumbling block. But be that as it may, that's usually not the case there is resistance because we are who we are. Now, I'm not talking here about someone who develops a behavior ad hoc that this is not how they were, when you first knew them, something has happened that's triggered a behavior, they suddenly become depressed, or suddenly become angry, or some event is transpired in their life and their behavior and personality has changed.

Alvean

Let me just jump in here for a minute..another thing that can happen in relationships is where one of the partners find faith, but did not have it when the relationship started, even in what we would deem as people of faith a good thing when that has become something that did not exist before. And now it has become a fundamental part of the relationship even that can come with some difficulty, because you are not what it was that I thought I bought right, in this

Doug

Really, yeah, it's the, what's the term of art when you offer something?

Alvean

bait and switch?

Doug

Yeah, I think that's it, the sense that people have had a kind of a violation of trust. I've been betrayed, you know, I bought this it's not what I bargained for, which might make for an

interesting show for us some time but not the show that we're talking about. Not the subject we're talking about today. Today, we're talking about the unconscious or conscious manipulation of another person to try to alter their behavior. And I told this story in my book, it's, I think, worth repeating. I may have done it in a prior episode about being out on a date with a very nice woman. It was, I think, our second date and we were sitting there talking and she looked at me and she said, I think you should trim your mustache, apropos of nothing. I mean, mustaches weren't the topic to be sure. There was no warning, there was no build up to this. And I thought about it for a moment. And I actually do pay attention to my grooming just because I have a beard and mustache doesn't mean I'm off the grooming hook. It actually is as much work as shaving, which I still have to do every day underneath my chin and I care about what I look like. So I take some time every day to pay attention to that. And I had in fact, just done so that very day.

Alvean

Were you insulted by that?

Doug

No, I wasn't insulted by it, but I was kind of nonplussed by it. And so I thought about it before responding. I didn't know this woman very well. And so I said to her if I said to you, I think you should change your hair color,

Alvean

right? You'd be prettier as a blonde,

Doug

what would your reaction be?

Alvean

And how would that have gone?

Doug

And, you know, what was staggering to me, was her response, Oh, it's not at all the same thing.

Alvean

Oh, that's interesting.

Doug

Yes, it is, I said, I like me the way I am, I like my mustache. And, if you don't, it's okay, we don't have to have a third date.

Alvean

Check, please.

Doug

But, you hardly know me, and already, you want to change me. Let's just say that it didn't end with a third date,

Alvean
not over that

Doug

No, but I should have read the signs really well. There was a subsequent incident, and if you want to know, you can buy the book. But, you know, it's kind of an amusing little anecdote but it's indicative of the kind of interchange that we're talking about here, the making over of another person, and particularly when it's about something that's superficial, as, you know, I don't like your mustache, or, you know, I think you should change your hair color. Worse are the more substantive kinds of critiques and manipulations that people engage in with each other to try to alter them almost, I think we want to say here. against their will. Right, because if they wanted to change, if they wanted to be different than you could do that through encouragement, you know, you look great when you wear that, that's a positive way to do something, it doesn't require anybody respond to it, take the compliment. And if it inspires you to do more of the same or to change something, that's fine. But that's an act of your own volition, and not an act of manipulation, or hook or pressure to be something else.

Alvean

And I think that we're not suggesting in any way that people don't mature in relationships grow in relationships. We've said in previous shows that anything that is not growing is dying. So we are absolutely aware of the fact that we become something slightly different in our relationships, and we discover more about ourselves and we tweak those things, but that natural and organic evolution into better versions of yourself, better versions as a partner is different when somebody is actively trying to make you into something and someone different than who you were coming into that relationship.

Doug

So I have a very quick little story to tell you about this, in the interest of humor, I hope

I have a certain sweater in my drawer. I never wear it, but I keep it and the reason that I keep it is that someone I was dating once said to me I really hate the way you look in that sweater. I keep it to remind me never to let anybody ruin something for me. I loved that sweater and I liked the way I looked in it. Now I may not objectively have looked good in that sweater, I don't know, I can't be objective about it. But I liked the way I looked in that sweater and that comment kind of really ruined the sweater for for a while until I finally got over it. So I keep the sweater to remind me not to let anybody else ever do that to me again. I'm not blaming this person but saying

I should not have allowed myself to frankly invest that much in the comment. If you like the way you look don't let somebody else by their comments by their efforts to try and make you into something else ruin things for you. Take criticism when its intended it in a loving way but don't let someone manipulate or alter you simply to suit their whim

That's our show folks, powerful advice. You got it here. We hope that you enjoyed this show and whether you did or you didn't that we will hear from you.

We take feedback.

Alvean

I love his sweater if you don't like our sweaters let us know

Doug

You can write to us at alvean@lovelife.digital or doug@lovelife.digital....and we want to thank Kamaria our producer, Todd, our recording engineer and all of you for being there each week and spending time with us listening

Alvean

and for your thoughts and comments.

Doug

We have so much fun doing this show or you. So we'll see you next week with another interesting topic.... bye now.