

Hi, I am Alvean Lyons,
And I am Doug Weiss
And this is Love Life.

Doug

Sometimes in life, we sadly don't get what we want. Sometimes we do. And we find out that it wasn't what we thought it was. The same is true in relationships. Sometimes we want what we want, and we don't get it. Sometimes we get it but we don't want it. So the topic that was suggested to us this week is about getting what you want, and how to do that, without turning it into a win lose proposition. Too often, I think, in my experience in relationships, that's what happens in order for one person to have what they want, someone's going to give up something else. And in the perfect world, that shouldn't be the case. In a perfect world. I think we could all say in the abstract that I want the person I care about to have what they want, I just don't necessarily want it to come at my expense. So how do you compromise?

Alvean

Well, there was a T shirt or a meme I saw that basically meant that said something to the effect if your happiness, costs me my joy, then you're too expensive. And because I think that, getting what we want, making sure that we enjoy life and enjoy our experiences, and the other person also enjoys, their's, I think that there are a couple of things that should be sort of scaffolding to it. First of all, we have to be clear about what our wants actually are, what our expectations actually are. I think one of the most difficult things is to try to help someone in a relationship get what they want, but they don't even know what they want. So I liken that to... and I might have used this in a previous show before, but forgive me if I have. So in relationships, we call it people smart math, and basically that is expectation minus explanation equals failure. If you expect something inside of relationship, but you don't understand what that is, you can't clearly communicate what that is. It is virtually impossible for the other person to be able to meet that expectation or that desire. So I use this example.

I know you are a good cook Doug. So let's say for instance, you tell Peggy that you're going to make this incredible lobster mac and cheese and you tell her to go to the store for you to pick up some cheese for it. But you don't specify that what is needed for this particular lobster Mac is gouda. So Peggy goes to the store and she gets you this fantastic aged cheddar. But we both know that cheddar and lobster are not the best combination. So Peggy's excited she's come home, she got you the best cheddar that this gourmet grocery store offered, she's coming to present her best to you. And when you see what it is that she presents to you, you're disappointed because you already know that it's not going to help you make the recipe that you had planned for this particular lobster Mac. So here's Peggy giving her hundred percent but her hundred percent is worth nothing to you. Because unfortunately, you did not clearly share with her that what you needed from her, what you wanted from her was this specific thing so that she had the opportunity to give you back what it is that you truly desire. So you had an expectation minus an explanation and it's set somebody who loved you up for failure. Yeah, when we do that inside of relationships, we're constantly expecting somebody who loves us to give us what we want. But if we can't communicate that to them effectively, if we're not clear

about where we are right now, it makes it very difficult for even the best partner to be able to provide help to support, to create the kind of desire the kind of happiness, the kind of relationship you want.

Doug

Yeah, I was in a relationship with someone who..... let me say not to exonerate myself, I am guilty as charged, of having done exactly what you just described in this relationship. My significant other practiced this art to a fairly well, that is expecting me to, to know, somehow, by some osmotic process, what she was thinking all the time. And I used to say to her, I am psychic, but my abilities are vastly overrated. Because it was a guessing game all the time. And I always felt like I was in a game and I that I was going to lose, because I could never frankly, anticipate what it is that she was thinking or feeling at that moment. And as a result, it felt as if our relationship was walking around an emotional minefield in which I could set off a near fatal explosion at any time, because I had no clue. And I'm, I will admit, there are times in my life when I've been obtuse and, didn't see, didn't hear, this wasn't one, this was literally a circumstance in which I never knew from one moment to the next where I was at. And part of it was because of a communication, a fundamental communication challenge that we had. She was a lovely person, but I believe in retrospect, out of a combination of fear that was born in an earlier relationship in her life, in her youth and a habituated experience she had in another relationship, she couldn't say what it was that she wanted, or was feeling. She was emotionally bound up. And so I was literally in the dark most of the time, and, with unerring instinct found most often the landmine Yeah, just set it off. And I had no idea what it was. And in fact that was a separate set of issues. But the fundamental issue was one that if I had actually understood more about what was going on in her and at given points in our relationship, it would have been quite helpful. I might have avoided most if not all, of that conflict.

So, that's an extreme circumstance. I think it's much more common in relationships for people to reach a point, an impasse where they, in the moment, are unable to express what's really going on, find it difficult to get the words out of their mouths to say, here's what I'm feeling right now. It's nothing to do with you, or anything you have done, right, this is an issue that I have to deal with, this is something in me, and I need you to understand that, that the way I am at this moment is not a reflection of how I feel about or about us, but something inside of me. I also want to say on the subject of compromise that too often we see things in these very binary ways, wins and losses. I often want to ask myself, when I get into that place, it's infrequent that I do these days, but when I do, what is it, you think you're going to win? And what is it you think you're going to lose, Are the stakes worth it, right. And if you really stop and think about it, often in life we assign a great deal more value to the winning and losing. What you're going to gain is not so wonderful, what you're going to lose is not that important, that we can't find the place in between where we we can meet. But we can up the ante, emotionally, in our minds. We are very capable as human beings, in the heat of our feelings to make life sundering decisions. If I don't get what I want this moment, that means. If I lose, it means and I want to say that, I think that that's seldom the case.

Alvean

Your best relationships are often relationships where each individual puts the relationship above each individual. So there's you and there's me. And then there's our relationship, there's you, there's me, there's this marriage, there's us, there's me and there's our responsibility as parents. Whatever it is, that that thing it is bigger than both of us. And we each have a loyal commitment to that thing, which is bigger than both of us. And that allows for us to make decisions that are in the best interest of the relationship, even if they're not necessarily the thing that helps me to win or to you or for you to win. But if the relationship wins, then we both win. But it's a perspective that requires a level of maturity and selflessness. That often takes a while for people to evolve to. It's a very conscious decision for people to make, you have to come to a place if you want deep, healthy love, you have to come to the place where the mission is greater than the moment. There will be 1000 moments for you to just say that thing that's going to help you win the argument. But if the mission is the relationship, then I don't need to win the argument. If I lose where our relationship is concerned, I have to choose the relationship above this temporary when it's winning the battle, but you're losing the war. And we're fighting for something that is beautiful, and healthy and good. And that thing is more important than whether or not you remember to wash the car or to take the dog to the vet, or to pick up the stuff at the grocery store. It's bigger than all of those things. That thing is whether you forgot to call me at two o'clock when you said you were, all of those things. They are our experiences, yes. But they are not defining of the whole relationship. The whole relationship is what it is that we mutually and with a love and a commitment have decided we're trying to create that's not about individuals. That's about a collective

Doug

And that's why we do this show. Really, You summed that up once again, brilliantly. That's what this show is about, it is about trying to help people find those healthy ways to have relations friendships, and what a great note to end on, to enjoy love and life now.

So that is the end of our time with you today. We hope that you have enjoyed this show, that you will take the time to drop us a note one way or the other. You can do that by sending an email to alvean@lovelife.digital or doug@lovelife.digital

And we'll we'll be back with you next week with more good conversation. And we want to thank our producer Kamaria and Todd, our recording engineer and you our listeners.

This is a community effort, your part is keeping us on track and we hope to hear from you. Thanks so much, folks. We'll see you soon.