

Volume 8, Issue 9

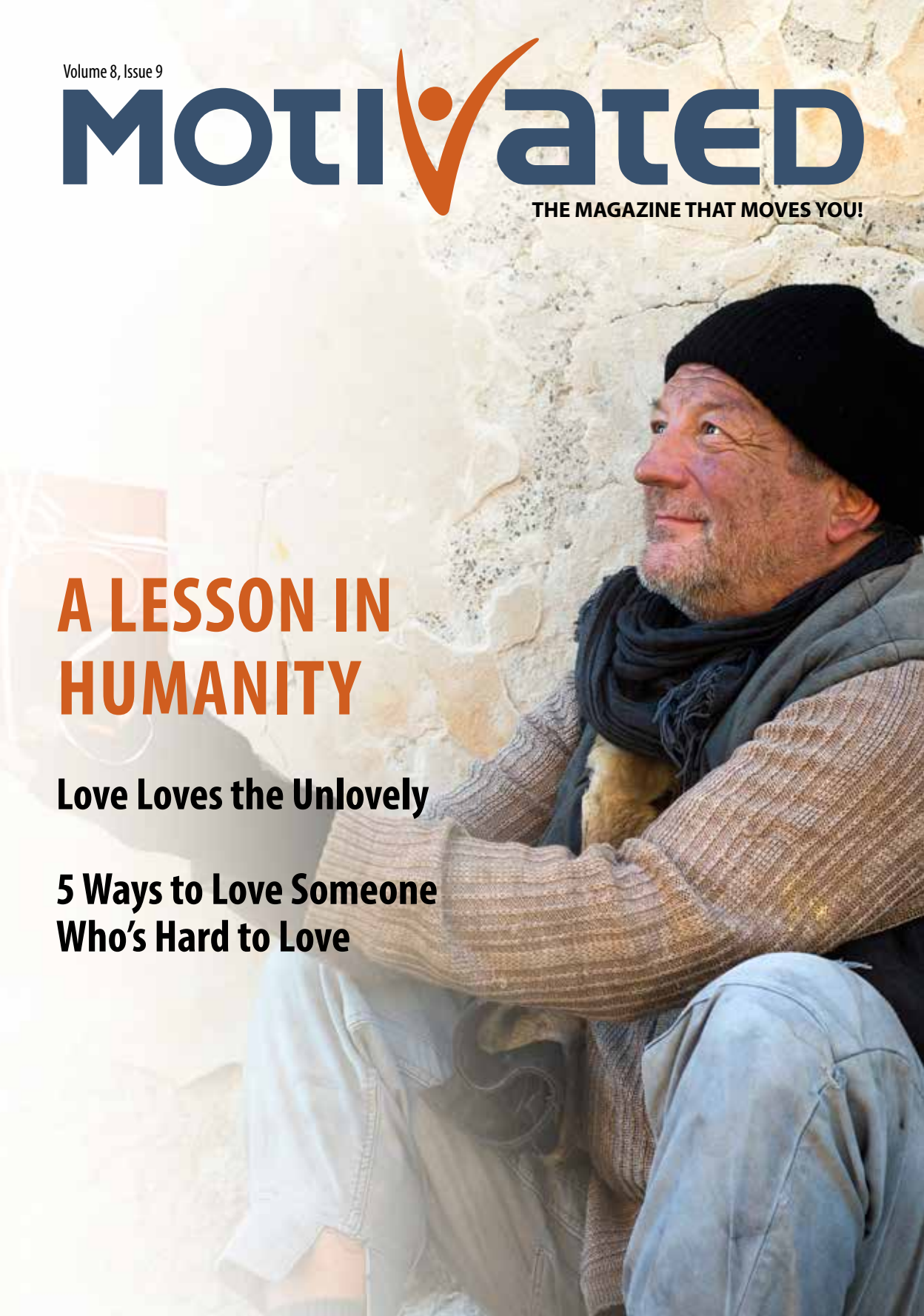
# MOTIVATED

THE MAGAZINE THAT MOVES YOU!

