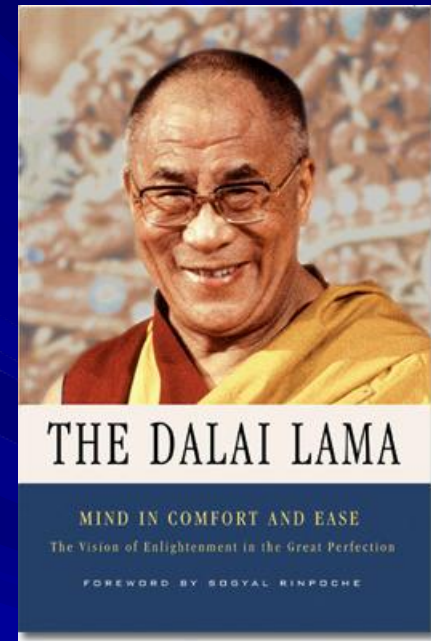


# Mind in Comfort & Ease: The Role of Love in the Therapeutic Relationship



# Mind In Comfort & Ease

- *The Trilogy on Finding Comfort and Ease*
  - Composed by the 14<sup>th</sup> Century Tibetan (*Dzogchen*) master Longchen Rabjam (Longchenpa)
- *Dzogchen*: the primordial state, that state of total awakening that is the heart-essence of all the buddhas and all spiritual paths, and the summit of an individual's spiritual evolution.
- The awakening of *Bodhichitta*:
  - The arising of spontaneous and limitless compassion for all sentient beings
  - The falling away of the attachment to the illusion of an inherently existent self (the arousal of awareness of interdependence)
  - Page 151 of Mind in Comfort and Ease by HHDL

# Mind In Comfort & Ease

## Finding Happiness

- The Research of Edward Diener
- Life Satisfaction: What makes people happy?
  - High Extraversion (positive emotions), Low Neuroticism (negative emotions)
  - Genetic basis: tends to run in families
  - Working toward goals helps; social comparisons are not that important
  - Little relationship between wealth and happiness (negative correlation between valuing wealth and happiness); living in a wealthy nation predicts happiness
  - THE HAPPIEST PEOPLE ALL APPEAR TO HAVE STRONG SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS.

# Mind In Comfort & Ease

## Finding Happiness

- The Research of George Vaillant
  - The Grant Study
  - <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/print/200906/happiness>
- Factors that predict Happiness in the Elderly
  - Mature Adaptations: altruism, humor, anticipation, suppression, and sublimation
  - Education
  - Stable Marriage
  - Not Smoking
  - Not Abusing Alcohol/Drugs
  - Exercise (Best predictor of good cognitive aging)
  - Healthy Weight

# Mind In Comfort & Ease

## Finding Happiness

- In an interview in the March 2008 newsletter to the Grant Study subjects, Vaillant was asked,
  - “What have you learned from the Grant Study men?”
  - Vaillant’s response: “That the only thing that really matters in life are your relationships to other people.”

# Mind In Comfort & Ease

- *Bodhichitta*: The INTENTION to be spontaneously and endlessly compassionate in all relationships
  - Adding a dose of *farginen* (Yiddish for “making a pact with another’s pleasure/happiness; opening the space to rejoice in the success of another; the opposite of envy”)
- To Live Life with Intentionality
  - Volition: The Power to Choose or Determine; WILL
- How do we exercise the will to be compassionate with Intentionality?

# Mind In Comfort & Ease

- The Research of Benjamin Libet
- Do we have “Free Will” or “Free Won’t”?
  - Readiness Potential: Brain Activation that occurs 550 milliseconds before a voluntary action
  - Consciousness of the Intention to Move occurs 350 milliseconds later, leaving
  - 200 milliseconds to decide whether to *inhibit* the voluntary action

# Mind In Comfort & Ease

- How do we exercise the will to be compassionate with Intentionality?
  - Free Will is a gatekeeper, not a motivational state
- William James argued that “volition is nothing but attention.”
  - “The ability to emphasize, reinforce or protract certain thoughts at the expense of others percolating into consciousness manifests itself with will.”



