

LEARNING TO LOVE

Foundation for Consciousness Development

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- ✓ Context. What is the purpose of the human experience?
- ✓ Chapter 1. What does loving mean?
- ✓ Chapter 2. Learning to love as a couple
- ✓ Chapter 3. Love relationships
- ✓ Chapter 4. Learning to reach agreements
- ✓ Conclusions
- ✓ Training exercises

Context. What is the purpose of the human experience?

Before embarking on the next theme, we ought to outline a context that presents a new way of looking at life, a new paradigm; one that lets us be happier and understand human beings. You don't have to agree with everything that follows, or to believe anything, because we are not talking about beliefs. All you have to do is to see how your own life changes after applying this information, to see if it works for you.

If the results inside you are happiness, peace and harmony, you'll find this information to be true; and if the external results, in terms of relationships, health, resources and how you adapt to your environment improve, you'll verify that that this information is wisdom.

The purpose of human experience is to evolve, develop our own consciousness and so be filled with wisdom and love. Each and every one of us has come to this world to work on our spiritual development, sharing and participating in experiences with other human beings. Life is actually a process in which the Universe teaches us; planet Earth is a "spiritual school" and each life experience is like one academic year.

Spiritual development is an internal, and so absolutely individual and personal task. Nobody can do it for anyone else, yet nor can we do it "without another"; in other words, we need to interact and share experiences with other people in order to achieve our own development —to know ourselves—. Sometimes, instead of getting on with our own development, we try to interfere with other people's, and instead of learning from them we try to change them. All this does is to distort the learning, or attempt to distort it, and this complicates life itself.

Only if we understand this can we be efficient by asking ourselves what life wants to teach us in each situation, because each is part of a learning process. In short, we have to learn to turn ignorance into wisdom.

When we notice that suffering is disappearing, that our inner peace is becoming invulnerable and that our own capacity to create, love and serve is expressed without any condition or restriction, it means that we have achieved wisdom.

In order to lay the foundations for a new civilization that will bring a greater level of satisfaction for everyone, we must start by harmonizing ourselves. To do

this it is essential to study the Universal Laws and apply the principles that lead to wisdom. We should bear in mind that only by sustained practice and discarding theories and ideas that prove to be mistaken can we really achieve wisdom. This way we can develop peace and harmony directly on the ground, with the teaching of daily life, because life is the best school and nature the best teacher.

All we need to achieve efficiency is to stop arguing with the perfect order of the Universe; mental inefficiency is necessary in order to discover, through saturation, that the Laws of the Universe exist. When we reach the point where we have suffered enough, we are ready to understand the Laws. Internal opposition must stop before external opposition can, and for this to happen we have to have accepted that everything that exists and everything that happens is perfect and necessary, because its purpose is one of Love.

Studying and understanding why things exist and why they happen can lead us to recognize the Laws, which in turn make it possible to create a better future for Mankind.

There are seven Laws that govern all of the Universe's processes of creation, administration and evolution. Of the seven, four are fundamental, for they control the development and evolution of the consciousness of the human species anywhere in the Universe. These four Laws form the lower triangle of the Laws, while the Law of Evolution is the superior Law that governs the inferior triangle, which is also known as the *triangle of hell*, because it is the lowest part of the Universal Laws.

We will be within the Law when we love, enjoy and value what we have. Everything within the Law functions well and flows on its own.

Anything that brings suffering, anguish, pain and illness, happens because we are going against the Laws, and that is how we are going to recognize them. The results we obtain when we go outside the Laws enable us to recognize their existence. We have to make mistakes to be able to discover the Law. Mistakes are not the problem; the problem is not learning from them.

The Law is designed so that we ourselves make a change, not so that we try and change others.

As can be seen in the following tables, human experience is governed by four specific Laws.

LAW	POSTULATES	EFFECTS OF VIOLATING THE LAW
NATURE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All things that are complementary attract each other. 2. Every living being requires the specific food for its species. 3. Every manifestation of nature requires favorable conditions. 4. Every living being has an instinctive sense of the Law. 5. All cycles of nature have specific functions. 6. Every violation of the Law produces serious consequences. 7. Every living being has its function. 	<p>Physical ailments: undernourishment, illness, vices, degeneration, misery, hunger, physical and mental defects, physical malformations, ecological imbalance, erosion, plagues, shortening of longevity, etc.</p>

LAW	POSTULATES	EFFECTS OF VIOLATING THE LAW
HARMONY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Everything that is sent out acts, reacts and returns. 2. Everything that is attacked defends itself. 3. Everything that pleases is accepted. 4. Only love can transform beasts into persons. 5. Only understanding avoids destruction. 6. We must control situations, not be controlled by them. 7. The best teacher is learning by example. 	<p>Psychological ailments and relationship problems: distrust, fear, estrangement, isolation, individualism, loneliness, sadness, depression, fights, shyness, lack of communication, disunity, boundaries, traumas, complexes, etc.</p>

LAW	POSTULATES	EFFECTS OF VIOLATING THE LAW
CORRESPONDENCE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Every situation is a learning experience. 2. Every circumstance is generated by oneself. 3. All events happen to whom they are meant to happen. 4. We are always exactly where we are meant to be. 5. We come to life with what we need to live it. 6. Only what needs to happen, happens. 7. We only give or have what we need. 	<p>Upsets in the individual environment: mental blocks, dissatisfaction, difficulty in achieving success in what we do, wearisome battles against the circumstances of life, inability to accept one's life, fears, anxiousness, constant frustrations, etc.</p>

LAW	POSTULATES	EFFECTS OF VIOLATING THE LAW
EVOLUTION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Experience alone opens the way for understanding the truth. 2. Only opposites lead to the development of consciousness. 3. We only move up a level through the appropriate transformation. 4. We are only the result of ourselves. 5. We only argue with situations that we have not understood. 6. The need for understanding alone is the reason for physical existence. 7. We can only recognize balance from imbalance. 	<p>Social upsets: rebellion, anarchy or self-destruction, when limits are imposed on the experiences to be lived; wars, strikes, violence, revolutions, delinquency, hate, conflicts, when human concepts are imposed.</p>

In the tables above, the effects of violating the Law are listed on the right-hand side. In this discussion of the Laws of the Universe we will also find an explanation of the benefits of not violating the Law.

It is important not to confuse the Universal Laws with human laws or rules; the Universal Laws are immutable and non-repealable, their origin lies in the wisdom of the Absolute or Divinity and therefore they are absolute; they cannot be amended or negotiated, and disobeying them brings a negative outcome—in the sense of unpleasant—, and also a positive outcome—in the sense of it being a learning experience—. That is why it is said that in fact human beings do not construct laws, what we do is issue rules; we call them *human laws*, but they are rules, because they are repealable, transitory and useful for a given moment.

We have come to planet Earth to develop three inner virtues: Happiness, inner Peace, and Love or Service to others. This development brings with it excellent results in all four fields of: Relationships, Resources, Health, and Adaptation to the environment:



The idea is to use these virtues to interact with what is around us. To learn to be happy, to be peaceful, and to love is the true purpose that has brought human beings to the physical world of matter.

VIRTUES	CHARACTERISTICS	SCIENCE IN WHICH IT IS STUDIED	IT REPRESENTS OR IS DEVELOPED IN
Happiness	0% suffering 100% understanding 100% self-worth	Acceptance	Function
Peace	0% conflicts 0% reactivity 0% confrontation 100% respect	Accepting life with wisdom	Destiny
Love	100% capacity for service 0% resistance 0% fear 100% adaptation 100% commitment	Unconditionality	Mission

Happiness, peace and love are principles of the divine essence; they have no polarity, they are immutable.

Learning to **be happy**:

- ✓ To learn to be happy we have only to face up to all that we believe takes our happiness away.
- ✓ To be happy we do not need anything outside of us, just understanding and a certain attitude of mind.
- ✓ Non-acceptance is the only cause of suffering; we must stop arguing with reality.
- ✓ It is essential to stop working on others, and work only and exclusively on ourselves, changing what it is inside us that is annoying (the ego) so that it stops doing it.
- ✓ If there is suffering, then just one question needs to be asked: what is it that I am not accepting?; that is where the answer is to be found.
- ✓ Everyone, without exception, has what they need to be happy; however, very few people know how to be happy with what they have.

Learning to **be peaceful**:

- ✓ Nothing and no one brings peace.
- ✓ Inner peace is the result of one's own spiritual development, not a gift.
- ✓ Handling peace requires several elements: clear and accurate information to understand that life is a process of love and that evil does not exist, the skill to manage one's own vital energy, and training.
- ✓ If peace is lost, we must ask ourselves: "What am I resisting?; what do I want to change?; who am I blaming?"

Learning to **love one's neighbor as oneself**:

- ✓ All this requires is to be involved or share time with people whose behavior is very different to our own, to learn to love and respect them just as they are.
- ✓ Love cannot be offended, because it is invulnerable, immutable, universal and neutral.
- ✓ Love signifies total understanding of the Universe; it is a way of being and does not need an "object" on which to project itself.
- ✓ Love is not a force, it is a tool.
- ✓ Love is not a feeling.
- ✓ Love is always giving the best of oneself.
- ✓ If there is a lack of motivation the best thing is to wonder why I am allowing the specific situation to limit my capacity for service, which in reality should not depend on external events.

By developing the three inner virtues excellent outer results are obtained in all four spheres:

- ✓ In relationships.
- ✓ In resources.
- ✓ In health.
- ✓ In adapting to the environment.

In the life experience of any human being five elements are present: purpose, destiny, mission, function and intention.

1. Purpose

There is a purpose of love that brought us to the world of matter; it is the perfect objective of learning two things:

- a) To be happy within oneself, i.e. not to depend on anything or anyone in order to enjoy inner peace and happiness.
- b) To love one's neighbor as oneself, i.e. to respect the rights of all beings in the Universe.

And how do we learn this? Here we can see the perfection of the Absolute's pedagogical design. To perform the exercise of learning to be happy within ourselves we need to live in a place, with certain people and circumstances where everything that happens around us is more or less aggressive. In this way we will realize that our problem does not lie in what is happening around us, but in how we relate to it, and the rejection and resistance that we set in motion.

As for the second part, loving one's neighbor as oneself, this means respecting them just as they are, not seeking to change them, not putting up resistance to others. We need to live in a place where the people around us think differently, have varying customs, and create different things. That way, we will learn to love them as they are, without judging them or condemning them. This is how the purpose of love is fulfilled; it is the real reason why we human beings are here on planet Earth.

More than 2,000 years ago, the Master Jesus taught us this when he said: "Love your enemies"; they are not our enemies, they are people who think differently.

Being happy means experiencing zero suffering about what happens; and loving means offering zero resistance to others. Wisdom is the same as love, not feeling. Those who have love care deeply about others, but they do not suffer; however, those who possess goodness but not wisdom care deeply about others, but they suffer enormously. Those who do not care, the indolent, the indifferent, possess neither wisdom nor goodness.

2. Destiny

This is what we come to learn from the world of matter —how to manage the seven tools of love to attain invulnerable peace—; it is a great opportunity to learn what we are missing.

All of us bring to the world a destiny that is inevitable and highly valuable. Our culture teaches us to try and avoid destiny instead of showing us how to harness it. The key to harnessing destiny is: "You have the capacity to enjoy whatever you

do, because that capacity is within you". However, if someone says to their child: "You must always do what you like", this will generate a huge block in them.

Destiny is a pedagogical design whose purpose is to enable human beings to verify and discover information that governs the Universe and its perfect order. It is therefore the best opportunity for transcending all human limitations. Instead of complaining about the difficulties that we face in life, we must take advantage of them as a great opportunity for transcending them; then they will disappear for good. If we do not learn from difficulties, far from disappearing, they will become more complicated, they will persist and they will become permanent.

3. Mission

This is what we can teach in the world of matter. We should enjoy our mission intensely, whether or not it is part of our function.

Our mission enables us to recuperate a large amount of the vital energy invested in the exercise of learning to be happy. Our mission is what we already understand, what we already know; it can therefore be used to serve others while bringing enormous enjoyment.

Both our mission and our destiny are represented in our personality: the latter through our belief system and the former through understanding. As we progressively transmute our ignorance into understanding and wisdom, we will increasingly have a bigger mission and therefore more satisfaction.

4. Function

This is what each individual does to support themselves; it consists in putting all possible enthusiasm, joy and love into what one does, even if it is not part of one's mission.

We know that all living beings have a function within the order of the Universe. It takes wisdom to accept it with joy, enthusiasm, and total capacity for action and service. One's function does not consist in "earning one's living"; living is not "earned" because it is a divine gift. What one earns is what supports this biological entity, this body.

Thus, our support is guaranteed as a result of our function. Those who are happy and enjoy what they do will always have an abundance of resources at their disposal.

5. Intention

This is what we want for ourselves or for others. Intention must be directed in a way that does not interfere with the destinies of others nor seek to avoid our own destiny.

Intention is the most complex element for human beings today, because feelings, the idea of kindness and the other ideas that our culture has erroneously conveyed to us lead us continually to try and interfere in the destinies of others. If we were to accept that destiny is something extraordinary and not "bad", that it is the best opportunity we have to fulfill what we came to the world to do, we would stop trying to change the destiny of others.

When a son or daughter wants to fly the nest and their parents object to it, how should we act so as not to interfere? We always want things to go our way. In this case, the parents consider that it is not the right moment for their son or daughter because they do not have a steady job, for example, and they do not want them to leave home. The "I want's" are the cause of suffering. An "I want" is also unconscious selfishness because we want others to be happy doing what we want them to do.

What would be the wise and loving thing to do in this case? To say to the son or daughter: "The most important thing for us is for you to be happy and find your way, and we therefore respect your decision. We want you to know that if you want to come back the door will always be open."

In short, wisdom means being clear about our purpose, taking advantage of our destiny, enjoying our mission, accepting the function and holding the intention of not interfering in the destiny of others. All this must be practiced in thought, word and deed.

Chapter 1. What does loving mean?

