

Discovering Love by **Swamini Brahmajnananda**

(This is an edited transcription of a talk given by Swamini Brahmajnananda at the World Yoga Festival UK in July 2019, kindly transcribed by Melissa Bell.)

Link to watch - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0CBq3IZjUDs&list=PL5vNI4hvD69oBvCqI-oYafoLiPEscvuj_&index=3

All of us feel loved in different ways, and we can classify them into 5 types.

The first type is through hearing words of appreciation and needless to say, they are genuine. We are not going to fall for flattery. At times, even if there is genuine appreciation, some of us are so skeptical that we don't even trust a genuine compliment.

The second way, is caring actions from the loved person. It could range from making a cup of tea, to taking the person on a holiday, doing all kinds of things to make life comfortable for you.

The third way in which some of us will feel most loved is quality time, when we do things together.

The fourth way in which a lot of us will feel loved is the presence of the person. The person need not say a lot, or do a lot, you are just happy being in the presence of that person.

The last one where we feel most loved is touch. Some of us are very tactile and the person may have said a lot of good things to us, may have given us gifts, spent quality time with us, but unless that hug is available, you don't feel loved. Can you see yourself within any of these or some or all of these?

One thing for us to understand is that given our background, the way we were brought up, and our preferences, we feel most loved in certain and specific ways. There is nothing right or wrong about it, it is a preference. The problem arises when the other person does not understand that, or we do not understand that. Let's say that I want to hear words of appreciation, but for that person, giving gifts is important because that is how the person expresses his or her love best. Because I am not able to recognize that this is the person's preferred way of showing love to me, I will feel they do not love me. I do not see their expression of love, and they do not understand how I cannot possibly feel loved because I have given them all kinds of gifts, and it causes a fight and a misunderstanding which can lead to further arguments and accusations. This happens because we did not understand that the other person's way of expressing love is different from mine, and that is okay.

It is likely the way you feel loved, and the way you give love are the same. But, the other person's way of relating might be different, and it's time we open our eyes to this. A lot of our conflicts and misunderstandings are because we were not able to see that this is that person's way

of expressing love, and it is okay. I am not saying you reconcile with this, you can tell the person how you feel loved the most. Then, that person can include that mode in their repertoire of engaging with you, and of course you include the way in which that other person feels loved. It is very simple and straightforward.

We have a very sophisticated analysis of this topic of love in the Upanishad, in the Veda, in the final section called Vedanta. A lot of us will think that we love the other person because of his or her very good qualities and so on and so forth, but there is a very beautiful dialogue between a husband and wife talking about the nature of love to help us understand this more.

There is a person whose name is *Yajnavalkya*. He is a *Rishi*, a seer of mantras, and is extremely accomplished. He has been teaching the Veda, has two wives, and has built up a lot of wealth including cattle. He comes to a certain phase in life and he says that "I now want to leave for taking the robes". This is the stage of life which we call sannyasa and it is also a lifestyle. He is not technically asking for a divorce, but in some ways he is.

Here, I digress a little bit, the view of the human life, according to the Vedic tradition, is divided into four stages (*ashram*). The first stage is where we are focused more on education and setting the right foundation for the rest of our lives, also referred to as *Brahmacharya* ashram. This stage includes a lot of discipline, going to a guru, studying, etc. The second stage is called *Grhastha* ashram. and is very important for the maturity of a person. In this stage, you choose to have a partner, get married, have children or adopt, etc. It is the most productive time of your life because that is when you are contributing to society and each other. You are maturing out, you are learning to stay with the same person and fight, not leave. This is not easy, this whole phase is very important. It is also the time when you actualize some of the education you have received. Once the children have grown and flown the nest, then you are more in advisory role. In the second stage, you were all over running around and getting things done, making your wealth, etc. In this third stage, you take a back seat and move into this advisory role and spend more time on prayers and contemplation, called *Vaanaprastha* - ashram. After this stage, because all of the experiences of life have matured you so much and you have been prayerful all along, the last stage is where it was permitted to take to a life of renunciation to pursue self knowledge. Renunciation is considered as permissible, now you have lived a complete life and you are not actually renouncing things, they are naturally dropping off of you in the sense that you do not value a lot of the things as much as you used to earlier, and you want to devote all of your time and effort for understanding yourself, God, and the world.