# Mind In Comfort & Ease

## Why be a Loving Person?

1. People want to be happy.
2. Strong social relationships are the best predictors of being happy.
3. Being intentionally loving is the best predictor of having strong social relationships.

# Mind In Comfort & Ease

## How to be a Loving Person?

1. Form the Intention to be Compassionate.
2. Accept that all sorts of Impulses will originate in the Mind.
3. Understand that all impulses can be reinforced or inhibited IF they are noticed.
4. Learn to “pay attention with intention.”  
(Mindfulness)

# Mind In Comfort & Ease

How can therapists teach people to Love?

- By practicing *Bodhichitta* in the therapy hour
  - Spontaneous Arousal of Compassion
  - Awareness of Interdependence of ALL beings
- By leading groups that facilitate the experience of Compassion
  - The Campaign for Love and Forgiveness
  - The Fetzer Institute:

<http://www.loveandforgive.org/>

# Mind In Comfort & Ease Workshop Agenda

- How do I become more loving, in appropriate ways, as a therapist?
  - A look at the research
  - A look at the theories
- How can I teach people to be more loving in their lives?
  - The Mystery of Love from The Fetzer Institute

# Monday Afternoon Break



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NzJ2NKp23WU>

# Mind in Comfort & Ease

## What Causes Therapeutic Improvement?

- Therapist Effects (Rediscovering Fire)
  - What are the tools that the therapist can use to facilitate improvement?
    - The Research of William Miller and Project MATCH
- Therapist Attributes (Mindfulness & the Therapeutic Relationship)
  - Review of the Research concerning Client descriptions of Effective Therapists
- Love and Therapy (What's Love Got to do With It?)
  - What do the Greeks have to say about Love?

# All Counseling Theories Include:

- A Way of Understanding involving the body of counseling knowledge that explains personality theory and structure and human development.
  - Case Conceptualization
- A Way of Being addressing the counselor's presence in the room with the client.
  - Therapist Presence
- A Way of Intervening involving the techniques the counselor will use to enhance the client's movement toward the goals of treatment.
  - Treatment Plan

# Natural Change

## “Spontaneous Remission”

- Research concerning most disorders consistently finds:
  - Population prevalence is far higher than # of individuals in treatment
  - When affected individuals (not in treatment) are followed over time, many improve
- True for many disorders, including alcohol problems, depression, nicotine dependence



# Therapist Effects

- Miller, Taylor, & West (1980) observed 9 therapists and rated them on the extent to which they showed accurate empathy
- Treatment for alcohol disorders
- Did follow up at 6, 12, and 24 months
- Found:
  - At 6 months,  $r = -.82$  (drinking & empathy)
  - At 12 months,  $r = -.71$
  - At 24 months,  $r = -.51$

# Therapist Effects

- Miller, Benefield, & Tonigan (1993) rated therapists for confrontational responses
- Did follow up at 12 months
- Found:
  - At 12 months:  $r = .65$  (drinking & confrontational therapist style)
  - Also found strong correlation between confrontational style and increase in client negativity (resistance)

# Project MATCH

- “Matching Alcoholism Treatments to Client Heterogeneity”
- Project MATCH Research Group
- A collaborative clinical trial organized by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
- Primary Reference: Journal of Studies on Alcohol, January, 1997

# Project MATCH

- Two parallel but independent randomized clinical trials with one year follow-up
- Group One: 952 (72% male) alcohol dependent clients in OP treatment
- Group Two: 774 (80% male) alcohol dependent clients in aftercare following IP or partial hospitalization