If we want to learn how to love, first we need to know what we are talking about and clarify what it really means, so as to start from a common basis. When we talk about **love**, we think that we are all referring to the same thing, but it's easy to realize that each of us understands something different. So it is best if we agree on what love means, so that we do not mistake it for *fondness*, *affection*, *desire*, or *physical attraction*.

In the following pages we will describe the *characteristics of love* and we will also recognize *what is not love*.

Love is not something that arises spontaneously, rather it is an inner virtue that we must work on and develop. Once a person is filled with happiness and peace, then they are in a position to practice loving others as themselves; because if they do not love themselves, then what can they offer others?

Learn to love by loving yourself.

Love means *total freedom to express peace and harmony* to all around us. If that is not what is happening, it will be easily recognized that though that person may express other normal human characteristics, they have not yet attained love.

Love can also be defined as the *ability to have excellent relationships that benefit all those involved*; it means zero resistance to others, because love cannot oppose anything. If there is opposition, it is because resistance is being offered to something that is not understood, and love is absolute understanding.

Love is universal.

Universal and unconditional, we might add. It can be compared to the sun: when the sun shines, it shines on everyone, it does not decide to shine on one person and not on another. Extrapolating this to human beings, if we are not able to treat others the same way as we treat our "loved ones", then we are not truly loving. Our **beloved ones** are everyone, whereas our **loved ones** are those with whom we have established specific agreements, which are the only thing that make it possible to distinguish between one relationship and another. In short, if love is not universal then it is not love, it is sentiment, fondness, attachment ...

Following along this line, if there is a conditioning factor such as "I have to ...", then we are not talking about love, because love means absolute freedom, without any obligation. We are as free to share as we are to move away.

The table below clarifies a number of ideas connected with love.

Table 1. Human qualities related with the Law of Love

	Human qualities related with the Law of Love
Mastery	Everything is going well and we live in constant peace
Wisdom	Others ask us for advice and guidance
Love	We are loved unconditionally
Understanding	People gravitate towards us and want to share with us
Faith	Nothing is feared
Acceptance	Life gives us everything without us having to look for it
Happiness	We feel fortunate with what we have
Mission	We discover what we do best and what we like the most
Appreciation	We give thanks for learning opportunities
Strength	When acting from a place of love rather than a place of feeling
Charity	Our own guidance or advice is useful for our neighbor
Compassion	We understand the cause of suffering

Love is like water.

This is a beautiful simile: water adapts to all forms, and does so perfectly. What is it that cannot adapt to a form? Something that is rigid, that does not move, that is unable to change; that is, someone who cannot develop their spirituality, because the concepts become rigid and inflexible for them. We call these individuals "post people".

The outcome for a "post person" will always be suffering and dissatisfaction, because to find satisfaction they would need to be in relationship with people who are flexible, adaptable, loving, understanding, full of peace and harmony, and by being such a rigid kind of "post", this is not possible for them.

What love is not:

Loving does not mean *I like*; that is just *attraction*.

Loving does not mean *I desire*; that is just *satisfaction*.

Loving does not mean *kindness*; that is just *sentiment*

Loving does not mean *joining together*; that is just *an agreement*.

Loving does not mean *friendship*; that is just *sharing*.

Love is being happy with the other's happiness.

Loving is accepting the other person as they are, without wanting to change them. In a couple relationship, if both members are happy with the happiness of the other, then everything else takes second place.

A Master totally accepts others as they are, however they are in their experience at that moment, and loves them equally whatever they do or say. This is the true nature of the expression of love.

Yet that is not what ordinary human beings do; instead we judge, interpret, criticize and condemn those who do not behave the way we want, those who do not do things the way we like or think they should be done. When someone goes outside the parameter that someone else considers "normal", they immediately earn all kinds of criticism, attack or condemnation. And why do we do this? Solely through ignorance.

Filling oneself with love means leaving sentiment aside, respecting the experience of the other person, giving them freedom to experience, and not taking responsibility for the results of the decisions of others.

Love is neutral.

Love has no duality, it is like peace, neutral. Regardless of whether someone does something we find unpleasant, if we love them we do not stop loving them as a result, because we accept them as they are. The neutrality of love means loving

equally the ignorant and the wise, those who are immersed in darkness and those who are full of light. In fact, love is closer to someone who is in darkness, because from the point of view of love they are more in need of support.

Loving involves neutralizing the positive or negative charges at a point where it is understood that all is necessary in order to learn to be happy. And this is apparent in our ability to take pleasure, enjoy, take delight in every instant of life and in every relationship that we have.

Love is not a feeling.

There are huge differences between love and sentiment. Thus, *sentiment* is not reliable, because of its duality. *Fondness*, for example, is a sentiment, and is seen to be dual because we shift from fondness to hate when the external situation changes. Sentiment is useful for coming to know ourselves, but it should not be used to establish relationships. Fondness comes to an end, whereas love is infinite.

Moreover, sentiment can be negative, but love never is. It is possible for sentiment to be variable, because it has its origin in inner feelings of pleasure or displeasure, but this does not happen with love, in which everything can be reconcilable.

In addition, love is expressed universally: towards any species, any situation, because with love we can always respect and understand any being or event. However, sentiment is specific and individual.

Loving is enjoying everything we do.

The frequent claim that love hurts is not true; we cannot suffer from love, we only suffer due to personality, ego, sentiment, ignorance. Love brings constant enjoyment; however, sentiment is polarized from positive to negative in the face of external effects that we are not able to manage. Therefore, if we are suffering, it means there is neither love nor understanding. However, we should not worry about this, because it is a normal process. We are on the right track. What interests us then is building loving relationships so that they are constant and stable.

In comparison with the elevation of spiritual development, feelings are something totally primitive, basic, and elementary. As we come closer to love, we no longer need them. It is like a baby that crawls: once it has learned to walk it

would be absurd if it went back to crawling. Love can direct sentiment, thought, emotion, actions and decisions, if we learn how to recognize it and use it.

1.1 Handling feelings and emotions

Knowing how to handle feelings and emotions is essential for maintaining a good relationship, since it is amazing how easily they can veer from positive to negative in the face of any disagreement, upset or situation of attack, however small it may be, and thereby seriously jeopardize the relationship. When we notice that our feelings have turned negative, before saying or doing anything at all we must change that polarity by doing the following: we must remember all of the qualities and happy times we have had with our partner and, then when we have gone back to feeling all right, we should healthily express our need to establish an agreement on the matter at hand.

As for negative emotions, it is necessary to externalize them, but never against anyone, as they are tremendously harmful for the relationship. The best thing is to go somewhere where one is alone and can discharge them by running, beating the ground, shouting or weeping.

It is not healthy to repress our emotions, be they positive or negative; the appropriate thing is to let them flow. If the emotions that arise come from positive stimuli, they are extraordinary for relationships; but if they are negative, the result of the instinctive defense mechanism, we must remove ourselves from others in order to discharge them. One of the biggest mistakes that has been transmitted to us culturally is that we need to learn to control and repress our emotions. This is not so, because if we do we poison ourselves and we somatize a variety of illnesses. Emotions must be channeled, we must allow them to express, to flow, but always in an appropriate manner and in the right place.

*We must not stop ourselves from feeling,
we must learn to decide what to do with what we feel.*

The best procedure for healing a relationship or healing ourselves is to first discharge our emotions and then change the polarity of the negative feeling through thought; that is, mentally reprogram what is positive.

You may ask how you can manage the negative emotions and feelings that arise as a result of some of the behavior of your partner or other people close to you. The answer to this question is as follows:

First of all, to **manage our emotions** we will use the "wailing wall", which enables us to discharge the adrenaline that is circulating in our blood without harming anyone.

Emotions arise from our instinct. Other people are not to blame when we feel bad; therefore, if something triggers negative emotions we must move away from it, and release those emotions by "burning" adrenaline through physical exercise, weeping, shouting ... And so as not to damage our relationships with other people it is important to do this, as we said earlier, somewhere where we can be alone, if possible out in nature —among the rocks, in the forest, or where there is calm water, such as a river or the sea—.

Apart from that, to **manage our feelings** we will use the *changing polarity* technique. Feelings arise from the mind, beliefs, personality. We each provide our mind with information through our thoughts. This means that if we remember a wonderful time with our partner —or with anyone else with whom we have a conflict— this will generate a pleasant feeling of warmth and happiness. However, if we bring to mind a painful memory, the feeling will immediately be otherwise. The only method for rebuilding feelings is the *recognition of values*.

This re-polarizing exercise is useful for couples who are reconciling differences and want to rebuild their relationship, not for those that have already broken up or separated. If our case is the latter, the best thing is not to think about our ex-partner, but just to wish them the best and for each of us to continue on our way, because to go back to brooding about them is not healthy. Thinking about how bad the relationship or that person was only fill us with resentment and hurt, making it much harder to start new relationships and damaging our health. And if we think about situations that were pleasant, our sense of frustration will be enormous when we realize that they no longer exist.

Everything that is pleasant for the body and causes it pleasure, triggers happiness hormones (endorphins) and other neurotransmitters, such as dopamine and serotonin. This strengthens the immune system, improves our health in all respects, and generates a sense of closeness, integration and pleasure, which is why endorphins are so beneficial. But we should bear in mind that they are generated in response to a trigger. However, aggressiveness generates adrenaline

which in turn produces stress and the secretion of ageing, deterioration, somatization and aggression hormones.

These are automatic mechanisms of human beings and how they are triggered so that the resulting emotions are positive or destructive, is up to us.

At this point, a misconception about crying needs to be clarified; it is usually given a negative connotation, one of sadness, but there are also tears of joy that are the result of emotions that are generated by a pleasant stimulus.

1.2 The understanding of Love

Wisdom = Understanding of Love = Truth.

The reason why someone does or does not do something may be completely different depending on whether they are ignorant or wise. On the outside there may appear to be no difference, but on the inside, decisions taken from the *understanding* of love free that person from suffering and lead them to a state of total inner peace, whereas decisions taken from ignorance, even without blaming anyone for them, do not generate peace; it may be that the person accepts their responsibility and their mistake, but even so they are not at peace.

Someone who is full of love will never have to do anything that violates someone else's rights. So out of *wisdom* it is impossible for anyone to steal. It is like Robin Hood: he had a justification in his mind, but his actions nevertheless were absolutely ignorant, because they violated the Law of Correspondence.

Truth cannot be taught; absolutely everything we learn needs to be verified through our own experience in order to turn it into understanding, or to modify it if it is not the truth. A Master knows that the truth cannot be taught, it can only be discovered, experienced. A Master will give us information so that we discover the truth for ourselves, tools so that we reach understanding.

So in order to reach the understanding of love first we learn and then we practice what we have learned. Learning is related to receiving knowledge and paying attention to everything that happens around us. Practice is related to applying knowledge, it is a training; and understanding is verifying the knowledge through practice, through inner and outer results. Therefore, learning is a step towards understanding.

Love is the verification of understanding

Filling ourselves with beliefs is inevitable, what is important is that at least they be flexible; this will enable us, after verification, to discard them if they are false and to consolidate them if they are true.

In other words, if we want to move from innocence to wisdom, we cannot avoid passing through ignorance (mental pollution). The exercises for clearing ignorance and developing the true capacity for loving occur when we consciously decide to change our attitudes and learned behaviors for others of love; and these are recognized by the outcome that we obtain in life.

Table 2. Attitudes of Love and their outcome

Attitudes of Love and outcome	
Every expression of tenderness can open the heart
Every expression of art can be admired
Everything that is understood can produce peace
Everything that is free can come to oneself
Everything that is accepted can generate happiness
Every appreciation can bring satisfaction
Everything that is beloved can always be with oneself

So let's stop using learned attitudes of selfishness, and train ourselves instead in positive attitudes of love. This is an ongoing task in which we strive to express love above all else.

But how can we clear that *mental pollution*? With the seven tools of love; by using them ignorance begins to disappear.

Table 3. The seven tools of love

Tools of love	Explanation	Letting go ...
Accepting	We accept that the Absolute/Father's purpose is perfect and that everything that happens is neutral and necessary.	... of trying to change others. Of getting involved in conflict and trying to change the perfect order of the Universe.
Acting	We act with total efficiency and calmness in any circumstance that arises, giving the best of ourselves. Doing is the key to having.	... of attacking anything or anyone in thought, word and deed. We will remain absolutely firm and loyal to the agreements and commitments that we freely establish.
Adapting	... to the place where we are meant to carry out functions to achieve a life filled with satisfactions.	... of fleeing from where we are and the situations we have to experience. Believing that happiness is outside: it is a false illusion.
Thanking	We are grateful for all that we have and all the difficult and painful situations, because they are opportunities that life gives us to learn and undertake our spiritual development.	... of suffering with difficulties, by understanding that they have a deep purpose of love for us to recognize the Law and free ourselves from suffering.
Accepting	... the outcome of our own decisions and experience of life. We are responsible for generating our thoughts, feelings and emotions, they are not the result of what happens around us or of what others think, say or do.	... of blaming anything or anyone for what happens to us. There is no one to blame.
Respecting	We respect everyone in their ideas, customs, and behaviors as well as their right to take their own decisions.	... of criticizing, judging, condemning and punishing anyone for any reason, because we understand that each individual is doing the best they can.
Valuing	... and enjoying immensely all that we have and all that we do. We always have what we need.	... of complaining about what we have. Prosperity is the result of valuing.

Working consistently with the seven tools of love provides us with the training to be able to live in a higher civilization.

On the other hand, taking love away from our own lives is an unconscious procedure which has become a habit for us as a result of an "education" based on imposition, lack of support, lack of understanding of "mistakes" and poor communication. The *Learning to have peace* theme includes there is a table with examples of both aggressive and loving communication. You are recommended to read and practice it.

If we become involved in frequent arguments and different forms of attack, defending what we believe, and not the truth, all we will achieve will be to damage our relationships and constantly take love from our lives.