Yajnavalkya approaches his wife Maitreyi and tells her that he wants to take sannyasa, live a life of a monk. One of the rules of sannyasa is that if you are married, you must be granted permission from your partner or parents, whichever applies, you are not permitted to just walk off. He tells her he has divided the wealth between the two wives. Maitreyi asks the question,

implying that he is walking away from this wealth, and giving it to me, "This wealth that you give me, is it going to give me what you are going to get by walking off?" He was an authentic, honest husband, and he said "No, it won't." And he says a particular phrase, "Whatever is loved, is really for the sake of the self. (*Atmanastu kaamaya sarvam priyam bhavati*). When the husband is loved, or the wife is loved, it is not for the sake of that person, it is because that person evokes the pleased self in you. You love that person because of what the person does in you when in the presence of that person because you are happy with that person. So what you really love is your own happiness. You cannot and do not want to be with someone who makes you miserable. And like that, he goes on explaining that even the children are loved not for their sake, but because they evoke the pleased person in you. This knowledge is something for us to unlock.

All of us have had the experience of being loved, not just romantic love, love from our parents, our siblings, friends, children, colleagues, etc. When we are loved, we are happy. This is a no brainer - of course we are happy, but it is not so simple. We are happy because the projecting mind is resolved temporarily. There is a connection between the object of love, and my happiness. With that same person, one day we might become incompatible or have a fight, or you might feel exhausted or ill, so, the way you will relate to that person will be different. Still, we want to command this condition all the time - who doesn't want to feel loved all the time? What does our reality suggest? The extent of depression that exists in this world is shocking, there are 7 billion of us, and it is ironic that we cannot find even a few people with whom we can be compatible and love and be loved. Everyone complains that they are not loved enough, they wish they were a little more loved, or they wish this person was a little more expressive, some complaints will be there.

When analyzing this experience of being loved, what happens is complete acceptance. You feel accepted and the other person does not seem to have an agenda for you. You might snore, you might have very annoying habits, but still, the person is accepting of you. **That vision of the acceptance from that person, that you are lovable, is what you really love.** If that vision of that person towards you becomes your own vision, then you can say "I feel loved when I am ok." not based upon the other's vision of us. But most of us are not like that, because that vision has not yet been transferred. In that person's eyes, I am lovable and being loved makes me very happy, the two always go hand in hand. So when that person is not around, I am sad. All of this is happening because I don't feel loved without that person. That person's vision has not transferred to mine. How can this vision transfer happen? Should it happen? Actually it is the other way around.

If you are able to discover that in the experience of love, what has happened is the ego - the ego is the self concept, it is nothing more than that, it creates a sense of separation between you and the world - resolves and there is only love because both egos have resolved. This means

the sense of separation that was there, is no longer there and that is when you are deeply happy. This gives you a glimpse of the wholeness that you really are, and that is what we love the most. That is the nature of the Atma. Atma is you, it is yourself. You are able to get a glimpse of the Atma (wholeness, fullness) when there is no more projection and the ego has resolved.

When you are ok with yourself, you find yourself being very kind and loving to others. It is very natural. When we are traveling in the tube, our expressions and our eye contact with each other will not be there. But when you are somewhere like this yoga festival, everyone looks at each other, everyone acknowledges each other, some people smile, some people give hugs. Why is this? It is because the ego, which struggles with insecurity, is not struggling as much in this given environment. You are in harmony with the elements of your surroundings. That is what happens to us when we have love. When you are watching a lake, you accept the lake for what it is. You may wish for better weather, perhaps, but you don't critique the clouds and think "these clouds, how ugly they are, they have to be a little more beautiful. It should be a little deeper blue in the sky." You don't resist the sky, you don't resist the trees, you don't resist the mountains and the stars, you are just able to appreciate their beauty - you are in harmony with them. A lot of us will get fed up with the city, feeling it's too busy, and the pollution is terrible, which gives us the sense that I love nature. **You actually don't love nature, you love the pleased self that gets evoked when you are in nature.** When you are watching something like nature, when we are with trees, with the water, with mountains, anyone who is in nature experiences that sense because that ego, which creates a sense of separation, just dissolves. It dissolves because I have no agenda for the mountains and the rivers to be different. I don't have a projection on them, I see them for what they are, objectively. I enjoy it and I am in harmony with it. The times that we have experienced love becomes incidental, unfortunately. It occurs in specific incidents, and only then I am in harmony with the other. **When in a moment of understanding, I don't have a sense of separation with that person, there is an experience of oneness.**

