

## ‘Love Knows No Other’

When we talk about love, we commonly refer to love of or for a person, an animal or God. But that is a limited feeling arising in the context of a subject-object relationship – a feeling which can easily transmute into its opposite. Rupert’s definition of ‘love’ is very different:

Love is the name we give to Consciousness when it reawakens to its identity with all things, when it recognises itself *in* all things, *as* all things.

Love is the natural condition of Consciousness when it is knowingly one with all things.

It includes all things within itself and is itself the substance of all things.

[*The Transparency of Things: Knowing is Being is Loving*]

Most of us have had a glimpse of this, because when we fall in love, we experience a temporary collapse of the feeling of being separate from our partner. In some cases that spreads beyond that one relationship to a feeling of love for everyone and everything we encounter, for a brief while. That is a reflection in the body and mind of the ever-present, all-encompassing love to which Rupert is referring.

In traditional, progressive teachings, the path of love starts with a subject-object relationship – love for the guru, love of an external God, love of *Param-Atman* etc. As Rupert has explained, the hardest step on that type of progressive path, is the last step of letting go of the object of love. The Direct Path works differently. The path of Love, which follows on from the path of Discrimination (the *neti-neti* approach), starts with the dissolution of subject-object relationship through a deeper investigation of the body and the world. This is Rupert’s description of how this happens:

The outside object or world and the inside self cannot stand the scrutiny of this investigation and in time both will collapse. In this collapse the separate inside self dies and the separate outside world is dissolved, leaving only the raw intimacy of experience. This collapse *is* the transparent experience of peace, happiness, love, beauty or understanding.

What we call it depends usually on the nature of the experience prior to this collapse—whether it was precipitated by feeling, thinking or perceiving. If it was precipitated by feeling, it is known as love; if by thinking, understanding; and if by perceiving, beauty. All these words refer to the same essential transparent experience of our own presence.

Rupert goes on to explain how this understanding has been lost within contemporary culture and misconstrued within some non-dual teachings:

This understanding has been lost in our culture that has reduced peace, happiness, love, beauty or understanding to experiences within the realm of the body, mind and world, as they are normally conceived. It is similarly misunderstood in some expressions of contemporary non-duality that equate happiness and unhappiness, beauty and ugliness, peace and agitation, considering them simply pairs of opposites arising equally in awareness.

These teachings have reduced the living understanding of non-duality that is the source of all love, beauty and understanding to a politically correct system of equality and relativity. In this case the fierce clarity of understanding has been appropriated by ignorance. In other words, the separate inside self, which is created by the ignoring of the reality of our own being, has appropriated the true non-dual understanding and is using it as a means of validating and substantiating its own erroneous beliefs.

[*Presence Volume 1: Nature’s Mirror*]

Love is not something we can practise or cultivate. It is ever-present but sometimes veiled. It comes automatically into the foreground once we recognise our true nature:

The experience of Love is precisely this relaxation of Consciousness's exclusive identification with a separate body/mind and, as a result, the inevitable inclusion of the 'other', of all 'others', within itself.

For that reason Love is said and felt to be unconditional, uncaused, unmodified, universal. It has no opposite. It is inherent in our true nature.

[Rupert Spira: *The Transparency of Things*, The Ease of Being]

In fact, free of the limiting notions of being a separate entity, and the desires and fears that are required to maintain this position, life becomes free, alive and vibrant.

Relationships are relieved of the demand to produce love, and love shines in them naturally as a result.

[Rupert Spira: *The Transparency of Things*. Ego]

So what does this mean for our existing relationships? Does the word 'relationship' even have a meaning? Here is some practical advice:

Don't love anything or anyone. Don't think of love as something that you give or shine on a particular person. Think of love as just the field of your heart, which as your heart expands and opens, it includes more and more and more of your experience. So that in the end there's room for everyone and everything in it, including your deepest, darkest fears. Including everything. So don't feel 'I love a person'. Feel that this person comes within the field of love, and therefore is bathed in the love that I feel. But it's not specific to this person. I share it, celebrate it with this person, but it's not exclusive to this person – or animals or trees and so on.