Table 4. The "tools" that take love away

Tools that take love away
Aggression
Selfishness
Interfering in the experience of others
Invalidation
Imposition
Judge, criticize
Possessiveness
Prohibition
Sincerity

Love involves a deep understanding of the need and value of an event, whereby it becomes part of a perfect process. Developing love is developing the inner understanding that leads us to a profound acceptance of the order of the Universe, the inner results of which are peace and happiness.

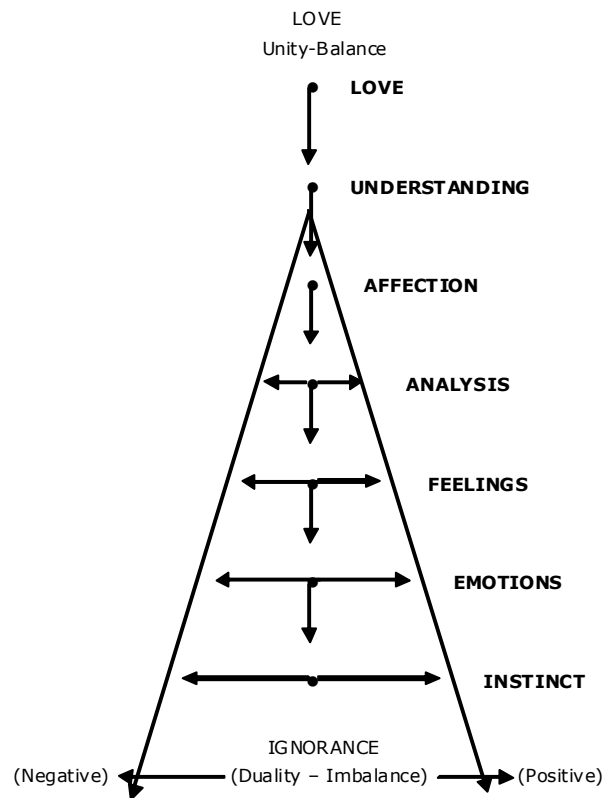


Figure 1. The point of love acting on the lower centers

Love is the higher center of understanding, balance and neutrality. The lower centers are activated with its energy, and this harmonizes and neutralizes their duality, allowing the qualities of love to be expressed through the characteristics of each one. The diagram above shows how the neutralizing action of love on the lower centers takes place along the central line of balance.

On the higher levels of this pyramid, there is increasingly less chance of lateral oscillation; finally, on the level of affection there is no oscillation at all, that is to

say, there is no negative, or even positive affection; this is simply an energy of similar characteristics to those of love, i.e., neutral.

However, unlike love, affection is directed only at certain people or other living beings, it is not universal. In order for the energy of affection to occur and be expressed, there must be a sense of harmony, empathy, friendship or liking; otherwise, affection does not arise.

When *affection* is active in a human being, it generates peace, inner security, self-worth, mental balance, capacity for integration, enthusiasm, the wish to share and the strengthening of friendship and other relationships by stimulating the development of feelings that can express love. However, when there is a lack of affection, people fall into states of apathy, sadness, mental imbalance and neurotic tendencies. Often the need to socialize has its origin in the lack of affection, for just being within 70 cm of another person makes us share their *auric field*, through which affection is transmitted. That is why it is not good for human beings to be alone too long, because before long they will begin to manifest the symptoms of lack of affection.

Table 5. Positive and negative emotions and attitudes generated by feelings

Feelings that originate from:	Positive emotions and attitudes: they generate satisfaction	Negative emotions and attitudes: they generate dissatisfaction
1. Instinct	Pleasure	Rejection
2. Emotions	Joy	Sadness
3. Personality	Fondness	Hate
4. Affection	Consent & Pamper	None
5. Love	Share & Integrate	None

1.3 Differences between fondness and love

Fondness is associated with feelings, these in turn are associated with beliefs, and beliefs lie in the mind. Fondness easily comes to an end as soon as a disagreeable or contentious situation arises for someone.

Sometimes feelings are hurt and this hurt cancels out the fondness, but where there is love it is always possible to rebuild the feelings and stabilize the relationship. This is so because love understands that a mistake is always a chance to learn, and getting something right is always a chance to verify.

Just as the duality of belief comes down to "right" versus "wrong", the duality of sentiment can be defined as "today I love you, tomorrow I hate you".

Table 6. Fondness and love. Differences

Characteristics of fondness	Characteristics of love
It has duality.	It has no duality.
It's temporary.	It's permanent.
It's variable, because it judges.	It's stable, because it does not judge.
It's associated with the mental field, with what one believes.	It's associated with the spiritual field, with one's understanding.
It's possessive, exclusive, limiting, and selfish. Imposes and forbids. It demands, does not propose, does not reach agreements (it demands them), blames others or itself. Suffers.	It's liberating, does not impose and reaches agreements. Unlimited, universal, helpful. Conciliatory, it does not demand, it commits itself. It does not blame, it's grateful. It doesn't suffer, it enjoys experience. It's not selfish, but accepting.

1.4 What is the purpose of love?

Love is totally neutral, and the fundamental basis of the Universe. Its main uses are:

- ✓ Understanding, accepting and respecting every living being.
- ✓ Respecting the concepts, ideas, customs and experiences of others.
- ✓ Recognizing the value of all beings and things.
- ✓ Changing the polarity of negative feelings.
- ✓ Laying the foundations for building relationships that are always satisfying.
- ✓ Sustaining harmonious and united family units.
- ✓ Supporting the development of a healthy society that can live in peace and harmony.

1.5 What is the purpose of affection?

Affection has no negative polarity either, but it is not universal. It is useful for:

- ✓ Nurturing and stimulating feelings that can express love.
- ✓ Strengthening and improving relationships and friendship.
- ✓ Developing the capacity to integrate and understand others.
- ✓ Stimulating enthusiasm and the desire to share, which are nutrients.
- ✓ Nourishing the mental center and sensitivity to love.
- ✓ Helping all beings to give the best of themselves.

1.6 What is the purpose of feelings?

Feelings can be hurt, are sensitive and a tool for self-knowledge —if someone feels happy, they know their virtues; if they feel unhappy, they know their

limitations—. If we try and prevent the suffering of others, what we are actually doing is hindering their spiritual development. Therefore feelings are useful for:

- ✓ Being aware of the conditions of our inner world.
- ✓ Creating sensitivity and the strength of doing.
- ✓ Supporting or preventing the learning of others.
- ✓ Building or destroying relationships.
- ✓ Generating or inhibiting the desire to share life and sexuality.

1.7 What is the purpose of emotions?

In turn, *emotions* are useful for:

- ✓ Discharging accumulated inner tensions.
- ✓ Generating well-being and supporting the development of relationships — when they are constructive—.
- ✓ Damaging relationships and distancing people —when they are destructive—.
- ✓ Encouraging or inhibiting enthusiasm for living life.

1.8 What is the purpose of instinct?

Lastly, *instinct* is useful for:

- ✓ Recognizing the genetic complement.
- ✓ Identifying what is necessary for staying alive.
- ✓ Defending existence in states of ignorance.
- ✓ Maintaining aggression in relationships.
- ✓ Running away from learning situations.

Once we understand the order of the Universe and we know that there is no need to defend anything, the instinct for survival is no longer necessary.

1.9 Love is a decision

All human beings, from their individual experience, aspire to live in a better world. In order to do so, they have to start right now to fertilize their mind with the seed of love and wisdom, which will grow within them making them correspondent with an extraordinary future. The fact is that the marvelous world we dream of already exists, we just need to make ourselves a match for it, by replacing our aggressive thoughts, communication and actions with loving thoughts, communication and actions. Love is an individual decision.

The seeds of the future are installed in the mind of the present through *loving thinking* —these are thoughts of a high level of personal satisfaction, and of respect and understanding for the experience of others—. Loving thinking creates within an individual the characteristics of affinity in attitude and behavior, which will ultimately make them correspondent with a world of love.

The whole process follows a perfect sequence: it begins with a thought; for that thought to be one of love, and rather than originating from ignorance, we need to turn to our own mental file of understanding —that is, the spiritual part of love that is conscious in each of us, and developed to a greater or lesser extent—, and generate the thought from there. If we sustain it, this thought begins to update the mind with the principle of love, and as a result it generates the attitudes and external behaviors that give rise to the following steps: updating of the mental field, rise in vital energy, verification of a new inner sense, projection of a new behavior and observation of a new result. While this exercise is under way, life, in its pedagogical process, tells us: "You're doing an excellent job, but we're going to see whether you've now developed sufficient understanding and inner strength, by testing you." This generates a situation in the physical world so that we can verify whether we have actually successfully reprogrammed our mind. If it has not been thorough enough, when put to the test we will once again experience suffering, rejection, the desire for vengeance or justice; to a lesser extent, indeed, but we have not yet passed the test. This means we must return to the starting point, go back to the thought and keep working on the thought of love.

The mental field can only be reprogrammed from the understanding of love. We need to repeat the following sentence in our thoughts hundreds of times: "Everyone always does the best they know how to and the best they can". That

way our minds will not believe there is malice, or anyone to blame, or that justice must be done or someone must be punished.

When we have thought often enough that everyone always does the best they know how to and with the best of intentions, but they are entitled to make mistakes, the time comes for the test: we find ourselves, for example, in the presence of someone who is making a big mistake and inside we are thinking: "This person is doing the best they know how to and they deserve my love and respect; I'm not going to judge them, because they're entitled to make mistakes; I'm willing to serve them." That is when we know that we have passed the test.

Once we have the wisdom-related information, all we need is training. We will only learn to love through a profound inner transformation that will make us enjoy each moment of our lives. This is a conscious, not an automatic, gathering of information. When we open up our minds to this new information we begin to experience other ways of relating, of living together, of sharing with the other beings in the Universe, and we become aware of the immense resources that exist and the infinite possibilities of development that human beings have.

Once someone has become saturated with suffering and the processes of breakdown, and they take the decision to intentionally give up once and for all any aggression in thought, word and deed, they also stop:

- ✓ Blaming anyone or anything for how they feel or for what happens to them.
- ✓ Hurting themselves with their interpretations of reality.
- ✓ Running away from commitment.
- ✓ Wanting, and they are willing to do and serve unconditionally.
- ✓ Suffering over circumstances that they cannot change.
- ✓ Defending any cause, however worthy it may seem.
- ✓ Imposing their reasoning on anyone.
- ✓ Forbidding anyone from doing anything.
- ✓ Arguing with external circumstances.
- ✓ Depending on anything or anyone to be happy.

- ✓ Believing that they are the owner of something or someone.
- ✓ Trying to limit or control others.
- ✓ Attacking in thought, word and/or deed.
- ✓ Trying to interfere in the other people's destinies.
- ✓ Blaming themselves for their mistakes.
- ✓ Trying to change others.
- ✓ Being afraid of anything.
- ✓ Putting limits on loving and serving.
- ✓ Being attached to anything or anyone.

Instead, they begin to:

- ✓ Increase their vital energy.
- ✓ Have greater mental clarity.
- ✓ Improve their capacity for perception.
- ✓ Experience more joy, optimism and enthusiasm for life.
- ✓ Feel able to enjoy every instant and each experience of life.
- ✓ Understand the need for peaceful and harmonious coexistence that is respectful of all the beings in the Universe.
- ✓ Have more prosperity.
- ✓ Improve their relationships, their health, abundance, happiness and satisfaction in all that they do.
- ✓ Perceive a profound sense of peace inside them.
- ✓ Feel that their capacity for loving and serving is expanding.
- ✓ See the possibility of accessing other higher technologies.

The best place where we can learn to love is planet Earth; because so many things happen around us, at such an impressive speed, that at every second we have a new opportunity for loving, for understanding that there is no one to blame and there is no malice, and that the more mistaken someone is the more information they need, and the more they need to be loved and respected.

We cannot love according to our likings, beliefs, concepts, ideas or feelings; we need to love from understanding, acceptance and the tools of love. Unless we "switch to love", our relationships will be catastrophic.

For a better understanding of what love is, we will place it in the spiritual file, within the triple structure of a human being: the *genetic file* (body) is governed by the laws of nature, the expression of which is emotion; the *mental file* is governed by the intellectual information of the culture, the expression of which is sentiment —i.e., fondness, beliefs ...—; and the *spiritual file* is made up of the recognition of the truth and of the Laws of the Universe, and its expression is love.

Chapter 2. Learning to love as a couple

To pair or to couple means to place on the same level, to mutually complement. To put it another way, it is to be willing to smooth any differences there may be in order to have an excellent relationship. If the scales are not level, it is because there is more weight on one side than on the other, which means that we need to balance the loads and concepts.

To be a couple means to be on an equal footing, and this involves compromising—in an ideal manner for both parties—and learning to build agreements. Otherwise, the relationship will be a family or business partnership, but not a couple. Some couples prefer to put up with each other instead of breaking up because they share financial or social interests; others ultimately cannot stand each other and do break up. There are in fact very few relationships that can truly be called *couples*.

As we become able to build harmonious couples we will be able to begin to have harmonious families, and from there build a peaceful civilization and society. The individuals who can sustain a new society develop in a harmonious social unit.

2.1 The functions of coupledness

Coupledness as an institution has the following main functions:

1. *To establish the basis of family union that leads to harmony in the social unit.* A united and harmonious social unit is the basis of a healthy society, because by its example it facilitates the integration and collaboration of other people and can generate healthy and emotionally balanced individuals who contribute to the development of a new society.
2. *To create relationships that facilitate the expression of love.* Generating love-based relationships enables a couple to find mutual satisfaction in all family areas, learn to live together peacefully and guide their children within a social setting of harmonious growth. This is achieved through the tools of love, and also with good spiritual development and sufficient understanding of the Laws of the Universe and of Life, that assist us in improving our human condition.

3. *To share and give each other mutual support in all life's circumstances.* This decision is the joining that enables the couple to plan for the future with the objective of sharing a common destiny that will become a mission, with a shared life purpose.

When they join, individuals do not share just the satisfactory situations, but the difficulties as well. It is at times like this that the family needs to give support the member who has problems. They must be willing to give support and look for solutions, not for someone to blame, nor must they criticize or attack.