That oneness which is pointed out in the Upanishad is stated to be Atma - that this Atma that manifests as wholeness and the most dynamic form of wholeness, or fullness, is love. This is because there is no sense of separation, there is only an understanding and an experience of oneness. In this, how are you going to relate to everyone, because everyone is like you and everyone is an extension of you. Everyone is really not everyone, strike off the 'every', all that is here is one. It is like how the different parts of the human body, is one being. Although the liver, the heart, the lungs, the kidneys, etc all have a different function, they are all relating to each other and coexist with each other. They are different from each other, but they are in harmony with each other.

This love that we seek outside, is to be discovered by us in the form of what is our nature, what is our swaropa, what is it that defines me. And that happens to be the infinite. And that infinite when understood, it expresses itself as love. Depending on the situation, love

may be kindness, it could be compassion, it could be tough love, it could be the discipline that you do what is required in that given situation because you don't have an agenda to manipulate or to control. But, generally what happens is love becomes control - "I love you therefore sit down" or "I love you, therefore you should not talk to that person." etc. Our language might change, but it is that same love, distorted, which becomes anger, hatred, etc. This happens because our own nature is not understood - what happens is when that object of love does not listen to me, or does something that I do not like, I am seething with anger. You wouldn't be angry with the stranger on the street, you probably wouldn't care less. So, why are you so angry, only with this person? Because you have a lot of love for this person. And that same love, distorted, is experienced as jealousy when my need to be special and my need to control creeps in.

We are all control freaks, the degree varies and our ability to mask it varies, but everyone wants to control, especially the person you love. Why? Because that person is a source of happiness for you. That object of love evokes the pleased self, which makes me happy, but my happiness is like a yo-yo. Only according to certain conducive conditions I feel happy, and therefore loved. When the person I love behaves in a very bad way, or not according to what I want (and remember, I am a very moody person), then I don't feel loved, and therefore I don't feel happy. I am fighting all of the time, or sulking all of the time, I either withdraw or I go on the attack. In recognizing this pattern, and understanding that really speaking, the love that I claim to have for the other, is really love for myself. Is this being selfish? It is not selfish, it is the truth. It is because you have a love for yourself that a person may come at your side. I love myself so deeply, they may not articulate it that way, and nothing around me gives me happiness so it is better for me to go away than to continue living. Even the one who claims to be a martyr, that person has a certain image of himself or herself and wants attention and wants love and that is the pattern the person has learned. I have another exercise for you: You have to write at least 5-7 statements all the things that you have received as a compliment. Any statements of love, endearment, whatever it is that we want to hear. Whether you heard it from others or not, what I yearn to hear about myself. Pointing to the fact that I am deeply loveable. Whatever comes to mind.

The truth is, each of us is lovable, but, we are not able to receive love and we often reject it. We are not able to fully see our own fullness and think wrongly that because a person loves me, that I am lovable. **You have to flip the equation - you are loveable, and that is why someone loves you.** And love, is actually not a verb, it is your nature. When limitlessness, the nature of the Atma that is you, manifests in this dynamic medium of this human birth, it is very natural to be loving and to be loved. What is most natural for us is to be loving - it is very natural to be kind, to not harm someone, and to be in harmony with everyone. This is what the Upanishad points out, it is what we will call lakshana vakya. This is pointing out that love and that evoked pleased self, is really fullness, and fullness is my nature, ananta, limitlessness.

This is not understood by me because I have ignorance. I think I am limited, I think I am not worthy. This is a whole issue of self esteem. I have a critic sitting always by my side, who is pointing out the wrong things I have done, so much that even if someone is very genuine with me, I cannot accept it. I am always doubting things because I am so afraid to trust. All of us have struggled with trust issues, but as babies, we were blessed with the ability to trust. When someone threw you up in the air, you did not have trust issues then, otherwise, you would have had a heart attack right there! There was no sense of distrust, and along with my helplessness, came a sense of complete trust and surrender. Whoever it is I trust, I surrender. And it is this surrender that causes the dissolving of the ego. **The ego is just an artificial boundary, it is not absolutely real. It is when that dissolves that we are able to see ourselves as love. The vision of Vedanta is to see that this is who you really are.**

