

The Option Method Institute

Education based on the teachings of Bruce Di Marsico

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Loving has nothing to do with happiness, Part I

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I want to deal with this myth that love is somehow an absolute; that it is to be universally admired, that it is a universal goal, and that it is in any way, shape, or form equivalent to happiness. It's not. It's not something to be sought as a god, as if it were happiness. Love is not happiness. Happiness is not love . . . any more than lack of love is unhappiness. That is just what the world has believed. That's the closest they've gotten.

Throughout history, the way to be happy was to be good. The way to be happy was to be good. The goal was to be good, good, good, good, good. Then, after the Christian era, it became: “. . . to be good is to be loving, to be good is to be loving. Good and love. To be loving is good.” And then you can feel good about people.

I love whoever I choose to love, just like you do.

My point is, love is a mythological thing. Sometimes people call it an emotion. But the emotion of love is just feeling good. The feeling of being "loving" is like the feeling of being holy, or the feeling of being civilized, or the feeling of being noble, or the feeling of being an aristocrat. It is just feeling that you are being the way you should be, and you're really proud of it.

But love is like anything else. However you define it, you feel good if you get what you want. So if you're saying, "I want this person's love", and you get that person's love, then you feel good. If you feel that one of the ways of becoming a happy person is by being a loving person, then you can say, "I will be loving."

I know many people who try to justify every single thing they do as loving. No matter how obnoxious or stupid or ridiculous it is, they justify it as loving! They need to see themselves as loving; because that's the same as believing you are good. And then you have the right to be happy. If it wasn't loving, well then, maybe, I guess, I'd consider that I'm not happy. But I can justify everything I do as loving; if I give the drunk a drink, I'm loving, if I take the drink away from the drunk, I'm loving. You see, I got you either way. If I beat my children, I'm loving, if I don't beat my children, I'm loving. If I cheat on my wife, I'm seeking love, if I don't cheat on my wife, I'm giving her love. You screw it up everyway you want and you justify everything.

The point is, "Being Loving" is just another one of those characterological

goals that people set for themselves to consider themselves worthy human beings who deserve to be happy. Love is many, many things. It means many things in our language, but one of the most fundamental things, is "Being good to whom or for whom you choose". You love who you love--you are being good for them. I don't want to get into what "being good" means or what form that takes. But suffice to say, your loving somebody means you are desiring to be good to them. You want good things for them; you want to do good things to them. It starts in your mind as YOUR belief that they are good things. This is one of the problems.

If you are trying to make love a universal principle, you are not going to be able to do it, because what is a good thing? To give the drunk a drink or not to?

Participant: "If I want to be loving, then I want for you what you want."

Bruce: Why do you "want" to be loving? Don't you REALLY love anybody? Why do you have to "want" to be? Don't you love your husband? Don't you love your children? What do you mean you "want" to be? Wanting to be loving is making loving some kind of goal to be. If you want to be loving, consider that just the same as wanting to be well-dressed, and fashionable. Figure out what it is and do it. But it's got nothing to do with happiness.

I love everyone. But I don't believe I'm SUPPOSED to love anybody. As far as I'm concerned, anybody can be anything they want to be, and they can be happy, and I'd be perfectly glad if everyone was happy, and as far as I know, I'm the only one I know who is even capable of wanting everyone to be happy. To really want the son-of-a-bitches to be happy, the nasty people to be happy, the murderers to be happy--I want that. It's OK with me. I'm glad for that. If you want to define love that way, "that love is wanting people to be happy" then I love everybody.

But I don't have to do that. I don't even consider that a goal. I don't consider it worth talking about.

I don't want to deify "loving". I don't want to canonize it. I don't want to, I don't want to, I don't want to. I don't want it to be second on the list; I want it to be like ninth, tenth, or eleventh! I want good television programs to be second!

If you are not loving, that has nothing to do with you having a right to be happy or not. You can still be the happiest person in the world, if you love anybody, if you don't love anybody, or if anybody loves you or doesn't love you. It's not a notch on your gun, if somebody loves you.

Someone took a lecture of mine, "To Love is to be Happy" (and I had very definite reasons for putting it that way) and then made it into theology, and I want to poke holes in that. If you do what you do, you did what you did, why does it have to be called loving or not loving?

If a person believes that what they've done could be seen as mean or nasty, they may very well try to justify it as love. But I wouldn't believe that anything I did was mean or nasty. But I wouldn't necessarily call it loving. The reason I don't have to be mean and nasty is that there is no such thing. See, mean and nasty is another person feeling bad about what I've done, and they are calling it mean and nasty.

If you are starving, and you come to my door, and you say, "Would you please give me some bread?", and I give you a stone, I'm not mean and nasty. But I'm not loving. I don't believe I'm being mean and nasty, but I don't believe I'm being generous, I don't believe I'm being loving. And I don't believe that what I did, this person had to be unhappy about. Now, in fact, in the long run, if I was a Buddhist master, I could have a point of view that there is a great wisdom for them to see--I just enlightened them. You asked me for bread, and I gave you a stone--you don't see all the Truth in that?

Why do I have to judge every one of my actions...why SHOULD I judge every one of my actions as either fashionable or not fashionable, loving or not loving, cool or uncool, neurotic or non-neurotic . . . you name it, whatever has become the latest fad?