# Project MATCH

- Members of each group randomly assigned to one of three treatment modalities:
  - 12 sessions of Cognitive-Behavioral Coping Skills Therapy
  - 12 sessions of Twelve-Step Facilitation Therapy
  - 4 sessions of Motivational Enhancement Therapy
- Outcome Measures:
  - Percent days abstinent from alcohol
  - Drinks per drinking day

# Project MATCH

- Results of the OP Group:
  - 80% of days abstinent from alcohol
  - 3 drinks per drinking day average
- Results of the Aftercare Group:
  - 90% of days abstinent from alcohol
  - 2 drinks per drinking day average

# Project MATCH

- Results:
  - NO differences between the groups
  - Only psychiatric severity predicted poorer outcomes (in the Twelve Step Facilitation Therapy)
- Therapeutic Technique (CBT, 12/Step, MI) DID NOT predict outcome
- Common Factors (Person-Centered Relationship Style) predicted outcome

# Therapist Effects

## ■ Miller Concludes:

- Love (*agape*) triggers change
- What kind of Love?
  - 1 Corinthians 13: 4 – 8; 13)
- Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. Now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.



# Therapist Attributes

- Therapeutic Techniques fail to predict most of the variance in outcome
  - Therapist Attributes predict most of the variance in outcome
- Summary of words from a variety of studies:
  - Sensitive, gentle, honest
  - Warm, attentive, interested, understanding, respectful

# Therapist Attributes (continued)

- Summary of words from a variety of studies:
  - Spending more time with difficult clients, used resources outside the immediate therapeutic circumstances, firm and direct with parents, encouraged autonomy, implemented problem-solving skills, had strong therapeutic relationships
  - Higher empathy skills
  - Understanding and accepting, independence encouraging
    - Not authoritarian (directive) and critical-hostile

# Therapist Attributes (continued)

- Summary of words from a variety of studies:
  - Feeling understood, self-aware, feeling supported by the therapist
  - Clients with serious mental illness in a community mental health setting: Positive therapeutic alliance best predictor

# Importance of the Therapeutic Alliance

- Average Psychotherapy client is better off than 80% of untreated Controls
  - Research shows equivalency of techniques
  - Therapeutic Alliance is strongest predictor of good outcomes
- Descriptions by Clients of Good Therapists
  - Acceptance, Empathy, Warmth
- Bien concludes:
  - Rogers was right; it IS about the relationship

# End of Monday's Work



# Mind in Comfort & Ease

## Day Two



# Love and Therapy

## The Greek Language and Love

- *Philia* refers to friendship
- *Eros* refers to sexual love (but is actually a bit more complicated than that, as we'll see)
- *Storges* refers to attraction and sentimental affection (e.g. "I love chocolate" or "I idolize Tommie Agee")
- *Agape* refers to selfless, accepting, sacred love

# Love and Therapy

- *Agape*: “disinterested” Love; that is, not interested in personal gain; a love that is focused on the welfare and benefit of the other.
- *Agape*: Accepting Love; that is, wants to know the person exactly as s/he really is
- *Agape*: Authenticity of the Lover; that is, the Lover is willing to be known exactly as s/he really is
- *Agape*: What Carl Rogers described when he described his 3 Core Conditions: Accurate Empathy, Unconditional Acceptance, Genuineness



# Love and Therapy

- Freudian Analysis: Love is Psycho-Sexual in Nature; always Transferential (or Counter-transferential)
- Freud: “Normality is an ideal fiction; I hope to transform hysterical misery into common unhappiness.”
- Can *Eros and Filia* be parts of the therapeutic alliance?