We can be in charge of being loving, but we cannot be fully in charge of the love that we receive. You are free to love, but there are 2 things that stop us. The first is what we call Raga, or my cravings, my need to control. "I want my loved one to behave in this way, so I will be loving to that person only when this person listens to me." An example of this occurred while doing a workshop with parents. I asked the mothers when is it that they feel loved. One mother said she felt loved her children listened to her and obeyed her. She was expecting obedience from her children, and she is sinking into depression because she doesn't feel loved. And she doesn't feel loved because she wants to control and her children are not listening to her. This is meant to explain that having relative love in our lives is not dependant on other people showing love to us, it is dependent on me showing love to others.

Only when I have relative love in my life, am I ready to take the step to seeing that I am that absolute love. So that requires a process of study of Vedanta, a certain process of preparation, being exposed to the scriptures, studying certain texts systematically, but before that, I need to have relative love in my life. **And the only way to be loving is to love. You don't have to look for a golden opportunity, the right time, the right astrological calculation.** The more and more I am able to see that what is here is intelligence, people are the way they are because of their background, I am no longer interested in labeling and jumping to categorizing them. I understand they are there in my life for a reason.

I am related to 5 sets of factors and this is where I am able to practice my love. You must not think that you only want to limit your love to your romantic partner, you cannot let only that person be an object of your love. There is no reason to hold back your love.

The first are the people here, you are connected to all the people around you. Just as with the example of the yoga festival where it is very natural to smile at each other. the same you is in the tube where you do not want to make eye contact with anyone, and they are the same people. It comes very natural in an environment like the yoga festival because you feel you are

committed to a similar purpose, so you are connected to each other. Similarly with your family members, friends, colleagues, that is our own little world. How can I do more kind and caring actions for them? We have to discover love that is our nature. Discovering love is not looking at Tinder and swiping left and right and unfortunately, we associate the purpose of our life is to get love - a lot of people say this. But the point is, you are loveable! You are a manifestation of Isvara, you are extraordinary, you are the limitless that you are actually seeking and you are connected to all the people around you. In your little world, this is what we call manushya yajna. It doesn't matter what the other person is doing, or not doing, your nature is to love and you do that. **You do caring actions for the other without needing to look for some esoteric mystical reason to be loving to another person.**

The second relationship is to nature. You are also connected to all plants, animals, and nature. All of the environmental sustainability spoken of is because we have treated things as objects around us. We have treated them as though they exist for my consumption and this is a very wrong way of thinking because I am connected to them. The air that I exhale, is the air that the tree inhales. So, I learn to live a life of least injury because life feeds life. While there is no way you will not injure anything, even when you use floor cleaners, you are killing bacteria viruses, but that is required otherwise you will not survive. So there is some level of violence that is there in our lives. Causing little injury, some hurt, killing beings, will happen, but this sensitivity that is there in each and every one of us, that I am loving towards plants, animals, use of resources, etc, is a connection I have and it is a connection that I must honor.

The third is my relationship with my teachers. Whoever the teachers are, here we generally say it is the Veda, the Rishis, but anyone you consider a teacher. All we have learned, even if it is online learning, is because of conscious beings that were there in that body of knowledge. So, you acknowledge and you do something that is an act of care either for them, or to keep that tradition going, or to share that knowledge.

The fourth group of people we are connected to are our ancestors, our parents. Some of our parents may have been dysfunctional, but the point is, they did the best they could. They didn't really want to harm us, but they didn't know any better. The love that they had for us, regardless of whether it may have been twisted or not, they were the instruments for us to be here, and to have this wonderful life. So, we acknowledge and do acts of care for our parents. There are rituals, I am sure in every culture, for the dead and gone. In India, we have annual rituals that are done, sometimes even every month for the ancestors.

The fifth group of people, beings that we are related to are what we will refer to as Devatas or Deities. Deities are like the heads of departments. For the bodies of water, we will say Varuna. You may or may not connect with this, but you can connect with the fact that for every phenomenon or every process, even within the company or a project, there is someone who is in

charge. All of these phenomena that we are experiencing on a day to day basis, moment to moment basis, is because there are different beings working. For this festival, there are at least 100 volunteers on site, they are making things possible for us. What shall we say about this entire world? It is not random, there are beings that are working for certain processes. So, we do acts of care and we show our love towards them.