## A LESSON IN HUMANITY

**Love Loves the Unlovely**

**5 Ways to Love Someone  
Who's Hard to Love**



- 3 Postcard from Verona**
- 4 14 Ways to Show Love on Valentine's Day—Or Any Day**
- 5 A Lesson in Humanity**
- 6 Love Loves the Unlovely**
- 7 The Love Cup**
- 8 5 Ways to Love Someone Who's Hard to Love**
- 9 Love in a Letter**
- 10 Parenting from the Heart**  
10 hands-on activities to teach children about love
- 12 Notable Quotes**  
Love in action

**Issue Editor**

Motivated Vol 8, Issue 9  
Christina Lane

**Design**

awexdesign

**Contact Us:**

**Email**

**Website**

motivated@motivatedmagazine.com  
www.motivatedmagazine.com

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In 1966, Dionne Warwick sang, "What the world needs now, is love sweet love. It's the only thing that there's just too little of. What the world needs now, is love sweet love. No, not just for some, but for everyone." How true this is today.

Once a year, on Valentine's Day, many people engage in exchanging messages of love, cards, and gifts with people they love and care about. Whether you observe this unofficial and somewhat commercialized holiday or not, the idea of expressing love in word and in deed with those who are dear to you is something worth celebrating. But why stop there?

By all means, express your love to those close to you, but let's not forget that love has many facets besides romantic love. This year, why not take it a step further and put the concept of Valentine's Day into practice in various other ways, by reaching out to those not in our immediate circle of people we love and care about.

To help us all get started, I compiled a number of articles and stories about the wonderful effects that deeds of love and kindness can have on others. After reading this issue of *Motivated*, I think you will agree that a little bit of love truly can go a long, long way, and change a life—and the aching world around us—in wonderful and positive ways.

With love,

Christina Lane  
For *Motivated*

# Postcard from Verona

By Anna Perlini

I was born in the hometown of Romeo and Juliet. Every day on my way to school, I used to walk past the famous balcony where Shakespeare has the pair exchange passionate vows after a party. I recently returned to Verona, in the north of Italy, and passed by again—but the thick crowd of tourists made it almost impossible to get near the famous balcony. I noticed the walls around were covered with signatures, and it seems that the city has to periodically repaint them so as to allow more star struck tourists to write their names. The street hosts a number of shops that sell love-related souvenirs.

I don't know what Shakespeare would think of the way his story has been reimagined and adapted countless times. One thing for sure, it's never been more famous. When I'm asked where I'm from, my answer usually brings on smiles and wistful sighs: Romeo and Juliet.

When I was a teenager, I too felt very attracted to Romeo and Juliet's tragic story, and for a number of years, I was

secretly longing for my Romeo to come by and fulfill all my heart's desires, but life—and 38 years of marital ups and downs—taught me many lessons along the way.

I recently came upon a great quote: "There's a big difference between falling in love with someone and loving someone. Falling in love simply happens. But in order to really love someone you need to sweat, to suffer, to laugh, to stay awake, and to give of yourself. Real love doesn't just happen. Real love is something you make happen."<sup>1</sup> As much as I cherish great romantic stories, I've learned that real love is something quite different. It stands the test of time, it's about giving and not getting, and it's foremost a commitment. Back to Shakespeare: "The course of true love never did run smooth."<sup>2</sup> Quite a challenge then, but something we all can work towards. ■

Anna Perlini is a co-founder of *Per un Mondo Migliore*,<sup>3</sup> a humanitarian organization active in the Balkans since 1995.