# Love and Therapy

- *Eros*: More than just sexual or romantic love
  - *Eros* is born of chaos and personifies creative power and harmony
  - *Eros* personifies the life-force; from nothing comes something created
  - *Eros* personifies the power that comes from deep sharing, including but not limited to sexual sharing
  - *Eros* personifies the unleashing of primordial creative power

# Love and Therapy

- Plato held *Philia* as higher than *Eros*
  - *Eros* is too irrational and physical for Plato
  - Too concerned with begetting children rather than begetting Wisdom
- *Philia*: The Love between friends

# Love and Therapy

## ■ According to Plato:

– *But there are some whose creative desire is of the soul (psyche), and who long to beget spiritually, not physically, the progeny which it is the nature of the soul to create and bring to birth. If you ask what that progeny is, it is wisdom and virtue in general.*

– From “The Symposium”

# Love and Therapy

- Is there room for *Eros* in therapy?
  - Therapy acknowledges Chaos
  - Therapy embodies creative power and harmony
  - Therapy depends on deep sharing; with strong and definite sexual boundaries
  - Therapy unleashes the client's primordial creative power; clients "self actualize"

# Love and Therapy

- Is there room for *Philia* in therapy?
  - *Philia* is the love between friends
  - Friends long to create spiritual progeny
    - Wisdom and Virtue
  - In *Philia*, relationship is one of the *psyche*

# Love and Therapy

- Rodriguez concludes:
  - *Agape* is essential to all therapy
  - *Eros*, in its purest sense, provides the energy and drive of therapy
  - *Philia*, in its purest sense, provides the spiritual framework of the therapeutic alliance (two souls [psyches] seeking wisdom and virtue)

# Tuesday Morning Break



[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RX\\_Y3zUPzEo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RX_Y3zUPzEo)



# *the Mystery of Love*

*Explore the many kinds of love  
that give shape and meaning to life.*

- Emotion, Energy, Practice, Force: What is Love?
  - Welcome and Introductions
    - Be sure to include “How you are feeling NOW”
  - Review Format (Conversational, Discussions, Videos to provoke both)
  - Logistics
  - Distribute materials, pointing out need to bring each week and presence of “homework”
  - Review the “Shared Agreements”
  - Do a “Centering” Exercise
    - Brief guided meditation or prayer

# Emotion, Energy, Practice, Force: What is Love?

## ■ Our Shared Agreements

1. We agree to hold confidential what is shared in this room. If we encounter a conversation partner outside this room, we will respect his or her privacy.
2. We intend to balance sharing and listening, allowing everyone to participate, and we'll pass whenever we wish.
3. When someone is speaking, we'll allow him or her to speak uninterrupted, and refrain from giving unsolicited feedback, advice, or commentary.
4. We commit to using "I" statements as often as possible when we share.