When we consider these five groups, what happens is, there is a lot of love in my life. I am always engaged in acts of care, warmth, love, for each of these groups, not only to my romantic partner. **The only way to love is to love.** We are in charge of that, no one can feel helpless and say they don't know how to love. You are aware of how you express love, and you also know that others will express their love in different ways. Now, you have a certain sensitivity and you can resonate with the other with respect to how that person expresses his or her love towards you. And, you are also able to see that you are deep intelligence and you are pervaded by Isvara. You are just an absolutely perfect manifestation. That all of the laws, all of the principles have conspired to make you the way you are and that makes you deeply lovable, whether someone loves you or doesn't love you.

You can show love and care to all of these 5. You can show love to manushya-s, people. This is what we call Manushya yajna. My acts, my karma, is to be done and not to be done as a burden, because it is an acknowledgment of my sense of interconnectedness with these five factors. So people, or manushya-s, different beings, plants, and animals, or Bhuta-s, my ancestors I am deeply connected to, or Pitr-s, fourth are Rishis, teachers that I have received a lot of learning from, and the fifth are Devatas. Even when you do the sun salutation, you are acknowledging Surya devata. We are so deeply interconnected to all of these five factors. **These five sets of beings have contributed and continue to contribute to our lives.**

So the question is, how can I show my love, my care, for these beings on a day to day basis. With this, you will find that you will have a lot of love in your life because you have now discovered the love in your life. **It is no more a verb that you do, you have discovered that you are that love.** The love that you were seeking as a projection outside, where that love was inhibited by cravings, aversions, raga, dvesha, is no longer inhibited. When I say love is your nature, I am not saying this la la land kind of love, because some say love needs to be strong. However you want to express it is up to you. **Because you are love, you are lovable, and therefore you can be loving, and you can receive love.** You are not going to distrust everyone who pays you a genuine compliment. The person is saying it and genuinely means it if you do not think they are genuine, it means that you do not have the ability to trust. If you do not have the ability to trust, what is this great indicator of authenticity that I am looking for? I am looking for certainty, perhaps. Or perhaps I am looking for the infallible which is God - but I am seeking it in beings that are fallible. Fallible beings are capable of making a mistake, and that is not

acceptable to me. Here is where I need to understand that **my search for the infallible will only end when I discover Bhagavan or Isvara.**

If I am expecting a person around me to be perfect without mistakes, I will have to be born and reborn again, and again. There is no such person, no such guru either. Every guru, every person being a human definitely has limitations, but the point is the truth of who we are is pure being. And that **pure being when manifesting in a dynamic interactive way, is love.** When that love gets distorted comes anger, jealousy, etc. **The way to discover relative love in our lives is to be loving. No excuses.** Relative love is discovered in our lives by being loving and I've said if we relate to all of these 5 factors then we are ready to discover the absolute love that we really are.

Right now, you might just take what I say at face value, but you may see the logic that I am saying. When you try it, or in the moments you have tried it in your life, you see the truth of what I am saying, and you know it to be true. So, just like everyone is smiling at everyone here at the yoga festival, all we have done is invoked the loving person that we really are. This simple, kind, and loving person which is very natural. You are absolutely at ease with yourself. Even if you love your work, you actually don't love your work, you love the pleased self that it evokes. **Whatever your role may be, it is only a medium for your own fullness and wholeness to manifest. What we deeply seek, what we yearn for, is fullness. That fullness has to be discovered as your nature, and only then will the search end.** Until then, we will keep searching out there until we get exposed to Vedanta.

Questions:

How do you love someone who has been cruel to you and who are destructive in your life?

If the person is cruel to you and is abusive, there is no reason why you need to be together. It's possible that the person is being cruel because the person wants to punish you. So, it would be better to enter therapy, couples therapy. We seem to have lost a way to communicate to each other. Generally, there is a lot of love initially but a lot of it is also a projection. We have a certain image of what we want, and that person happens to be the image at that time. But, then of course, reality happens and that person is nothing like they were in that image, and I can no longer relate to that. If both people learn to accept each other, and see that you are different, you will learn to be in harmony. **Learning that you don't have to be like me, and I don't have to be like you calls for a tremendous amount of maturity.** If that third person helps us communicate better, then things might work out. But if the person continues to be abusive, maybe that person needs to go to therapy on their own, maybe there are some childhood issues and the person has developed a pattern. I am assuming that you have taken a lot of effort to