4. *To grow together.* To grow spiritually is merely to broaden our understanding and learn to manage situations with greater wisdom, without suffering, fighting or blaming. Growing is one of the functions of coupledness because by doing so we learn adaptation, flexibility, the ability to compromise, appreciation, conciliation, support ... When we grow, life begins to be very satisfactory because conflicts disappear.

5. *To have children consciously.* When a couple consciously decide to take on the responsibility of bringing children into the world. Procreation is not a result of marriage, it is a conscious act of love that brings great happiness to the family unit.

In the same way as we prepare for an exam, a competition or an interview, it is very advisable that a couple prepare themselves to have a child, and to mutually agree on when is the right time; it is essential to prepare for the marvelous event of parenthood, so that everything is in harmony.

6. *To support the education of their children and the integration of the family.* To support the development and harmonious upbringing of the children from the understanding of love facilitates the integration of the family group, as part of a process of mutual growth that ensures the future stability of the social unit. The objective is that the children grow up healthy and can join society as individuals that make contributions, that are builders and not destroyers of society.

2.2 What is the purpose of coupledness?

The main one is to have more than an individual can have on their own, i.e., to become stronger. To have greater harmony and balance, to enjoy a life situation that is more satisfactory than being alone, to improve one's individual conditions by joining together with another person. This is the purpose, but it is not usually the result.

We do not achieve that result because we were "sold" the untrue idea that we would find someone who would make us happy. The fact is that if we expect another person to come into our lives to behave the way we want, so that we feel happy, that is not love, that is selfishness. We can find happiness within ourselves and learn to share it with other people, because happiness is an inner condition of human beings.

So the first thing we must measure when thinking about forming a couple is our level of happiness. If it is 50%, we will have good chances, because we can use that percentage, which is stronger than that of suffering; but if our own level of happiness is low and our level of suffering is very high, what we will share with the other person is suffering, limitations, attack, all the elements that wear down a relationship. So it is better for someone like that to have a relationship but not to marry, because if they do, the conflict will be very great. *Couples are few, but there are many marriages.*

If we want to succeed in all human relationships, including coupledness, we need to work on the three inner virtues: *happiness, peace* and *love*. A human being's outer success stems from inner development, not the other way round.

We can perform our own personal assessment to recognize the capacity for loving that we have within us. So, *if I'm willing ...*

- ✓ ... to accept, to compromise and be flexible, it is because I possess the virtue of **happiness**.
- ✓ ... to respect, not to attack or be upset by the mistakes that people make around me or with me, I possess the virtue of **inner peace**.
- ✓ ... to commit to the agreements that I make and to serve although there may be difficulties, I possess the virtue of **love**.

2.3 What do we need to know before we form a couple?

In order to know that we are in a good position to form a couple with someone else, first of all we need to know that our differences are actually reconcilable, and that we cannot look for happiness in anyone else; also that a couple relationship is built at a mental, not physical level; and that falling in love is not an indicator of compatibility for relationships, but is the best way to make a mistake. This is because falling in love comes from instinct, although it later encompasses feelings and affections, and instinct is not able to recognize the mental field or personality, only the genetic compatibility for procreation.

It has been scientifically proven that falling in love generates the "happiness hormone" phenethylamine (PEA), as well as the neurotransmitters mentioned before. This hormone hinders us from analyzing the other person in greater depth and makes it impossible to see if the two individuals are mentally compatible. Physical attraction does not mean that there is compatibility in other areas that actually complement and sustain a stable relationship with a high level of satisfaction. A harmonious couple relationship is built on mental compatibility.

2.4 How do we learn to live as a couple?

By using the tools of love. And also by knowing that men and women are complementary opposites, that is, that the feminine structure is receptive and the masculine is transmissive; they can complement each other harmoniously if their mental fields are harmonious. Adaptation and flexibility are necessary.

2.4.1 How do we manage a couple relationship harmoniously?

Achieving proper stability in a couple involves at least the following five steps:

1. *Reframing the meaning of love.* This involves being very clear about what love is, because the success of the relationship is going to depend on our inner level of love. Are we willing to accept others or would we rather fight with them? Are we capable of maintaining our peace? Are we willing to apply the principles of freedom, support, trust, respect, tenderness and service to the relationship?

We need to let go of trying to change others. Each of us has the inner capacity for self-transformation, but choosing this option must be an individual decision. Wanting to change someone else so that we feel good is a characteristic of egoism, and clearly leads to conflict.

If we do not accept the other person as they are or there is no compatibility in aspects that are very important to us, the couple relationship is meaningless.

2. *Mutual recognition of like-minded and complementary values.* This provides the foundation for building an excellent couple relationship, and should always come before falling in love. It is a question of observing compatibilities: for example, if someone is very much in love but does not admire the other person's values, the being in love will disappear very soon. However, even without feeling intensely in love, an excellent relationship can be built if there is mutual admiration.

Physical compatibility can be recognized through falling in love, but this does not guarantee that the relationship will work. It is necessary to learn to direct both the physical file —i.e., the emotions— and the mental file —feelings and beliefs— from love. We have a right to feel and experience, the problem is not with what we feel or what we think, but with what we do with what we feel and think.

*Instinct works by stimulation,
the mind by information and
the spirit by verification (understanding).*

Mental compatibility can be recognized in the capacity for reaching agreements.

3. *Attraction and falling in love.* *Attraction* is purely physical and emotional, it is not mental or rational. When someone feels attracted to someone else certain phenomena occur in their body: their pulse accelerates, their blood pressure and their breathing rate rise, the other person appears in their mind obsessively ... All this happens because instinct recognizes something as attractive.

However, *admiration* has to do with the mental field —we focus on similar personality traits— and with the spiritual field —values and virtues—.

Both falling in love and the feelings that are the result of physical attraction cannot be relied on when it comes to establishing a relationship; for feelings are variable and being in love is temporary, it is subject to the action of phenethylamine (PEA), the hormone that does not cancel out the personality, although it can produce certain behaviors associated with the state of being in love.

The fact that someone has a stable and very satisfactory relationship is not an obstacle to them falling in love with other people. What they will not do is give free rein to that state, they will let it pass as what it is, a temporary emotion to which they will not pay attention, although they will not deny themselves the enjoyment of the sensation; they may not even say anything. By this we mean that it is not a good idea to deny our human nature; instead, managing it with wisdom enables us to channel it. It is not a good idea to end a couple relationship just because one has fallen in love with someone else, but there is no reason to deny oneself the experience of falling in love. It is a matter of managing it with wisdom and understanding, without denying the reality.

Falling in love is genetic, not a rational condition. We do not decide to fall in love, in the same way as we do not choose to be hungry; what we do decide is what to eat. But falling in love encompasses emotions and feelings as well.

4. *Reach agreements.* Once a couple decide to embark on a relationship, they need to establish very clear agreements about how it will develop. They must determine the times and spaces they will share, their common aspirations and goals, finances and work, feelings and individual wishes, etc. And there must be willingly assumed commitments to those agreements.
5. To achieve integration of complementary opposites requires creativity, which makes it possible to manage the differences. Creativity leads us to integration, and from there we achieve adaptation, which in turn guides us towards union.

6. Men and women are not the same, we are complementary, and the only way to harmonize our differences is through agreement, not imposition. By nature we are perfectly complementary, but if agreements are not managed properly, instead of becoming harmony that complementarity turns into conflict. The mental rigidity that is present when we believe that something cannot be done blocks creativity and makes the options for reconciling differences disappear. Conversely, when we let go of the mental patterns and beliefs with which culture has imbued us, there is no conflict that cannot be resolved.
7. We ought to take advantage of our differences to complement each other, so that the relationship is more harmonious. This is what is called *harmonizing diversity*.
8. In an excellent couple there must be healthy communication, agreements, commitment, stability and satisfaction.
9. The first agreement that a couple should reach is to communicate healthily and efficiently. All the others can wait, but none of them can be built if there is no agreement on communication. This agreement involves keeping communication open at all times; when the channel is broken, the relationship ends.

2.4.2 The importance of healthy communication

Establishing healthy communication helps the couple to find solutions to most of the difficulties that usually arise in a relationship, and supports the development of mutual trust. Communicating each partner's values, as well as their feelings and emotions of love, must become a daily habit for the couple. In turn, disagreements must be dealt with in an atmosphere of total cordiality and neutrality, with both partners proposing what they need to make the relationship more satisfactory, and avoiding aggressive or dominating expressions like: "The thing is, you ..."; "It annoys me when ..."; or "I don't want you to ...". These expressions can be replaced with others such as: "I'd like ..."; "I think you can support me in ..."; "What do you think if ...".

Healthy communication, then, require several conditions:

- ✓ *Reaching an agreement on when is the right time.* This is not when we are upset, or while travelling or when we are involved in activities in which our minds are occupied. It is important always to find the right moment.
- ✓ *Our tone of voice must be soft,* precisely when we are going to discuss difficulties. This is because instinct responds to stimuli and people who are upset, without realizing, raise their tone of voice —as though they were defending themselves—, which triggers rejection and the release of adrenaline. It is essential to make an effort to speak in a pleasant tone of voice when discussing differences.
- ✓ *What we say should be loving,* that is, our words should not convey any type of blame, reprimand or invalidation. We should not look for someone to blame, because no one makes a mistake on purpose. We look for solutions to mistakes, not for someone to blame.
- ✓ *We should accompany our words with the appropriate body posture,* because body language accounts for 80% of what we say, and the words only 20%.

Part of the process of adding love to life, of improving relationships and cleansing the ego involves *modifying our language*, our learned vocabulary. For those of us who are adults, this means re-educating our verbal expression, which will have a positive influence on the readjustment of our external behavior.

2.4.3 There is no one to blame

When we argue with someone, it is always because of our own beliefs. Masters do not argue with anybody, they only discuss concepts, never truths. Masters do not make mistakes because they have already made them all and learnt from them. We are immersed in the process of mastery and therefore we have to make mistakes. It is simply one of the Universe's processes, there is no one to blame.

If someone is doing something that other people find inappropriate or unpleasant, and we say to them: "I'd be very grateful ...", we are actually thanking them, and the result will be much better than if we say to them: "I can't stand this". We are telling the truth when we react with: "Don't worry, you did the best you could, everything has a solution, tell me what you learnt from this".

We should never look for someone to blame; first of all because no one is, and secondly because it does not work. Whenever we have made mistakes, we must look for solutions; we should forget about who did what, we should look for a solution without personalizing or naming names.

2.5 Why do couple relationships end?

The main reason why couple relationships break down is the *failure to accept differences*, which leads us to attack our partner. The most usual forms of attack in a relationship, aside from those of physical violence—which we consider totally out of context—, are as subtle as:

- ✓ Indifference
- ✓ Keeping silent
- ✓ Ill will
- ✓ Short temper
- ✓ Long faces
- ✓ Unpleasant gestures
- ✓ Innuendo, snide remarks, etc.

These forms of attack destroy feelings, which are 100% vulnerable, and when this happens, there is no wish to share left, because the negative feelings that arise after the attack lead to estrangement, running away or fighting.

In situations like this there are two fundamental things for both partners to learn:

1. Not to react to attack.
2. Not to use attack, and this requires accepting differences.

If we achieve this, the stability and improvement will be noticeable, but while we persist in any type of aggressive conduct, whether inner or outer, the relationship will continue to deteriorate. It appears not to be noticeable, but it builds up inside and when it explodes it is too complicated.

Another important cause of failure in couple relationships is *not being aware of how the feminine and masculine principles of human nature operate*. These principles are complementary opposites, and therefore they operate differently. When these principles are not handled appropriately in a couple's relationship, the woman becomes disillusioned, sad and frustrated and the man feels disconcerted and rejected, which gives rise to the destructive forms of attack already mentioned. When these differences are not understood, instead of complementing the other person we try and change them, and this is what results in attack.

In general terms, the man, by possessing the masculine transmissive trait, wants to be accepted and acknowledged, to be satisfied at all levels, to be cared for, supported and tolerated, and to stay in charge.

The woman also needs support and to feel accepted, and seeks satisfaction at all levels, including sexually. But in addition, due to her totally receptive traits, she seeks security —because of the possibility of pregnancy and motherhood—, appreciation, stability, thoughtful gestures, flattery, tenderness, caresses and gentleness.

Regardless of their physical condition, some women are more masculine in their behavior, and some men are more feminine. So the ideal thing is to verify what each partner expects to receive from the other and discuss it clearly, so as to be able in this way to satisfy the other person through commitment. When there is mutual satisfaction, harmony and balance are achieved and the relationship becomes stable and strong. Nevertheless, the agreements must be reviewed regularly to check whether everything is still balanced or something is missing.

Desire is one of nature's indicators. The presence of desire is due to an energetic deficiency, which means that a lack of desire indicates that the deficiency has been rectified.

- ✓ When someone is hungry, it means that their blood glucose level has dropped.
- ✓ When they are thirsty, it means their cells are less hydrated and the body responds with thirst in order to re-establish the correct level.

- ✓ When someone feels sleepy, it is because their mental energy —generically called vital energy— has fallen.
- ✓ When there is sexual desire it is because there is an energetic need associated with affection —commonly called affective deficiency—. Just a simple caress stimulates such an amount of energy that the body secretes certain substances that it would not secrete otherwise. Caresses may be considered a nutrient, and they stimulate the body's process of self-healing. Instinct responds to stimulus, the mind to information and the spirit to verification.

That is why sexuality is not just a matter of producing offspring, nor does it only have to do with coupledness; it is, in general, a human matter.