[Rupert Spira, Buckland Hall, 6<sup>th</sup> May 2017: *Reality is Neither Something Nor Nothing*]

The following dialogue with Rupert explains what it really means to see everything and everyone as myself:

*Q: I feel my intimacy with myself, Sophie, is deeper than my intimacy with anything else. Is it possible to have the same intimacy with everything in our daily life?*

RS: No. Not only is it not possible to be intimate with everything, it's not possible to be intimate with anything or anyone. As long as there are 'things', as long as there are others, as long as there are objects, as long as you stand as a subject who is longing to be intimate with the object, that very relationship of subject and object is the denial of intimacy. There's no such thing as intimacy with a person. Forget about intimate relationships. Relationships are not intimate, if by 'relationship' we mean the relationship between myself and another. Don't look there for intimacy. There's no intimacy in a subject-object relationship. Subject-object relationship is duality. It is the absence of love or intimacy or oneness. So if you want intimacy, look for it in the only place it exists. You're looking for intimacy with objects – with things, with people. ...

*Q: Is it possible to live life without any identification with a character? As just activity, knowing modulating itself, losing the sense of I, Sophie.*

RS: No, keep the sense of I, Sophie, but make sure the sense of I, Sophie, refers to what I, Sophie really is.

*Q: Do we need to be able to make the same experience of I, this character, I this guy and I this woman? Like mind-perception – feeling, knowing equally?*

RS: You still have thoughts, you still have *your* unique thoughts. You can't know my thoughts. You can't know anybody else's thoughts. You have unique Sophie-thoughts, and unique Sophie-sensations. So in that sense, you are more intimate with your thoughts than with my thoughts. My thoughts don't appear in your experience, so it's not an issue. Don't expect to cease seeing experience from the point of view of Sophie. It's not *maya* that disappears, it's ignorance that disappears. It's not the illusion of the separate self that disappears, it's the ignorance that 'I am a separate self' that disappears.

Your experience will always seem to be perceived from the limited located point of view of your body. Mary always sees the streets of Paris through the agency of Jane. That continues. That doesn't stop. What stops is Jane's belief that 'I, the knowing with which I know my experience, am limited to this body'. That knowing, as it were, still comes through the agency of that body, but you just don't claim it. You know that what you essentially are, and more importantly you know the qualities of Mary's mind – its imperturbable peace, and unconditional fulfilment.

But you always see your experience through the eyes of Sophie, through the body-mind of Sophie. And that seems to give you a special relationship with Sophie, that you don't have with everyone and everything else. That's how it appears. And it's fine for it to appear like that. Don't expect that appearance to somehow magically go away. But don't try to find intimacy with another object or person. It's not possible for you, Sophie, the subject of experience, to be intimate with an object. True intimacy is the collapse of the subject and object. In other words, a relationship is never between two people. It's why Rumi said 'True lovers never really meet'.

Just try to lead your life without reference to a 'self centre'. Live your life mostly in sensing and perceiving, without a reference to 'a self' that is sensing or perceiving. Feel there is *just* sensing and perceiving. If there's thinking, those are like the sub-titles. OK, they are there sometimes. Turn them off from time to time because they are superimposed upon sensing and perceiving. Just live in sensing and perceiving – *as* sensing and perceiving. There's no subject that senses or perceives and there's no object that is sensed or perceived, unless you refer sensing and perceiving to a centre, in here. Then immediately the object or the other jumps out there. So just live your life without reference to a self, a person, a centre around who life revolves. It's just sensing and perceiving. There's no question of being more or less intimate with it because there's no individual self there to be either intimate or not intimate with it. There is just sensing and perceiving. And then when the subtitles, the captions are needed, they are available. But don't watch the subtitles at the expense of the movie. Watch the movie. The subtitles don't add much to it. Just live in sensing and perceiving, mainly.

[4<sup>th</sup> May 2017 Buckland Hall: *The Innate Welcoming of Awareness*]

When we look at all the troubles in the world, all caused by the veiling of love, we might wonder what we can do to help. This is Francis Lucille's answer.

Our true gift to the world is to be a source of love and clarity, and to recognize that to be this source one has to know oneself intimately. This doesn't seem to be an efficient approach, but it's actually the most efficient. [Francis Lucille, *Truth, Love Beauty: Deathless*]

## Contemplation

*Love is the dissolution of the 'I' that loves and the 'other' that is loved. It is the collapse of relatedness and the dawn of intimacy.* [Rupert Spira]