# Emotion, Energy, Practice, Force: What is Love?

## ■ Our Shared Agreements

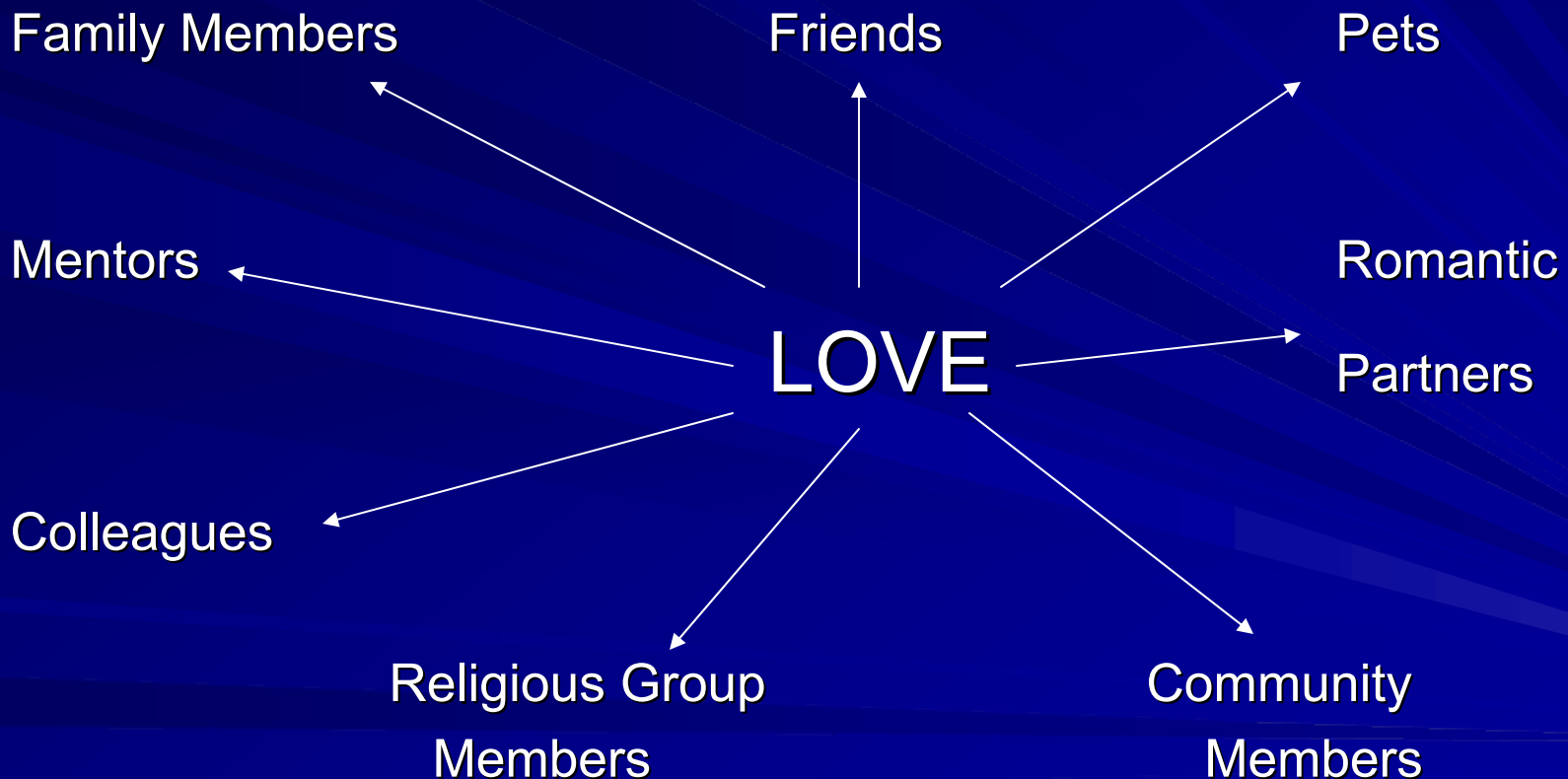
5. We will assume good intentions on everyone's part, agree that we may disagree at times, and learn together about respecting differences.

6. If an exercise makes us uncomfortable, we can skip it or ask the facilitator about an alternative.

7. We intend to arrive on time and attend all four conversations, and strive to begin and end our conversations on time.

8. We will listen with focus and attention.

# Emotion, Energy, Practice, Force: What is Love?



# Emotion, Energy, Practice, Force: What is Love?

## ■ Embodied in Moral Exemplars

- Mother Theresa
- Gandhi
- Dalai Lama
- Martin Luther King
- Aung San Suu Kyi
- Nelson Mandela

# Emotion, Energy, Practice, Force: What is Love?

## ■ Embodied in the Brain

- Mothers looking at pictures of their babies have the compassion response
- Newborn babies DO NOT cry when hearing a recording of their own crying
  - But they DO cry when they hear a recording of another baby crying!

# Emotion, Energy, Practice, Force: What is Love?

## ■ An Emotion?

– Something we feel inside?

## ■ An Energy?

– Something that motivates us?

## ■ A Practice?

– Something we do?

## ■ A Force?

– Something that compels us to do?