resolve it and it is not resolving, that is why I am suggesting therapy. **One thing we must understand is that while in the experience of love, there is dissolving of boundaries.** Sometimes that person cannot respect the boundaries that also need to be there. **It is not collapsing of all boundaries, there are some boundaries that must be maintained, through telling the person what you want and what is acceptable to you.** Therefore, if that person is always crossing the boundary of what is acceptable and not acceptable, then either the person is pushing you too much, and testing you all of the time. Maybe the person is going through all of this, but I think therapy is the way out. **You can continue to have love for that person, and love does not necessarily mean that you have to be together.** It sounds ironic but love does not let you to live in peace if you are not compatible. So if you can't even communicate or have a cordial conversation, and all attempts to resolve compatibility have not worked, then it really means that person was only in your life for a particular reason. **You thank that person, see the lessons that you can derive from it, perhaps you have even realized the projections you had and maybe it's time to be objective to reality. Be grateful for the fact that you had that experience of love, and that it helped you discover that you are lovable.** It is a shame that it didn't work out, but there is love in your life, you are lovable and you wish well for that person. Of course it is sad, you will have to go through a bit of a grieving process, but as a lot of people here who have survived more than one relationship can definitely tell you that things will be well with you.

Children demanding unconditional love question:

Unconditional love is actually not possible, what they are seeking is love for God. They are seeking love at all times, and all places, and all situations. This is not possible from a human being. No matter how brilliant and saintly the person is, it's not possible. Even the saintly person needs to sleep and is not available. The parent-child love is as unconditional as it can get, and it is very beautiful, but it's a myth that unconditional love is possible. When anybody talks like that, you actually ask them what is it you can do for them. How would they like to feel loved, what will make them feel loved? They are actually complaining that they don't feel loved which is why they say you should love them unconditionally. It is a very simple question, but it is a question none of us ask because we are embarrassed to ask. It's so simple and straightforward because you are happy to love them in the way they would like to be loved. The more you discover your relationship with God, that is what will seal it with you. You will always be loving towards everyone. Because you see the order, you see the principles, you see the laws operating, and you see that all that is here is Isvara. But that is something to be discovered over a period of time, and we have to retrieve this understanding and our need for the infallible from the many ideas we have about God.

I have a teenager and she shouts back at me. How do you deal with a child that is just rude?

There are two ways. If your teenage daughter is shouting back at you, the first is do not take it personally, she is just venting. The second is to tell her that when you shout like this it really hurts me. "I don't want to be hurt so please keep it down". Generally, what happens is, we don't know how to request and our request is presented as a demand.

Love, Ananda, your nature, shines by itself. But there is a veil of avidya, ignorance. To pierce through that Avidya, there is also adhyaasa, projection. To relate to each other, it is better to express love. Despite all of our communication workshops and everything, a lot of us do not feel understood. It is unfortunate. But it is better to tread on the side of caution and express.

When I say to my son, don't speak to me like that. He says well you should be able to deal with it all of the therapy you do.

Tell him what you are feeling and request for him to do something. Tell him you are upset. When you are demanding of anyone, they are not going to meet your demands, we are all rebellious. You should just request but there is no guarantee everyone is going to listen and respond to your request, but, there is a good chance because your son cares for you, if you say this really upsets me. Then maybe he will try to not be rude.

When should I express?

This is a very good question, you should express most of the time. Think about the army, for example. When do they prepare for war? Is it only when they see some signs of tension? No, they are always preparing and are always battle ready. If there is a war, if there is a fight, they can deal with it. If there is no fight, they keep preparing. Same thing with the example of the immunity of the body. Am I going to start preparing for the immunity when infection is going to strike or has struck? No. I ensure that my communication with my loved ones, is good enough. **I am expressing what I need to and I am also able to listen and receive what they are saying.** That way, when a conflict arises, it also diffuses quite quickly because that person already understands me and I understand them. You will always give the person the benefit of the doubt. If you have not had that communication channel open, and suddenly you have a great fight, then sometimes these fights can lead to divorces, or complete break downs. **The time to resolve is not when you have a fight or when there is infection, you should always be preparing, communicating, and expressing your act of care and love for the other person.**