1. F. Roversi

2. A Midsummer Night's Dream

3. <http://www.perunmondomigliore.org>



# 14 Ways to Show Love on Valentine's Day—Or Any Day

By Joe Simmons, SJ, adapted

- 1. Call a widow(er).** Maybe it is your mom...your neighbor...your grandpa. They have lost their soulmate, and holidays stir up memories that are bittersweet. Let them know you love them.
- 2. Visit an old friend...or a friend who happens to be old.** They were young once too, and might have some wisdom to impart. Your visit will make their day.
- 3. Drop the grudge you're holding, at least for today.** It will make you and the other person feel so much better.
- 4. Empty the dishwasher...**before your mom, spouse, or roommate has to ask.
- 5. Give someone in your family a hug or a call.** Just because.
- 6. Give a compliment.** Words can hurt... but they can also build up. Surprise someone—your co-worker, student, child—with a genuine compliment.
- 7. Do a kind deed.** Snow blow the sidewalk, or mow your neighbor's lawn...and don't let them see you did it. Go and do something good for someone who can't repay you.

**8. Reach out to a married friend in distress.** Marriage, like anything worth committing to, isn't always sweet after the honeymoon. Listen. Encourage. But mainly listen.

**9. Reconsider someone who annoys you.** A nosey co-worker, an unpleasant sibling, a cranky teacher. Are they really trying to annoy people, or are they just looking to be loved? [For a solution to this, see number 6.]

**10. Love zealously...not jealously.** Sometimes loving someone means pulling them closer to you. And sometimes it means giving them time and space to flourish on their own. This love can be hard.

**11. Apologize to you-know-who for you-know-what.** Just do it. You'll feel

better immediately, and it will be the start of a new chapter for both of you.

**12. Give thanks.** Go to a sacred space—or just a quiet place—and give thanks to God for the people in your life who love you, no strings attached. Maybe write one of them a note.

**13. Give.** Remember that no act of kindness is wasted. An anonymous donation to a charity. A lunch invitation to a “lowly” intern in your office. An extra 15 minutes with a student in crisis. These are small acts that teach the next generation what it means to love and live generously.

**14. Stop looking at your Facebook feed...and be fed by a face-to-face interaction with someone.** But only after you share this on Facebook. ■

# A Lesson in Humanity

Adapted from *A Lifetime of Success*, by Pat Williams and Fleming H. Revell

Years ago, a 10-year-old boy approached the counter of an ice-cream shop, and climbed onto a stool.

“What does an ice cream sundae cost?” he asked the waitress.

“Fifty cents,” she answered.

The youngster reached deep in his pockets and pulled out an assortment of change, counting it carefully as the waitress grew impatient. She had “bigger” customers to wait on.

“Well, how much would just plain ice cream be?” the boy asked.

The waitress responded with noticeable irritation in her voice, “Thirty-five cents.”

Again, the boy slowly counted his money. “May I have some plain ice cream in a dish then, please?” He gave her the correct amount, and she brought him the ice cream.

Later, the waitress returned to clear the boy's dish. When she picked it up, she felt a lump in her throat. There on the counter the boy had left 15 cents. She realized that he had had enough money for the sundae, but sacrificed it so that he could leave her a tip. ■

# Love Loves the Unlovely

Author unknown

A very wealthy man lived in the beautiful countryside with his wife and his millions. He was childless and said he'd give it all if he just had a son to love and to pass his inheritance on to.

As his wife passed her thirties and entered her forties, he began to lose hope.

Then one day she became pregnant. However, complications in childbirth cost his wife her life as she gave birth to a son with Down's Syndrome. The father loved his boy just the same.

He poured his life into that boy. My, how he loved him!

At the age of twelve, the boy died and, suffering from a broken heart, the father followed his two loved ones shortly.

With no one to inherit the father's wealth, the will dictated that a great auction would take place. An auctioneer would sell the houses, the land, and the livestock to the highest bidder. Many wealthy people drove for hundreds of miles to attend the auction.