2.5.1 What are the false beliefs that can damage a couple's relationship?

There are several beliefs that can have an impact on a relationship and lead it to conflict, attack and finally breakdown. They are as follows:

1. *Believing that our partner can make us happy.* By believing this, when we fall out of love, the logical consequence is to blame our partner for not being able to make us happy, and this leads to conflict.
2. *Believing that our partner is to blame for what happens to us.* This belief leads us to want to punish the guilty party or to exact vengeance. But it is important to remember that there is no one to blame, just ignorance and mistakes.
3. *Believing that our partner can guess what we need.* This is called the "bad habit of assuming". Clear and precise communication is always necessary to avoid assumptions.
4. *Believing that sincerity is a value,* when in fact it is a mental limitation that is expressed whenever we say what we think and feel from a place of negativity, ignorance and ego. It is necessary to express values, not what is negative.
5. *Believing that what is not spontaneous has no value.* Spontaneity, providing it is pleasant, is beautiful, but the problem is thinking that what

is not spontaneous is not beautiful. Much more valuable than spontaneity is someone who takes the deliberate decision to do something that through communication they have understood as being important for their partner. For example, spontaneous sexuality generally results in infidelity, which in most cases leads to separation.

6. *Believing that men and women have different work.* Apart from giving birth and suckling a baby, there is nothing that a woman cannot do as well as a man, nor the other way round.

2.6 Unstable and stable relationships

Relationships are unstable when the partners' behaviors are aggressive, because they maintain the "animality" of human beings. Aggression is typical of the instinct for survival, and therefore it is not a characteristic of human beings, but of the "rational" animal. An authentic human being is one who does not behave from the instinct of survival, but from the purely spiritual understanding of the need for coexistence and respect. To survive we have to fight, but to live together we need to respect each other and reach agreements, and this is what makes us human beings.

Humaneness is a characteristic of someone who always expresses themselves through loving behavior, and this is achieved by using the seven tools of love. In this way we will not only be humane, we will have excellent, very stable relationships; so much so, that they could be called everlasting. They will never experience boredom, because they will really enjoy great creativity from the point of love, and because both members are willing to satisfy the other; and this is a willingness of love, whereas the desire to be satisfied without taking into account the other partner is selfishness. To summarize, if we are willing to satisfy our partner and to express what we need for our own satisfaction, and this is all done jointly and through agreements, we will achieve a stable and excellent relationship.

2.7 Games for couples

What we aim to convey with this is that the exercise for reaching an agreement should be fun. What is best is for both partners to give way, to be

flexible, because if one of the two is rigid they will always believe that they are right and they will not evolve spiritually; on the other hand, the one who always gives way will become saturated and the relationship will ultimately break down. The best thing is to find a solution that combines both points of view.

The *games for success*, not only in a couple relationship, but also in business and in life in general, are:

- 1. Whoever gives way, wins:** mental flexibility, adaptation, acceptance, spiritual development, inner peace ... and less suffering. The one who does not give way learns little, and if one of the partners learns and the other does not, the difference between the two of them will grow bigger.
- 2. Whoever serves, grows.** Service is the way of expressing love towards our fellow human beings. What we do should always be of the best quality, and contain our best energy and ability to enjoy what we do, and in this way our service will be excellent. That is why this is an extraordinary game.
- 3. Whoever pleases, is successful.** For if we are always pleasant, we will always be the best option.

2.8 Tools for couples

The main tools a couple has to ensure that their relationship works are:

- 1. Two-way attraction.** This tool belongs to instinct and is what leads us to fall in love. It enables us to verify that the couple are genetically compatible. This in turn leads to two results: in the aspect of *energetic exchange*, in sexuality and with caresses, the intensity of the energy managed will be much greater; in *procreation*, mutual attraction guarantees that the couple are genetically compatible, which means that their children will be harmonious. Many genetic accidents are the result of the incompatibility of the parents.
- 2. Admiration.** This tool is both mental and spiritual. When someone admires something about their partner it is because they recognize their values and virtues. Admiration ensures the stability of the relationship, since to the extent that the partners have mutual values, their admiration will be reciprocal. The degree of attraction may decrease, since the cycles

of desire and energy are variable, but admiration as a value, as part of love, is constant and can sustain a relationship even at difficult times, which attraction cannot do.

- 3. Appreciation.** Giving value to the relationship and to each partner is another tool that provides a great deal of stability, even in situations of crisis and difficulty.

The constant expression of values is one of the main ways of contributing to the strengthening of a couple relationship and of all relationships. Other people cannot guess that we appreciate them, we must tell them how important they are, how much we enjoy sharing with them.

- 4. Acceptance.** Appreciation allows us to accept differences, adapt to them, or reconcile them, instead of arguing with them.
- 5. Respect.** It lets us maintain harmony. Through respect we stop criticizing, judging, invalidating or condemning another person because they behave in a way that is different to how we behave. We should not do to anyone what we would not want for ourselves, because it will come back to us through the Law of Cause and Effect.
- 6. Commitment.** It means that no one is obliged to anything. Commitment involves doing something for the value of doing it, either for ourselves, for the relationship or for love. If someone feels obliged to do something, then they are not committed, and that can fall apart at any moment, because it generates inner tension.
- 7. Freedom.** There must be total freedom, managed through agreements. If we impose limits on people, if we "put them in cages" or "chain them up", how will we know that their love is really deep? What this attitude displays is the fear of losing the other person. We should avoid imposing limits: what is meant for us will be with us; what is not meant for us will not.

But how can we know whether something is meant for us or not, if all the time we are forbidding, imposing and controlling? In this case we become a hindrance instead of a support; that is the best way to have people leave our lives.

- 8. Loyalty.** There can only be loyalty after an agreement has been established and a commitment has been generated, but not if the agreements are not clear. In general we believe that infidelity is disloyalty, even when in fact we have never reached any agreement about sexuality, we have just assumed it.
- 9. Adaptation.** It is one of the tools of nature: it is not possible for a being to survive in a certain place if they do not adapt to it. In the same way, a relationship does not survive if one partner does not adapt to the other and vice versa.
- 10. Trust.** It is the tool that facilitates communication.
- 11. Communication.** If there is no trust, there is no communication, in which case we cannot find out what is happening and we are left totally disorientated.
- 12. Support.** This tool is used when difficulties arise or mistakes are made. It is a matter of always valuing people more than material things. For example, support is necessary if someone crashed our car that we had lent them. In such a case, we would say to them: "For me what is important is that you are all right; don't worry, cars can be repaired".
- 13. Gratefulness,** appreciation for all that we have and also the difficult and painful situations, because they are opportunities that life brings us to learn and improve in our spiritual development.
- 14. Flexibility.** Agreements can only be managed through appreciation.
- 15. Joy.** It is what generates inside us the hormones of closeness and happiness, endorphins and amines, which produce the urge to share and join together. Being full of bitterness and sadness is not a good option; we must look on the bright side of life and not expect what is out there to enthuse us, but to generate our own enthusiasm.
- 16. Reconciliation.** It allows us to attain harmony. To achieve it, the other tools are used: agreements, flexibility, adaptation ...

17. Agreements. They are the fundamental tool for reaching harmony in conciliation.

18. Meditation. Meditating for a few minutes each day enables us to recover vital energy by being at "mental rest", with our minds quiet and in silence. Increased vital energy will enable us to relate with others from a place of peace and mental clarity.

19. Changing the polarity of feelings. When our feelings are negative, it is best not to try and establish agreements; nobody can do anything worthwhile without joy. First of all we must achieve a change in polarity, and to do this we can make a list of the values that are recognized in our partner and our relationship. As we review them, together with the happy times we have, our feelings are polarized towards the positive. That is when we are ready to speak and to establish agreements.

20. Common purposes. We must verify that our partner is on the same path as we are. There are no good or bad paths, just different ones; but if two people are thinking of becoming a couple they need to verify that they will travel along the same path, and being in love is not sufficient for that.

21. Games for couples. For example, the one who gives way, gains; the one who serves, grows; the one who pleases, is successful.

These are all the tools that are required to achieve success. We must practice and practice with them, until we achieve it.

2.9 The quality of a couple's relationship

In general when a couple enjoy harmony and satisfaction in their relationship, regardless of the fact that instinct will not cease to recognize compatibilities with other people, they are unlikely to think about choosing another option. But when there is disharmony, conflict or dissatisfaction, it is very easy for people to take a different option. So relationships break down as a result of lack of harmony.

When a couple break up, the mind makes us feel we have lost someone who we thought belonged to us. Understanding that nothing and nobody belongs to

us, that there is simply a relationship change, not a loss, removes suffering and prevents the drop in vital energy. This is how we achieve non-attachment.

The inexhaustible source of energy is love.

To assess the quality of our relationship we can individually review the following virtues, and write as a percentage (from 1% to 100%) beside each one the extent to which they are present in our relationship:

- ✓ Trust
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Respect
- ✓ Support
- ✓ Joy

If this assessment shows that there is a good level of support and respect, even if the other values are not as high, the relationship can be maintained. In fact, whenever any of these values rises, the others tend to as well. For a couple's relationship to be satisfactory all of the values must be over 50%; if they are over 70% the relationship will be excellent; if they reach 90% it can be considered a relationship of love; and if they are 100%, it would be mastery.

So let's perform our own assessment, and will begin to work on the inner values that display a lower percentage. The best "laboratory" that there is for developing the virtues is precisely life as a couple and as the family.

Chapter 3. Love relationships

3.1 The keys to love

The different types of relationships that human beings establish throughout their lives not only determine the social structure, they also make it possible to measure fairly accurately the characteristics of the limitations learned by the human personality. In this respect, relationships are an important tool of evolution, for as well as being the building block of civilization, they help individuals go beyond their conceptual and traumatic limitations. This is because in our continuous attempts to find satisfaction in relationships, we ultimately discover the principles of love beyond learned concepts and limitations, and recognize love is the only real inner guide to reach personal happiness and build a new civilization where personal conflicts and wars do not exist.

We cannot develop our consciousness if we isolate ourselves and do not build relationships, because on our own we cannot know ourselves or work with our limitations. Relationships are an extraordinary opportunity to learn to love, be happy and respect the experiences of other people.

The *keys to love in relationships* lie beyond concepts, beliefs and interpretations, culture, traditions and learned limitations, and they can be recognized in the following manner:

- ✓ **Love always results in inner peace and happiness** in relationships and in everything we do. If this is not the result, there is a simple explanation: we are not acting from our center of understanding nor giving the best of ourselves.
- ✓ **Love is Law**, and it is always verified with results that produce satisfaction.
- ✓ **Happiness in relationships is the result of loving** and supporting the happiness of those with whom we are in relationship. We give love, and life gives it back to us in abundance and satisfaction, because that is its natural result.
- ✓ **What we decide to sow in our life is our choice, but we have to harvest it**, because what we sow we must reap. If we sow joy,

enthusiasm, cooperation, service, support, optimism, understanding, appreciation or respect, we will reap abundant harvests of love, happiness, well-being and satisfaction in all our relationships. Selfishness is the result obtained by the opportunist, who, having failed to sow anything, expects to reap the harvest and calls that justice. But in fact, he who sows nothing reaps nothing, and he who sows the wind will reap the whirlwind.

Let's see what results we obtain in the four fundamental aspects of life: health, relationships, resources and adaptation to the environment. If we want a different result it is because we need a different seed; and if we start sowing it right away, before we have finished gathering in the previous harvest, a new crop will begin to thrive that may possibly cancel out the previous one. This is what the Law of Cause and Effect is: everything we send out through an action returns with the same characteristic.

- ✓ **Love is a deep understanding** that is expressed with an attitude of service, gratitude, appreciation, acceptance and respect towards persons, things and life. Valuing and continually giving thanks for what life gives us ultimately generates inside us the capacity to enjoy all things and situations, and to build excellent relationships.

It is important not to express what we feel or what we think, unless what we feel is love and what we think is appreciation.

- ✓ **Love means feeling within us** that we can always express ourselves with kindness, gentleness, tact, prudence, simplicity, absolute trust, total devotion, complete freedom and unconditional support.
- ✓ **Acting with love means always doing what is necessary** for others to feel happy sharing with us.

As we have seen, relationships of love go together with happiness, so we will now look at happiness in relationships.

3.2 Happiness in relationships

The secret to happiness in relationships is to understand and train ourselves in the following fundamental aspects of life:

- 1. Not being attached to anything or anyone.** All attachment is based on the fear of losing and on inner insecurity, and therefore it becomes a limiting factor for personal peace and freedom, and also for the freedom of others, and ultimately generates a psychological dependence that exhausts vital energy. When we grant and have freedom, when we depend on no one, and no one depends on us, to maintain our inner peace, something absolutely wonderful happens: we begin to share only the harmony, peace and love that exists in each of us, and not the limiting fears that damage relationships; because we understand that both material things and people are temporary and cannot be retained, but love is eternal and we can always share it and be happy enjoying the present.

*When we share with absolute freedom
we can always be happy in relationships.*

- 2. Not wishing for anything other than what life gives us.** We have to understand and accept that life always gives us what is necessary according to the function that we each fulfill, and that the only thing that depends on us is to give of our best in the function that we are meant to carry out, and to be aware and ready to accept other functions when life shows us that this is required. Through this attitude we learn to be happy recognizing that life always gives us the best. And once we have learned to be happy we are able to support the happiness of everyone with whom we are in relationship.

*I have all I need to be happy,
because I am happy with what I have.*

What we receive does not depend on life or on other people: it depends only on what we do. So we should not ask anything of life, but rather just decide what we are going to do in life.

Whenever we want or ask for anything that is not meant for us, we create a disorder in the flow of riches and a conflict in our mind that exhausts vital energy, because what we ask for does not match what we do.

3. Interpreting whatever brings peace to life. We must always think the best in response to any event or circumstance that life presents us with; because the only truth that exists is love, and every event is an opportunity to recognize it merely by verifying that thinking and interpreting from love leads us to find peace within us. This is the natural result of love, and if we manage all our relationships from inner peace we will always find happiness in them.

Therefore, the secret of happiness in relationships consists in doing the best we can every day, and accepting with love the result that life offers us; because there is nothing outside us that we can change, but the result of always doing the best we can will also always result in the best, and this will manifest in all of our relationships.

Let's be happy; that is what life will always give back to us.

Life is a marvelous opportunity for learning to love and to share. So let's decide to be happy.

