

LL59-What has true love taught you?

I'm Doug Weiss, and I'm Alvean Lyons, Welcome to Love Life

Okay, Douglas, here we go with one of those deep-down honest topics. This one's about love. And the question is what has true love taught you? Because people acknowledge the fact that if you've ever experienced real love, you will recognize that you become something different as a result. But what are the lessons that have come from having that experience? So my question to you, Douglas is what has true love taught you?

Doug:

How to place someone else's needs above my own, how to live generously, and the need for absolute honesty and transparency in everything. I think those are the three lessons that I took most, and I've been blessed to have experienced true love more than once. I use the expression with full intent. We have lots of ways of expressing love. It's curious, the English language is one of the very few languages in which we don't have an alternative word for word for love, love of my mother, or my aunt, or my friend, or my wife, or my lover is one word. In most languages, there are other alternative words to differentiate. Now, we do it with inflection and context. But true love in the sense of the bonding between two people has a deep and transformative nature. And I think I want to underscore the word transformative here. True love changes you as you change your partner and the willingness to accept that change is part of what I think defines love. I think that's the truth in true love, that we are willing to step outside our own ideas, identity, our ego, our own sets of needs, wants and desires and subordinate them to another. This doesn't mean to be clear, that I live to make Peggy happy, because quite honestly, that's not my job. And I'm not capable of doing it. That's her responsibility. But it does mean that I am sensitive and to try to be aware at all times of her feelings her wants and needs and to meet them to the best of my ability without a reciprocal expectation. And I think that's the other part of this. There is not it's not out of a sense of reciprocity. It's out of a sense of the value I place in our relationship

Alvean:

How long did it take you to know that you're really in love?

Doug:

You know, I don't know. I don't remember when. It wasn't instantaneous, it wasn't a thunderclap, it was an awareness that I wanted to be with this person for the rest of my life.

Alvean:

And how long did it take you to come to that awareness?

Doug:

Well, it was certainly months. But I couldn't tell you precisely when. Well, I think turnabout is fair play. Let me start with the question that you put to me, what is true love?

Alvean:

Nakedness, without fear. I have experienced incredible, incredible love in my life, Matt is just the most amazing person. And amazing not because of his perfection, but amazing because he's so perfect for me in that even his imperfections make me a better version of myself. Because they cause me to think through how I see my world, how I see myself, what I believe to be true inside of love, and to expand boundaries, that I would not have been as generous about. Perhaps, to be someone else, to be willing to be another version of myself, not a lesser, but a greater version of myself. I love that you said honesty, because I think the greatest gift of our relationship is that I put 100% of myself on the table, fully aware that he would be capable of devastating pain if he were to trample upon all of that. But I am also fully aware that the only way that you can be 100% loved is to be 100% willing to be hurt. You can't hold 25% of your heart in your pocket, and submit 75% of yourself to be loved, and wonder why you don't feel 100% love. But some of us, especially if we've been hurt before, think to ourselves..... well, we make a calculated decision about love. I can put this much of me out there, and if anything goes wrong I can still recover. If I still have this little seed love in my pocket. I still have this 25%, I could start over, it hasn't been touched. But the truth is that complete love requires the risk of complete hurt, and I can be all that I am with him.

Chelsea, my business partner and closest friend, as I would say, my person, is someone I know love with at a totally different level. I have never been loved by another individual, that is not romantic love, the way that I'm loved by her. And what's amazing is that we used to hate each other. People wouldn't believe that at one time we could not stand each other. I swear, if the other were on fire, we wouldn't even spit to save them. It was terrible. But what God can do inside of two people who will just allow for his presence is utterly extraordinary. And I have learned how to love at a different level and a different way to understand the language of love, at a different level because of the way that she loves me. I've never understood love in terms of service to another. I've never understood love to be a loyalty above and beyond yourself in the way that she has taught me to love. And I never knew that friendship love could also be some of the most intimate love you can experience in life. I realize that the depth of my love with Matthew is because Matthew is also my friend, and my lover, and my person. And she is my person. She may not be my lover. But she is my love. So, I know, this is where we are a triangle, it is me, him and her. And I feel so spoiled by that kind of love to have two people in my life, that I don't have to hide any part of who I am from to be fully and completely loved. And to know that at any given moment, each of them would lay down their life for me, I don't even deserve it. That kind of love has been life changing for me. And it makes me want to love people differently, and more and more generously, as you referenced before, because I know what it feels like to be on the receiving end of that.

Doug:

One of the more poignant things you spoke to is risk. The definition of true love that emerges is one in which you risk everything, there is nothing held back. You are open and vulnerable, so fully as you said, to be devastated. I think that's a very difficult thing for people to do in general, and I think it's far more difficult for men to do. For men, it's easier to love in a more

superficial way, because we are not as willing to be vulnerable. Though men are risk takers, they are much less so when it comes to emotional issues.

Alvean:

You guys are wonderfully conservative about your decisions. When it comes to emotions you're absolutely right. Which is why I think when you see a couple that really epitomizes truly love, you're seeing in the man a state of evolution in his feelings. That's remarkable, remarkable, in that it is rare.

Doug:

I don't mean to sound judgmental about men in general, I'm anything but however I do think we struggle with our ability to be vulnerable in general, and to be very vulnerable. I think men have much greater difficulty in accepting vulnerability as a condition. And I think that is what stands between us and the depth of feeling that we mean when we say true love.

Alvean:

I agree completely. I think that love is the most amazing experience one can have. The place at which the potential of who you are and the potential of your heart are most effectively realized is when you can experience love at that level. But there is no question that also requires ultimate risk to have the ultimate reward.

Doug:

And yet in the real world we find incredible examples of sacrifice men make for others, other men, friends, giving their lives. But when it comes to the idea of true love, that's the place where we have the greatest difficulty.

Well, that's an absolutely pertinent topic for the show, the title of which is love life. As always, we try to take on things that are hard, the difficult. The easy questions we leave to others. We hope you've enjoyed this episode and we hope you'll be back next week.

Till then please write to us at doug@lovelife.digital or alvean@lovelife.digital if you have questions or ideas for another episode.

We want to thank Kamaria Mason, our producer, Todd Washburn, our Recording Engineer and the entire Love Life family, including you, our listeners. We'll be back next week with another episode. Until then, have a wonderful week. Bye folks.