The auctioneer began the sale with an 11 x 14 framed picture of the boy, who had a Mongoloid face. "What do I

hear for this first item up for bid?" the auctioneer cried. No one bid a dime. The audience was silent. They waited for the valuable things to come.

"Do I have a bid? ... Does anyone care to bid?" At the last available minute a woman in the crowd said, "I'll give five

dollars for that picture, it's all I've got." She was the maid who had cared for the boy during his twelve years of life. "Do I hear ten... will anyone bid ten? Going once,

going twice...sold to the woman for five dollars."

Then the auctioneer tore a letter from the back of the picture as he handed it to the woman who had won the bid. The letter was written in the hand of the father just before he died. It was signed and notarized.

"To the person who thinks enough of my son to buy this picture, I give my entire estate."

The auctioneer's hammer hit the anvil as he proclaimed, "Auction over!" The hush that fell over the crowd lingered in the air for a long time. ■



# The Love Cup

Adapted from *A Hug and a Kiss and a Kick in the Pants*, by Kay Kuzma

Seven-year-old Lara was having a miserable day. She whined, pouted, pushed her little sister, Lisa, and then grabbed away Lisa's favorite doll.

Finally, Mother could stand it no longer, "Lara, what has gotten into you? You'd better straighten up and be kind to your sister, or you're going to get it!"

Lara paid no attention to the warning and continued to say mean things to Lisa.

At bedtime, Mother told Lara that her sour attitude made her very unhappy. That made Lara even angrier. "You like Lisa more than you like me," Lara retorted. She fell asleep sulking.

The next morning Lara woke up in a bad mood. She complained miserably when Mother attempted to comb out the tangles in her hair. Mother was beside herself; what was wrong with Lara? Could Lara be suffering from a lack of positive attention?

Mother called, "Lara, I think I know what is wrong with you."

"You do?" Lara looked puzzled.

"Yes," said her mother, "your love cup is empty! Come over here and let me fill it up." Mom sat Lara on her lap, hugged and kissed her, and told her how special she was. Lara was surprised, but she obviously enjoyed the attention. She knew she deserved the opposite.

After a minute, Mother asked Lara if

her love cup was full yet. "No, but it's up to here," said Lara, as she pointed to her chest. Mother loved her up again. Then she asked, "Is it full now?" "No," said Lara, "but it's up to my chin."

"Good," said Mother, with a big hug. "Let's see if we can't get that cup so full that it will spill right over the top." Finally, with a big smile on her face, Lara said that she was full and running over.

"Well, if you've got that much love," said Mother, "why don't you give some of it to your sister?"

"Oh, no," said Lara, "Lisa will just push me away." Mother knew that after the obnoxious way Lara had treated Lisa that just might

happen, but she encouraged Lara to try. Somewhat hesitantly, Lara went up to Lisa and said, "Lisa, I love you," and gave her a hug. Lisa hugged her sister back, real tight. Then they both headed off hand in hand to the breakfast table.

But that's not the end of the story. A few weeks later, Mother had a terrible day. She grumbled and spoke harshly to the girls. After a while, Lara said, "Mommy, I think I know what's wrong with you. Your love cup's empty!"

Then she threw her arms around her mom's neck and gave her a big kiss. Do you know what happened to Mother's love cup? Just like that, it filled to overflowing, and Mom was her happy self again! ■





# 5 WAYS TO LOVE SOMEONE WHO'S HARD TO LOVE

By Anna Collins, adapted

When you hear the word “love,” many of us think of our spouses, children, family, or friends. We think of people who are easy to love, because they love us back. But people who are hard to love are in need of our love, too. But how?

Instead of putting a smile on and making fake conversation until we can make the quickest exit, why not try this:

**1. Pray often.** Ask God to help you to see people in a positive light. When we start to see people that way, we begin to treat people better. If you're really struggling to love one person in particular, commit to praying for him or her every day. It's nearly impossible to hate someone if we're constantly asking God to bless that person's life.