3.3 Types of social relationship

3.3.1 Destiny relationships

First of all we can speak of *individuals or personalities that are incompatible*. These are also called *destiny relationships*, and they are characterized by their conceptual and behavioral differences, which keep them in constant disagreement; this is expressed through aggressiveness, poor communication, dissatisfaction and suffering. This will continue to be so until the individuals recognize and overcome their limitations; when this happens, finally learning occurs.

Destiny relationships are characterized by selfishness, and are recognized because we cannot escape from them until we learn what they teach us. Sometimes the experience is postponed. Imagine you have a dreadful boss, but have enough savings to live on for a while, so you can quit your job. In that case, the postponements occur because life says: "Right now you're not strong enough, or lack the energy and capacity to cope with the situation, so we'll let you postpone it". Yet that does not mean that the situation has been transcended; on the contrary, it will be repeated later, when we are strong enough to cope with it.

Destiny relationships generally begin because there is a strong *point of attraction* (fatal attraction), that can be physical, financial, social, or of any other type of personal convenience. However, despite this, certain characteristics of destiny (difficulties) can be observed right from the start, such as fear, doubt, mistrust, uncertainty, lack of shared objectives and disagreements. Nevertheless, there are the appropriate conditions to start the relationship, and it begins.

In this type of relationship, those involved usually apply the *method of resistance* —which in turn brings the Law of Destiny into play: the greater the resistance, the greater the force—. This method adopts different and well-known forms that always entail suffering or dissatisfaction in relationships, like criticism, rejection, attack, indifference, annoyance, rebelliousness, heated argument, contradiction, sulking, not speaking, non-appreciation, bad temper, scolding, threats and physical, verbal and psychological violence. It finally leads to a relationship of endurance, with continual attempts to escape that never succeed.

*When we no longer need destiny relationships
we are ready to enjoy love relationships.*

3.3.2 Love relationships

We call relationships between *individuals or personalities that are compatible love or conscious relationships*. These are characterized by the recognition of the essential values of life and relationship, and by the mutual recognition of each of the partners. This type of relationship is expressed through the acceptance of conceptual differences as mutual learning opportunities, the excellent communication there is between both partners, willingly accepted agreements, unconditional support and constant satisfaction within the relationship.

Love relationships are defined by the understanding that every situation is a marvelous opportunity for learning, a permanent willingness to serve and the creation of options for managing differences, as a form of support for the development of adaptation, flexibility and awareness of true sharing.

These relationships generally stem from *mutual admiration* (recognition of values). The first signs of admiration are seen with the appearance of shared interests, wanting to know more about the other, wanting to share, the impression of trust, feeling of loyalty, sense of peace, certainty of finding support and, in general, an atmosphere of joining with the other person.

In this type of relationship, the partners apply the *method of acceptance*, where the Law of Love is always fulfilled —i.e., the integration of extremes in a single purpose of love and peace—. This method eliminates any possibility of suffering in relationships, but it is only achieved by using the tools of consciousness: appreciation, acceptance, commitment, calmness, understanding, gratitude, joy, service, respect, communication, acknowledgement, enthusiasm, kindness, reflection, information, congratulation, availability, ability to accept responsibility, action, dialogue, support, tenderness and gentleness. *Conscious relationships* lead to a process of constant growth in love, and bring great satisfaction to the individuals involved, which generates great stability and long-lastingness of the relationships.

It is necessary to train oneself constantly in the application of conscious behavior, until these principles become habitual behaviors; then we will be able to experience a genuine renewal of life and enjoy the wonderful complement that relationships provide.

When we fully enjoy relationships

we know that we have developed a true understanding of love.

How can we turn a *destiny relationship* into a *love relationship*? By managing destiny with the *seven tools of love*. If they are used properly it is possible to transcend destiny, and relationships of this type will not re-occur.

Life is like a university where we are continuously learning to love and to be happy for ourselves; and how we learn is through mistakes, crises and difficulties. That is why all three of these challenges have an intrinsic value, and the learning

that we acquire thanks to them strengthens us and enables us to develop skills and virtues. Although ultimately the idea is not to spend all our lives in training, but to "graduate".

When we are able to value people, relationships and service, then we find love and happiness; if our relationships improve day by day it is because we are adding love.

*The stability of a relationship cannot be
based on feelings, because they are variable.*

When feelings are activated intentionally from the center of love, true happiness, upon which love relationships can be built, arises magically. Love relationships achieve total integration and true sharing full of joy, satisfaction and pleasure. This is because the light of love does not allow the darkness of ignorance to manifest in feelings.

3.3.3 Relationships between like-minded personalities

Like-minded personalities have similar likings, feelings and ideas. They are popularly known as "twin souls". Affinity is marvelous, but it is not easy to find. When there is mental affinity, agreement is unnecessary; by not performing this exercise of establishing agreements an individual fails to acquire a profound tool of human development, the *ability to reconcile differences*, that is to say, the ability to give way, to adapt, not to blame and not to judge. Affinity, then, does not produce spiritual development, but a sense of pleasure, and energy and an integration that are extraordinary.

The greater our spiritual development, the more like-minded we will become, but while that is happening we need to evaluate our differences and learn to reconcile our disagreements. If we succeed, the development will be immense and the couple relationship will achieve stability; if we do not, breakdown will be imminent.

3.4 The principles of love in relationships

The most important principles of love in relationships are teaching, freedom, individuality and universality. Let us now consider the results of applying these principles.

- 1. Teaching** is for people to have the necessary information to properly experience their lives; it also supports inner growth and encourages the development of self-responsibility as a basis for freedom. The result of teaching is inner security for taking on the experience of life, which leads to the appreciation and acceptance of one's existence as a great learning opportunity.

The Masters make a specific proposal for managing any relationship: information that is sufficient —it covers what is necessary—, efficient —it is comprehensible— and timely —at the right time, not before or after—.

What is better, punishing mistakes or improving relationships? Usually, when we make a mistake we resort to punishment instead of teaching, because the idea of blame and guilt abides in us; that is why relationships do not work. When someone values their relationships, they always let go of punishing, imposing and forbidding.

- 2. Freedom** is for others to reach their own understanding and accept responsibility for the result of their decisions. The natural consequence of freedom is trust, self-assurance, prudence and inner strength, all of which lead to the development of the ability to choose what is appropriate in every circumstance of life, and make it easier to search for individuals to strive for inner and social balance. In turn, this favors the existence of love relationships, in which the union stems from the deliberate decision to share and not from obeying a rule.
- 3. Individuality**, like the process of understanding that each individual must carry out on their own experience of life, is for developing and expressing creativity, for renewing structures in the sense of change, and for discovering social patterns that bring greater satisfaction. Experiences are necessary to be able to reach an understanding. The result of individuality

is the ability to share without attachment and to find self-worth and mental flexibility; this leads to a constant process of change and personal, social and technological growth.

We are speaking of individuality for a very simple reason, because the process of spiritual development is individual; no one can evolve or learn for another, in the same way that no one can eat for someone else. And the decisions that we adopt in response to life are also individual, personal and totally respected by the Masters. Of course, it is then up to each individual to accept responsibility for the result of their decisions.

4. Universality, as a profound understanding of the meaning of love, is for developing the ability to love everyone equally, recognizing that the only difference lies in the types of agreements that we establish with each one. The result of the principle of universality is the ability to accept, support and respect the agreements and decisions of others; and, in turn, it leads to new forms of social organization that bring greater satisfaction to everyone.

Table 6. Principles of love in relationships

Principles of love	Cultural principles
Teaching	Authority
Freedom	Standardization
Individuality	Possessiveness
Universality	Exclusivity

The quality of love in relationships can be recognized through the Law of the Triangle:

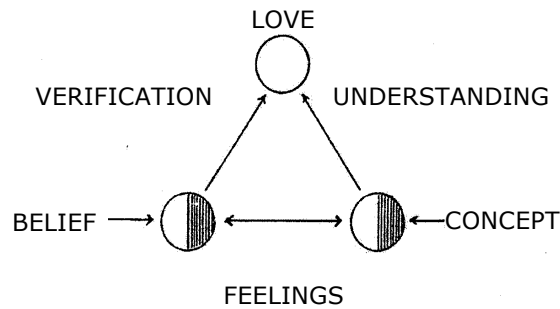


Figure 2. *The Law of the Triangle*

Horizontal relationships occur when beliefs and concepts are pitted against each other; and each person believes that they are right. Feelings and emotional reactions are inevitably mixed up in this type of relationship, which means that attack and suffering are generated. This is the base of the *triangle of the recognition of love*.

When we realize that the relationship is not satisfactory we turn to the upper vertex of the triangle where, beyond the concepts, beliefs or the reasoning of each individual, we act from the expression of love to seek a point of conciliation in the verification of the Law. It is at this moment that we understand that *acting from love means being happy with the happiness of the other person*, and a new outlook on relationships opens up where beliefs, concepts, reasoning or the methods to be used lose importance; because the intention focuses on the common purpose and on the result of love obtained from acting consciously and in the most agreeable manner for the other person.

Understanding unites us; belief (ignorance) separates us.

From our belief system, from personality and ego, we will never build relationships of love, only relationships of destiny, conflict, of difficulty necessary for learning. However, from the higher mental field, from understanding, which are the truths of love that each of us has been able to develop from our experience, it is possible to build relationships of love.

3.5 The point of Law

In horizontal relationships we attribute much importance to being right. If one says "I'm right", they feel entitled to impose their views and to think that others are wrong. In fact, being right is something that is of very little importance, because others are also right.

Let's suppose that we have a sphere, half of which is black and the other half white. If we ask person "A" they will say that it is white, and if we ask another person "B", they will say that it is black, depending on where they are in relation to the sphere, and both of them will be right. They are merely considering the situation from different points of view.

Now we are going to try and practice reaching a settlement, instead of imposing our own reasoning on the other person. In order to get these two people to agree, we could ask them to change places; this is what is called "putting on someone else's shoes": they look at the situation from the other person's perspective, and immediately realize that the sphere is, for example, white, and understand the other person's reasoning.

At this point, what decision can be taken? For example, a point in between can be chosen: neither A nor B, but a point we can call A+B, that contains the two standpoints at the same time. That is, if a positive figure is added to a negative figure with the same value, the result is equal to zero; this means that the zero contains both of them in a neutral manner. In the same way, the point of love is reached when someone considers "A"'s point of view as valuable as "B"'s. Point A+B, or AB, is the point of *integration or conciliation of love*. Without needing to change positions it is feasible to see the two situations at the same time, because it is being observed from a higher point: that of the *understanding of love*.

Trying to impose our own reasoning leads only to losing: we do not give ourselves the option of learning something new, of growing, of learning to love, of nothing, really, because we become a "post person". This type of person suffers a great deal, and the worst thing is that they always think they are right and that others are wrong. They tend to say things such as: "I'm easy to please if everything is done the way I say; do as I say and you'll see how we all are happy". This is what is called "mental rigidity" or "mental crystallization". In order not to fall into it we have the option of moving. The one who loves, the one who

is able to give way is always the one who gains; the one who is rigid is destined to lose.

It is not possible to conciliate horizontally, because in such a situation one belief is being pitted against another. However, love is a conciliation that neutralizes any difference. The higher point—which is no longer one of horizontal lines, of conceptual polarities—is called *vertical* or ascension relationships; it is also known by the name of *point of Law*, because no argument about the Law is possible, nor agreement or possibility of taking any decision other than obeying it. Therefore, every individual who recognizes the Law will reach a conciliation; however, from a conceptual standpoint there will always be differences.

Point of Law is also the process of verifying something when it is happening and not labeling it, but merely evaluating it with understanding. For example, if someone says they have a board marker in their hand, and what they write can be erased, this carries no energetic charge, they did not label it in any way. But if they say that it is the best instrument there is for illustrating a class, then they are labeling it and we can now begin to argue.

The non-conceptual point of Law, about which there is no argument and with which we will always all be satisfied in any situation, is the *common purpose*; the one that unites us all, whereas concepts or individual beliefs separate us. Therefore, if our intention in relating with other people is to join with them to share harmoniously, there is only one way of doing it: finding the purpose that unites us and not the concept that separates us. This is equally valid for all kinds of relationships.

If we find the purpose that unites us we will have excellent relationships with everyone, but if we focus on the concept that separates us, it will be difficult for us to relate harmoniously with someone. In our daily life we will try to find that common point of love called *point of Law*, where there is no argument and where agreement is not even necessary. When the common purpose is love, the where, how, or when, does not matter, we will be happy because we are sharing. But if we make the fact of sharing subject to conditions, we will go back to the *conceptual point*, and mental duality and conflict will return.

Therefore, if what we want is to have excellent relationships, we must begin to value love, that which unites us; if we continue valuing what separates us we will never achieve a satisfactory joining.

The following is a thought of love: "Other people's happiness matters to me, and I'm able to feel very happy when I see that others are. I want you to be happy, with me or without me."

On the other hand, a selfish thought would be: "It matters a lot to me that others make me happy".

Table 7. Point of Law or Love vs. ignorance

Belief	Point of Law or of Love	Ignorance What one does is to
Be independent	We cannot live without giving and receiving	Isolate oneself
Possess	Nothing belongs to us	Prevent others from using it
Justify	Nothing is unfair	Make mistakes
Blame	No one does anything to us	Not take responsibility for our own decision
Punish	There is no one to blame	Attack
Forgive	No one did anything to us	Resign ourselves
To suffer	Nothing can be changed	Not accept what happens
Problematize	There are only events	Suffer in response to opportunity
Oblige	No one can be obliged	Threaten
Solve	There are no problems	Look for the truth
Do for someone else	Nothing is done for us	Not allow the other person to do
Change the other person	Each individual decides when they change	Try to impose
Give away/give a gift	Nothing is ours	Give

3.6 Managing relationships neutrally

This consists of seven basic steps:

1. Attitude of love and service. The attitude of love is neutral, it does not carry either positive or negative charges, it is just the right balance. Service consists in giving others the information they need so that, by their own efforts, they can solve their problems.