**2. Humble yourself.** None of us are perfect. We can be hard to love, too. Think of how you would want to be treated in this situation, and treat that person the same way.

**3. Learn their story.** What if the reason that co-worker jumps down your throat

every time you talk to him is because he's mad about something that happened in the past? We're often quick to judge and quick to blame instead of taking time to understand others' backgrounds and how the past affects the people they are today.

**4. Forgive often.** It is hard to forgive the people who hurt us, but not forgiving someone causes us to become bitter and angry. We cannot love anyone well from that place. Make a choice to forgive, and experience the freedom and peace that comes from forgiveness.

**5. Set healthy boundaries.** Loving someone doesn't mean you have to be that person's best friend. We can love even the most difficult people by being kind, meeting their needs, and showing them respect.

Loving people who don't love us back can feel thankless at times. We are who we are because of friends who never gave up on us. And if we're committed to loving others well, one day the hard-to-love folks in our lives will be able to look back and say the same. ■





# LOVE IN A LETTER

By Peter van Gorder, adapted

I am a teacher, and have taught different age groups for several years. It is a challenging but rewarding job. One of the big pay-offs comes when your students grow up and show their appreciation, either in person, or when they send you some fan mail. Some of the letters can come from some of the most unexpected sources—students that had a rebellious streak, or seemed to have little desire to learn. Like this one, which I received just in time for my birthday.

Dear Teacher,

I really love the fact that you have such great faith for anything and everything new and different. I admire your willing attitude and enthusiasm about trying new things—it takes guts!

You're a good teacher, but what I like most about you is that you don't just teach in a classroom. You are always ready to teach. Wherever I went with you, I always learned something. There was never a time when you weren't teaching. I don't remember you ever telling me, "This is just an outing...it's not the time to learn." I am very glad for that, because I learned so much from you!

You taught me a lot about painting, and though you never got to see it, it went a long way!

You were always so positive. I remember one time, when I was about six, you were teaching me to paint a starry sky. I completely screwed it up! I remember being so upset because it didn't turn out right. It wasn't that I didn't try—

it just wasn't like yours! Although I'd love to put that ugly painting out of my memory, I'll never forget what you said to me then, "Don't worry honey! It's really good modern art!" You had such a big smile when you said it; I knew it was very sincere, and I felt encouraged. It was your patience and positivity that made me want to try again! I drew a lot more since you last taught me, and I am pleased to say that my art is better—much better!

I changed in many ways, and many of these changes happened because you had so much faith in me. I know that I sometimes made life a drag for you. I feel real guilty about that. I was always real stubborn, I still tend to be, but I've learned a lot since you last saw me. I don't think you would recognize me.

We've all benefited from the things you taught us! Thanks, for putting up with all the flack, and for teaching me all the things you did. I can still remember many of them! Have a great birthday! ■

# 10 HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES TO TEACH CHILDREN ABOUT LOVE

PARENTING  
FROM THE HEART



By Chelsea Lee Smith, adapted

Love is a wonderful character trait to teach to children. Because kids have been hearing “I love you” for so long, they can begin to understand the feeling and the actions that go along with this character trait quite easily.

Here are 10 easy activities to teach children about love:

## 1. Share the ways you like to feel loved.

Find out how your child likes to feel loved by asking, “How do you know when someone loves you?” Take turns sharing how each of you likes to be loved, such as being hugged, having someone’s help, or enjoying a game together. You may like to make a list under the name or a self-portrait of each family member, sharing each person’s favorite ways to feel loved.

## 2. Show your love for the earth.

Collect trash on the street, gather up recyclable items in your home, or do some gardening outside. Explain how actions must go along with our verbal expressions of love. By showing loving actions and not just saying the words

“I love you,” we are putting love into action. We can show love to everyone and everything around us by looking out for what each person, animal, or thing needs to be happy and healthy.

## 3. Make a list of people we love and people who love you.

Make a list or create a photo album of family members and friends. Use this list (or album) to remind your child that there are lots of people who care for him or her. Discuss the idea of love being limitless—no matter how many people we love, there is always more love in our hearts. Love is endless to receive, and endless to give.

## 4. Make a big “Love Heart.”

Explain to your child how a heart is often used as a representation of love because, like love supplies energy to people, the heart supplies blood to the body. This blood (love) allows us to live happily. Use masking tape, stones, a large piece of plain cloth, or several large sheets of paper taped together to make the outline of a heart. Have your child

come up with ways to use the heart, such as making it a race track, a collection area for stuffed animals or other favorite objects they love, or a place to sit in while they sing songs.

### **5. Create a “Love Dance.”**

Love feels so good that we often smile, laugh, sing, and dance when we are with those we love. Choose a song your child likes and make up actions or dance moves you can do together. Have a good time and savor the moments spending some time with someone you love. Being joyful helps us show and accept love.

### **6. Talk about people you have met, and the loving qualities they showed.**

Ask your child to remember a time when they met someone new, and what they noticed about that person. Talk about how they felt, and how they became friends. You may like to take turns pretending you are each a new person the other is meeting, and role play how you can show love to new friends. Talk about how someone may look different than us—such as being a different age, speaking a different language, or having a disability—yet we can appreciate another person for their special qualities.

### **7. Talk about unconditional love.**

When we feel true love, we love each other no matter what—both in good times and in hard times. Ask your child to think about some difficult situations they have faced, such as missing a friend, or not getting something they wanted. We can try to love ourselves and each other whether we are happy or sad, and be patient and forgiving even when someone makes a mistake. This is called unconditional love, because we love each other under all conditions. You can

extend this lesson by drawing pictures of many different conditions in life. For younger children this may mean different environments or weather conditions, such as rain, snow, deserts, or oceans.

### **8. Learn a sign that means “I love you.”**

The sign for “I love you” in American Sign Language is the pinky finger, index finger, and thumb pointed straight up (with the middle two fingers held down to the palm). Teach your child this sign or make up an original sign together for your own family to use to tell each other how much you love each other.

### **9. Play “Loving Actions.”**

Take turns coming up with creative ways to show love (such as greeting someone, opening the door for someone, kissing booboos, i.e. a sore finger, or offering a drink), which you can do as a game of silent charades. Basically this means you can act out your “Loving Action” without words so that the other people can guess what you are doing. You may like to use photographs to inspire ideas for showing love to different people, such as grandparents, friends, teachers, and strangers. Sometimes we show love to different people in different ways, and it is important to know the appropriate way for each person.

### **10. Make a card for someone you love.**

Ask your child who they would like to make a card for, and talk about why they chose that person. Is that person kind to them? Do they enjoy spending time with that person? Think about how that person makes you feel, and how we can try to display those same qualities to other people around us. Make a card for the person and arrange to get it to them by post or by dropping it off in person. ■

# Love in Action

NOTABLE  
QUOTES



Every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing.—**Mother Teresa**

Love is friendship that has caught fire. It is quiet understanding, mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving. It is loyalty through good and bad times. It settles for less than perfection and makes allowances for human weaknesses.—**Ann Landers**

Love is when the other person's happiness is more important than your own.—**H. Jackson Brown, Jr.**

Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage.—**Lao Tzu**

Friends show their love in times of trouble, not in happiness.—**Euripides**

Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend.—**Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Keep love in your heart. A life without it is like a sunless garden when the flowers are dead.—**Oscar Wilde**

The greatest healing therapy is friendship and love.—**Hubert H. Humphrey**

Spread love everywhere you go. Let no one ever come to you without leaving happier.—**Mother Teresa**

The greatest gift that you can give to others is the gift of unconditional love and acceptance.—**Brian Tracy**

When the power of love overcomes the love of power the world will know peace.—**Jimi Hendrix**