2. Recognition that every concept is right for the person who holds it.

This aspect has to do with respect; it does not matter if we think something is outrageous; it will be true for the person who is saying it. No one says things that they think are wrong, they think they are right; therefore, we must respect them. This means not getting involved in unnecessary arguments or in contradictions because the other person is right; we can try conciliation, or reaching an agreement, but we should not argue.

3. Pre-design or visualization of a state of inner peace. When we are going to speak with someone and we know that there is a difficulty or disagreement, and what we are seeking is conciliation, agreement or a compromise in that situation, before speaking to anyone we need to fill ourselves with peace. The appropriate way of doing this is to visualize ourselves in peace in the face of the situation, and say to ourselves several times: "I won't lose my peace or calmness for any reason, no matter what the person says or does".

If we do not do this beforehand, the situation will catch us unawares and when we least expect it we will find ourselves shouting at the other person. The fact is that if someone is being aggressive but we speak to them very calmly, they will calm down; but if in the face of the aggressiveness of the other person we also shout, then the aggression is doubled.

4. Response from the point of Law (not from the concept). It is a question of responding always from the neutral point, the one that is beyond our own likings, beliefs, concepts and customs; this is the one that can neutralize, support, or be happy with the happiness of the other person.

It is always possible to support the happiness of the other person while the differences are not very big and we are not being blackmailed, because giving way in that case is not being at the point of Love, but is a product of an inner weakness called fear.

5. Putting ourselves in the other's place. This gives us a better understanding of the situation.

6. Using a pleasant tone of voice. The tone of voice connects directly with instinct when it is aggressive. However, if it is a peaceful tone of love, it connects with the heart. It is merely a technique. We need to be careful with our tone of voice, because it can arouse the greatest resistances.

7. Highlighting the qualities of the other and mutual benefit. That is to say, do not speak of limitations, feelings, or negative emotions to the other people: zero criticism, zero attack and zero honesty —which is very aggressive—. We only say what is valuable, but never from a state of inner upset; first we need to let off steam and then fill ourselves with peace.

When someone is full of negative emotions, they can practice an exercise which is called the "wailing wall"; it involves going somewhere inert —in nature, in a room alone...— and weeping, stamping our feet, shouting and insulting. By doing this, we discharge all those negative emotions without damaging our relationships. Once we are calm, at peace and we have let off steam, we are in a position to propose an agreement.

We can live peacefully with all beings to the extent that we understand the principle of love. But as long as we continue to believe that there are good or bad, horrible or nice things, we will be stuck continuously trying to change what we think is wrong. But the fact is that the only thing that can be wrong is what is going on in our minds.

By blaming others for what happens, by not knowing how to avoid a conflict or to live in harmony, we realize that something has to change, and that something is within us, not outside us. This is the first principle of love, which we need to be able to start improving our relationships.

There are no good or bad things, there are only things that are necessary for our learning. Horrible or nice is in a person's mind; objects, forms or events are

not horrible or nice, they are just different. I need to clear my mind of these concepts that limit me and do not let me love.

People are at different levels of development of understanding, or spiritual development, and at different stages of the evolutionary path, but that does not make them better or worse. As long as we believe that it will be impossible for us to love. Instead, an expression of wisdom is one that says that everyone is doing the best they can even if they make mistakes; there is no labeling there, just acknowledgement of a value.

Relationships are a complement of life, not an obligation, an imposition or a process of limiting freedom.

3.7 The sequence for creating true relationships of love

This would be as follows:

1. Observing the compatible and complementary values.
2. Identifying the space that the relationship could occupy.
3. Deciding to propose or accept the relationship.
4. Verifying values through the process of sharing.
5. Creating agreements.
6. Entering into commitment.
7. Implementing the agreements.
8. Establishing the principles of love as the basis for the relationship.
9. Training in harmonious communication.
10. Developing the following commitments of love: trust, acceptance, freedom, respect, service, support, tenderness.

Qualities, values and virtues are spiritual aspects of human beings, inner aspects that we need to learn to express, communicate and use.

The table below lists the values and qualities shown by someone who is trained in relationships and in love:

Table 8. Qualities of someone trained in love relationships

Active	Collaborative	Enterprising	Orderly
Adaptable	Understanding	Enthusiastic	Organized
Pleasant	Committed	Firm	Peaceful
Grateful	Communicative	Flexible	Prudent
Joyful	Trustworthy	Unoffendable	Respectful
Kind	Cooperative	Intelligent	Serene
Loving	Considerate	Fair	Helpful
Affectionate	Dynamic	Loyal	Appreciative

When we have difficulties with someone, we might think that the other person is to blame. When we have difficulties with two or three people, then we can think that we are probably part of the problem. Lastly, if we have difficulties with quite a number of people then we can be sure that the difficulty is ours alone.

3.8 In general, why do couple relationships end?

When a relationship of any kind ends, generally those involved are so confused that they are not able to understand what happened, and they end up blaming the other person or themselves. In fact, as we have seen in section 2.5 when speaking of why couple relationships end, it is not a question of choosing who is to blame, but of ignorance, generally on both sides, as to how to establish and maintain mutually satisfying relationships.

The main cause of the deterioration in relationships is the *non-acceptance of differences*, which leads to the following mistakes being made:

- ✓ Continuous criticism.
- ✓ Certain tones of voice or sarcasm.
- ✓ Lack of cooperation.
- ✓ Invalidation of the other person.
- ✓ Failure to fulfill agreements.
- ✓ Rejection.
- ✓ Impositions or prohibitions.

These are all different forms of aggression that instinct recognizes unconsciously as an attack, so that it reacts either by fight or flight, and the personality defends itself by generating rejection and breakdown of feelings. This in turn wears down and rapidly puts an end to any relationship. Aggression generates adrenaline —the hormone of stress and ageing— and interrupts all processes of reconciliation. The conclusion is that it is not possible to build harmonious relationships from aggression.

The idea is that we ourselves, upon discovering the mistakes, learn to avoid them by using the teaching tool of inquiry:

- ✓ *Where did I go wrong?*
- ✓ *What did I learn from the mistake I made?*
- ✓ *What can I do to avoid making the same mistake again?*

Chapter 4. Learning to reach agreements

We all seek to complement our lives in different ways and with different types of relationships: of friendship, for sharing, for feeling part of, of membership, of fellowship, as a couple... And they will all be healthy if we establish them on the basis of clear agreements.

In order to build *agreements of love* with compatible individuals we need to find what it is we have in common, that is to say: the desire to share, conciliate, appreciate, adapt, accept and be flexible. We can also look for common ground that is neither ours nor the other person's, and to reach it we must both let go of something.

The magic of relating harmoniously with someone whose likes are not the same as ours is achieved by valuing the relationship above and beyond personal likes, feelings, ideas, concepts and beliefs; as well as peace and harmony. For the ego individual likes, concepts and feelings are more valuable than what is shared and collective; that is why selfish people do not enjoy good relationships. This is called *egoism* or *selfishness*.

As stated earlier, the best tool for reconciling conceptual differences is establishing an agreement. An agreement in which one party feels they gain and the other feels they lose is useful, but the ideal thing is for both to gain, and that can only be achieved in one way: by conciliating from love —the neutral point or point of Law—. In that case both parties gain, the satisfaction is double and the relationships improve considerably.

If we do not learn to give way, to flexibilize the mind, we will not put an end to ego nor will we be able to build relationships of love, but only relationships of destiny, of confrontation, aggression and conflict.

In order to learn to establish agreements it is essential to learn to compromise.

The tool that goes beyond establishing an agreement is conciliation of love. Without needing to change position to see the situation from the other's standpoint, it is possible to contemplate both situations at the same time, because they are observed from a point above, called *understanding of love*. When we look at any issue from this understanding, good and bad cease to exist.

The fact is that for a Master there are no good or bad people, there are only human beings in the process of evolving, with different levels of ignorance.

Whoever gives themselves the opportunity to grow always gains. We become Masters by undertaking inner changes, taking advantage of what is difficult for us, because it is precisely there that evolution lies.

4.1 Love commitments

Nobody can enter into relationships without entering into commitments. To enter a commitment with someone, first of all we have to have reached an agreement.

Our capacity for commitment is proportionate to our level of loyalty and our skill in building true relationships of love; and achieving them involves developing the fundamental commitments, in addition to loyalty and firmness. The commitments of love are present in the following tools or principles: acceptance, trust, freedom, tenderness, service, respect and support.

Acceptance means letting go of changing other people to fit in with what we prefer. Accepting someone else just as they are is the great secret for achieving excellent relationships. We develop acceptance by understanding the Laws of Life, and also by training ourselves to stay calm.

Trust consists in verifying that it is possible to speak or hear about any event or thought with the assurance of always finding understanding, dialogue, support and means of solution, however difficult the situation may appear. In a couple there is trust when each partner totally opens their heart to the other. Trust is developed by coming to terms with life without blaming anyone for what we feel, and letting go of any form of criticism or aggression.

The *enemies of trust* are basically bad temper, touchiness —there is no place for taking offence in true relationships of love—, aggressiveness, sentimentalism, possessiveness —or "control tower"— and protectionism. None of these allow communication or agreement.

Freedom means allowing each person to take their own decisions, make their own commitments and accept responsibility for their results, so that they can evaluate for themselves the value of the relationships and the commitments

entered into. Freedom is developed by letting go of the fear of losing, and of trying to impose, limit or forbid the experiences that each individual must have. In short, it is a question of *always acting from non-reaction*, establishing appropriate agreements and applying the method of mutual satisfaction or *conciliation of love*.

Tenderness means thanking people for being able to share their life, joy, harmony, their qualities and values, because it means always being willing to indulge, pamper, caress and play as part of relationships and love. Tenderness is developed by practicing the constant expression of loving gestures and gentleness in the handling of relationships.

Service consists in kindly providing clear, precise and timely information to support the activities of others, and also always being willing to learn, cooperate and serve with enthusiasm and joy in any activity. We develop service by training ourselves in loving communication and constant action, without limiting ourselves in any kind of activity

Respect consists in taking advantage of differences as a form of mutual support for inner growth and developing adaptation. Learning to respect the customs and concepts of others, without judging them or criticizing them, makes it possible to establish healthy communication which in turn makes it possible to establish agreements that lead to mutual satisfaction. We develop respect by letting go of imposing our own behaviors and customs, and avoiding invading the space of others.

Support means valuing relationships above any material aspect and any personal concept or liking. Support is developed by always seeking *solutions instead of someone to blame* in response to our own mistakes or those of others or the loss of any material property; also by valuing learning without allowing anyone to feel bad, since all events bring with them a lesson that strengthens relationships.

Agreements must be based on commitments of love, because sometimes certain agreements are no more than impositions disguised as agreements; but these do not work. Agreements must be free, reached by those involved through mutual consent. Sometimes we say that we reach agreements with children by telling them, for example: "You've got to tidy your room, do your homework and

these other chores, don't you?". Rather than an agreement, this is an imposition; the agreement would be to sit down with the child, or whoever it was, and say to them: "What do you think, how would you like, what feels best for you, what's your opinion?". Giving orders and then asking the other person if they agree is something that comes easily to us, but it is not an appropriate way to establish agreements.

In addition, reaching agreements is one thing and respecting them is something very different.

Commitment is the ability to respect agreements.

For example, if we agree to meet someone tomorrow at 8 o'clock, but they fail to turn up, it means they established an agreement but they were not committed to it. So we need to measure our capacity for commitment, which is something that has to do with valuing. Thus, if we value what is individual more than what is shared, as we said earlier, the couple relationship will fail; individuality has a value, but when we decide to share our lives with another or other people, without ceasing to value what is ours and personal, we need to assess whether company and union —i.e., what is shared— is worth more to us; because otherwise it will be better not to marry or live with that other person. Someone who acts out of a sense of obligation is not committed.

Once we have succeeded in reaching an agreement it is essential to fulfill it and abide by it. However, when it becomes apparent that an agreement is hard to fulfill, we ought to reconsider it and modify it in order to adapt it to the actual circumstances, rather than think of not fulfilling it.

4.2 Stability in relationships: areas of agreement

Each individual expects to find in their relationships the necessary complements to fill their life and their personal experiences. However, when relationships are not firmly founded on clear agreements and strong commitments, there may be many empty or incomplete spaces left that lead the person to seek to complement them with other temporary relationships, thereby hindering the chances of reaching total fulfillment and stability in their relationships.

The *empty spaces* can be managed either with quality or with time. If we do not see each other much but the time we share is quality time, the relationship will be excellent; but if the quality is poor and the time scant, the empty space will tend to be filled with other people, because no other option is left.

What has not been agreed tends to fill with disagreements.

The ideal for relationships is to *achieve a satisfactory level of complementarity in the principal areas of life*, so as to facilitate and support the development of commitment, of sharing, of the loyalty and stability necessary to move in the direction of true relationships of love.

It is possible to evaluate the *stability of a relationship* through different areas

- ✓ **Food.** Remember that it is a question of reaching agreement, not of imposing anything; agreements are established about who does the cooking, what kind of food to eat, etc. We usually do not discuss these things, and it is very important to take them into account.
- ✓ **Comfort.** Some people like to enjoy a certain standard in aspects that for others are neither important or necessary, and that they may even find uncomfortable to maintain. If there is no agreement on this matter, then conflict will arise.
- ✓ **Customs.** These are very simple things, but extremely sensitive. For example, you like sleeping with the window open, and your partner with the window closed; you prefer the light on, they prefer it off; you usually go to bed at midnight, and they go to bed at 8 p.m.; similarly, one of you gets up at 3 a.m. and the other stays asleep until 11 a.m. Unless you reach an agreement on this kind of issue, life will be very complicated. Compatibility implies something simple: that we can reach an agreement.
- ✓ **Culture.** This refers to the intellectual part. Some people are fascinated by learning and others are not, or they are interested in some subjects and not in others. Similarly, one of the partners may have an inclination towards spirituality and the other does not, they are only interested in practical matters. Or one of them spends all day in the library and the other never reads a book.

- ✓ **Money.** Generally speaking this is something people do not discuss, but instead make a series of assumptions that lead to conflicts and disappointments. Here different types of agreements are possible: shared finances —i.e., setting up a joint expenses fund—, or separate finances, an agreement that generates fewer conflicts. In the latter option, an agreement can be established to each contribute 50% of the shared expenses, while for the rest each partner manages their own income and expenses.
- ✓ **Education (in the event of having children).** Of course, here as in any of the other spheres, it is essential to reach agreement.
- ✓ **Families.** "Are we going to visit your family or mine? Which of the two families do we spend New Year with? Or with neither of them? On Mother's Day, what do we do with our mothers? This is how conflicts begin: "Well you don't accept my family ..., well you don't accept mine". If this is discussed beforehand, an agreement reached and a commitment entered into, there will be no problem.
- ✓ **Philosophy and religion.** There is no incompatibility when agreements can be established. Imagine that one of the partners is Muslim and the other Christian; if neither of them is fanatical, there will be no problem: in the morning one goes to the mosque and the other to church, and in the afternoon they meet up again. But if they are not in agreement, imposition and conflicts can easily arise.
- ✓ **Children.** Whether or not to have children is one of the first agreements that a couple must reach.
- ✓ **Hobbies.** They will also have to agree on how they enjoy themselves or manage their hobbies. This is an aspect that requires mental flexibility and for each partner to compromise in some way.
- ✓ **Purposes.** People sometimes marry start or living together without first having discovered that they have such different purposes that one of them goes in one direction and the other goes in the opposite direction. There is a deep *purpose*, which we call *complementary or compatible*, that is

essential; because if we are going to try and have a relationship by following different paths, we will not meet up.

- ✓ **Sexuality.** We come from a culture in which sexuality has been treated as a taboo and a sin, as something that is bad for human beings, as a need for the flesh but not for the spirit. This creates enormous inner blocks. Therefore we have to work on unblocking our minds and beginning to treat this subject like any other. Then we must reach agreement on our individual likes regarding how to have sex, how intensely, how often, etc. This must all be agreed in order to avoid subsequent assumptions and conflicts.
- ✓ **Tenderness and affection.** Both men and women are equally endowed to give and receive affection and tenderness, although culturally men have been severely restricted in being able to express this type of emotion, because they are expected to be very manly, they should not cry, they should be strong, tenderness is for girls, etc. One of the commonest complaints in couples is the lack of tenderness on the part of the man, because that is what men are used to and it seems normal to them to be brusque and unaffectionate. It is essential to reach an agreement on this point right from the start of the relationship.
- ✓ **Commitment of time.** We need to agree on how much time each partner is going to devote to the relationship, because otherwise one of you might say: "I've been expecting you since 7 o'clock", and the other one arrives at 11 o'clock because they did not know they were expected. At other times we may also feel stifled and need a totally free space, where we can do what we like right then. Yet it is also essential to have an agreement about those spaces, because otherwise they become a bone of contention. If one of the partners says, for example, that once a week they need to be alone, even if only for four hours, on their own and with nobody else, and an agreement has been reached on that, then it must be respected.
- ✓ **Work.** It is also important in a relationship to reach an agreement on the tasks and functions that each partner is going to undertake, and when. Some people are addicted to work, and it does not occur to them that their personal relationships also need time and space.

In general, to build agreements we must break through the mental limits and conceptual difficulties that are cultural in origin, which make it impossible to establish good relationships.

Full spaces are areas of complementarity and joint satisfaction in which there is a good level of commitment that supports the stability of the relationship, in contrast to what occurs, as mentioned above, with the empty spaces.

Once the levels of complementarity in a relationship have been assessed, and there are found to be areas in which there is little complementarity, each partner should draw up a list of the areas in which they would like to achieve greater satisfaction, and invite the other to join with them in seeking the most appropriate options in order to establish the relevant agreements and commitments. If after assessing the various areas, the conclusion drawn is that the two partners cannot form a couple, there is no problem, because they can always be friends or enjoy some other type of relationship.

Our minds become obsessed with purely cultural issues. For example, we were taught that a relationship has to be with just one person, when in fact that is not the case; relationships can be established with all human beings, provided that we learn to build them properly. And of course, there are different types of relationship. The only difference between them is the type of agreement that forms the basis for managing each relationship. For example, if both partners of a couple agreed to remain faithful to each other, this is a mutual commitment, freely entered into by each one, and there is not the slightest loss of freedom, because it is an agreement.

The crux of the matter lies in the ability to love. There are two very important elements within a process of love: *respect*, i.e., the ability to respect agreements; and *trust*, i.e., the freedom to establish agreements.

Each individual trusts that others have the ability to enter into agreements from their own freedom, because an agreement is not something that is imposed on another, but something that is freely accepted by the parties that have decided to establish it. Once an agreement is reached, it becomes a commitment of love and trust, and it need not be broken, because both agreements and commitments are modifiable and flexible. Otherwise they are not agreements, but impositions. If someone breaks an agreement or a commitment, they are

disloyal. This is a concept that goes beyond being unfaithful, and applies to agreements in general, not just those that are established within a couple.

Here is another example: someone agrees with their partner to be faithful, but a time comes when they are not satisfied with that agreement because they wish to experience something different. The right thing to do in this situation is to discuss it with their partner and tell them: "I'm ready to modify this agreement because I want to experience other things". The agreement is not being broken. If the other person says no, then there is a new disagreement that has to be settled. Yet for someone to be able to raise the need to try another relationship, there must be sufficient trust for them to be able to discuss it with the other person. Here again we find the two elements of love: *respect* and *trust*. If we do not grant the freedom to modify an agreement, if we retain, impose or forbid, then we leave love behind. And love is something very beautiful, that goes far beyond the concept of sentiment and ego limitation.

Agreements liberate.

Rules and beliefs enslave.

4.3 Agreements founded on love

To establish *agreements founded on love*, we need to:

1. *Value relationships above and beyond individual likings and material things.*
What matters to us most, people or things? We all know that people are more valuable than things, yet if someone makes a mistake—for example, they break a vase, or set the house on fire—, we often react by blaming them and being aggressive. Sometimes we go so far as to attack them for bringing us a cold cup of coffee; in other words, the temperature of the coffee matter more than our relationship with the other person. Yet that is not so, because what really matters is that the other person brought us our breakfast, even if it is cold; later we will have to reach an agreement on this matter so that they learn to serve it hot.

In addition, do we attach more importance to relationships or to beliefs? Beliefs form part of our ego. If one person believes one thing and another believes the opposite, if we give greater value to the belief, then we will

become involved in conflict because of this. However, if we attach more value to the person, then we will be willing to compromise about our belief and preference. Even if we know that we are right, because we have verified the matter on which we do not agree, we need to give way and allow the other person certain experiences so that they can verify the results for themselves, and to do that they need support.

How do we know that we really value our relationships? Because if we value them we do not complain, nor do we feel obliged to do anything. Of course if there is something with which we do not agree we have every right to make a new agreement on that aspect; this involves developing the ability to negotiate.

2. *Always be willing to give support.*
3. *Always use loving communication.* Someone who values their relationships uses harmonious communication and accepts the decisions to learn or to teach, depending on the situation.
4. *Depersonalize situations.* It is important to handle any situation of disagreement that arises in relationships as something apart from the persons involved, because they are not the problem. It is always necessary to look for solutions, not for someone to blame; all that this requires is not labeling a situation with someone's name, but to treat each one as something on which an agreement must be reached.
5. *Speak only of what is positive.* When discussing the need for agreements in some areas of relationships, it is very important to remember that the purpose is always to improve the relationship. Accordingly, we should speak only of what is positive, and instead of stressing how badly the other person does certain things, we should emphasize all the positive things we would gain if we were in agreement. Talking about what is negative serves no purpose.
6. *Stay in the present.* Another inappropriate habit in managing relationships is to speak about past problems, because that reopens hurts and resentments; besides which past events cannot be changed. Therefore, all discussion must remain solely in the present, valuing the outlook for gain

and mutual satisfaction that can be achieved in the future. The past can only be observed from the present with one purpose: to rearrange the mental conception that each person has of it; that is, what has been learned from the past can be valued, but looking back in order to complain or to blame other people or oneself is just a negative habit.

4.4 Managing disagreement

Adequately managing disagreements can become a process of mutual growth and continual learning that can even be enjoyed if it is treated as a game of options for personal growth. One of these possible games consists in being the first person to find the best option for agreement. One option would be: "I propose that..."; another could be: "Let's do what you suggest". By playing these games we learn to handle any situation and to attain a better understanding of the other person's point of view. We also develop the skill of adapting and learning other ways of doing things and of achieving mutual satisfaction.

Disagreement is initially inevitable, because there are no two personalities the same, and it is a question of seeking to reconcile the differences, if we aspire to harmonious and peaceful coexistence, and the tool of agreement is necessary for that. With regard to managing disagreement, we propose the following tools to address it:

- ✓ **Be trustworthy.** We are not trustworthy when we use aggressive communication. In such cases, no one will tell us anything, because we let ourselves get carried away by feelings of rejection and by our inner suffering, by the fear of our own aggression, or of not being able to handle the disturbed emotional state. So we begin to manipulate; this is called the *dictatorship of the weak*. In fact someone like that is not an aggressive person, but because everything makes them ill, they somatize and suffer with everything, so they use this to manipulate; and to prevent them suffering and from being destroyed, they have to be given their own way in everything. But it is obvious that in a situation like that there is no agreement, just manipulation.
- ✓ **Be flexible.** Mental flexibility is necessary to establish agreements and compromise on our personal likes and preferences.

- ✓ **Be adaptable.** When an agreement is not achieved on something that is not vital, we can always adapt. Other types of things, such as managing money, bringing up children or big investments, are different; then it is not an adaptation, it is a concession.
- ✓ **Value the relationship.** If we do not value the relationship, then it is not possible to reach an agreement.

To manage disagreements in which everyone thinks they are right, we generally use *democracy*, a system in which what the majority says goes; in these cases there will always be people who have to resign themselves or who do not agree with the final decision. The understanding of love ensures that the decision is absolutely satisfactory for everyone, but it requires the development of inner love.

When ultimately we are not able to reach an agreement, we are left with three options, all of them individual:

1. Someone decides to **adapt** to the situation because they consider that that is the healthiest thing for them to do.
2. Someone decides to **complement** their life in some way, after informing the others involved, since there is no agreement.
3. Someone decides to **end** the relationship and each person goes their own way.

These are the three possible options after exhausting all possibilities of agreement. The first exercise, then, is to try to find agreements; only when it has been ascertained that no agreement is possible, will those involved opt for the individual decisions.

Conclusions

- ✓ Loving is enjoying everything we do.
- ✓ Love is 100% capacity for service, 100% commitment, 100% adaptation, 0% fear and 0% resistance.
- ✓ Love is not a feeling; you cannot suffer because of love.
- ✓ Love needs to be verified and practiced.
- ✓ With love we open up, with fear we close down; with love we trust, with fear we doubt.
- ✓ Learning to value is learning to love.
- ✓ Love is learning to respect differences.
- ✓ Love is being happy with the other's happiness.
- ✓ Love is always giving the best of oneself.
- ✓ Love is the ability to have excellent relationships.
- ✓ Love signifies total acceptance.
- ✓ Love is universal, while agreements are specific.
- ✓ Love is neutral.
- ✓ Love involves a profound understanding of the Universe.
- ✓ Love is unity, equilibrium; ignorance is duality, disequilibrium.
- ✓ The purpose of love is always associated with peace, harmony, happiness, satisfaction and peaceful coexistence.

- ✓ To pair or to couple means placing oneself on the same level, complementing and being willing to smooth any differences. This involves giving way and learning to establish agreements.
- ✓ No one can make us happy, everyone is responsible for making themselves happy.
- ✓ In an excellent couple there will be healthy communication, agreements, commitment, stability and satisfaction.
- ✓ The secret of happiness in relationships is every day to do the best we can and to accept with love the result that life gives us.
- ✓ Love does not arise spontaneously, it has to be developed.

Nothing should be believed, nothing should be taken as true or fact; *we must practice* and verify whether in our own lives this information works and produces satisfactory results.

With this information we have *three alternatives for action*:

1. We can keep it in our library.
2. We can carry it with us and show it to everyone.
3. We can integrate the information within us, so that it becomes how we act. Only in this last case will we obtain satisfactory results.

Training exercises

Exercise for practicing the seven tools of love

Each day of the week, consciously practice one of the tools in your daily life, wherever you are. For example, on Mondays you can focus on *acting* with efficiency and calmness, and on paying special attention to what you do in order to try not to attack anybody in thought, word or deed. On Tuesdays you can practice with the tool of *adaptation*, trying not to run away from situations that you are meant to experience. And so on.

Exercise for expressing love

This exercise requires constant training in self-observation, but it gives excellent results. The idea is to learn to express love when you are feeling bad and having difficulties. First of all you stop blaming others or yourself, then you stop reacting, and lastly you learn to express your love.

Mental reprogramming with love information

To practice this exercise, repeat the following sentences:

- ✓ *I have the ability to be happy by myself. No external situation can affect my happiness, my peace or my ability to love.*
- ✓ *I value profoundly all that I have available to me, and I am committed to enjoying it intensely.*
- ✓ *I give thanks for all the opportunities that I have to learn to serve with love. I am happiness, peace and love.*
- ✓ *Everyone always does the best they know how to and the best they can.*

Thermometer exercise

To measure how your understanding of love works and to know whether you have succeeded in replacing sentiment with love, we suggest you make a list in two columns: one headed *inner peace* and the other *outer respect*. In the peace column, write down what used to upset you but no longer does, or now affects you less; and in the respect column, list every situation in which you have respected others in their decisions, behaviors, habits, ignorance or in anything else they do.

Personal challenge exercise

If you are willing to improve your relationships and truly committed to doing so, our proposal is: not to attack, not to complain, not to blame others or yourself, find solutions and give support. These are the tools for managing differences from the point of valuing.

If you always do the same thing with the same attitude, you will always obtain the same results. Change the information, change the attitude and you will change the results.