# Emotion, Energy, Practice, Force: What is Love?

- We can name it when we feel it!
  - Unconditional acceptance of another
  - Parental and familial love
  - Romantic love
  - The compassion of another
  - Witnessing the generosity and selflessness of others
- We “listen to our hearts” to feel love’s presence



# Emotion, Energy, Practice, Force: What is Love?

- Listening to our hearts
  - Brings up memories of broken hearts
- Broken hearts
  - Shards and destruction? Or...
  - A breaking that leads to a rebirth
- Love requires vulnerability

# Emotion, Energy, Practice, Force: What is Love?

- The Story of Boris and Camilla: “Love & Friendship”
  - What makes their friendship unique and unlikely?
  - How did they express their love for each other?
  - How did each of them benefit from this love?

# Emotion, Energy, Practice, Force: What is Love?

## ■ Suggested Home Practices

- I often express my love for someone by \_\_\_\_\_
- I like people to express their love for me by \_\_\_\_\_
- The most loving thing someone did for me as a child was \_\_\_\_\_
- The most loving thing someone has done for me as an adult was \_\_\_\_\_
- I would like to do something loving for \_\_\_\_\_

# *the Mystery of Love*

*Explore the many kinds of love  
that give shape and meaning to life.*

# Emotion, Energy, Practice, Force: What is Love?

## ■ Review of Suggested Home Practices

- Which practices did you do?
- What did you learn from it/them?
- How will this affect your loving relationships?

# Conversation Two

## Nature & Nurture: The Power of Love

- Love as a biological imperative
- Kyrie & Brielle Jackson: The Rescuing Hug
- Blood Oxygen and Heart Rate Became Normal



# Nature & Nurture: The Power of Love

- Love Creates Biological Connectedness
  - Love withstands death
    - Memories, feelings remain
  - Love is Unconditional
    - Our loved one may “do wrong,” but the feeling remains.
  - Love is Conditioned through Learning
    - Patterned after our primary caregivers
    - Adult empathy is best predicted by mother/child relationship (study of Germans who assisted Jews during the Holocaust)

# Nature & Nurture: The Power of Love

- Love has an Impact on Physical Health
  - Feeling Loved Predicts:
    - Lower rates of Coronary Artery Disease
    - Lower rates of Angina
    - Higher death rates (Dean Ornish study)
    - Better Immune System responsiveness
  - Feeling Loved Makes Us Feel Safe
    - Lowers the body's stress response



# Nature & Nurture: The Power of Love

- Feeling Loved Predicts Reaching Out to Others Lovingly
- Feeling Loved Predicts Greater Self Acceptance and Acceptance of Others
- “If you truly loved yourself, you would never harm another.”  
– The Buddha

# Nature & Nurture: The Power of Love

## ■ The Story of Ryan Johnson: “Unconditional Love”

- What is your reaction to this story?
- Can you relate to Ryan?
- Are Ryan’s choices loving or something else?
- How would you characterize his parents’ response?
- What happens when individual actions or decisions conflict with family interests?

# Nature & Nurture: The Power of Love

## ■ The Story of Ryan Johnson: “Unconditional Love”

- Do you have friends and family members whose beliefs or preferences oppose yours? Do you still love them?
- What is your concept of love or compassion toward yourself? How important is it, and how does it help or hinder your relationships?

# Nature & Nurture: The Power of Love

## ■ Suggested Home Practices

- Start to notice your thoughts about yourself and the things you say to yourself. Are they kind? Loving? If they are, would you write them down for yourself as reminders? If they are not, how might you rephrase them to be more positive and supportive? How does it feel to speak compassionately to yourself?

# Tuesday Afternoon Break



# *the Mystery of Love*

*Explore the many kinds of love  
that give shape and meaning to life.*

# Mind in Comfort & Ease

## Day Three



# Existential Psychotherapy

## Irving Yalom

- Death, Freedom, Isolation, and Meaninglessness
- Isolation
  - Interpersonal: Loneliness; Isolation from other people
  - Intrapersonal: Stifling one's own feelings or desires; accepting "oughts" and "shoulds" as one's own wishes; distrusting one's own judgment; burying one's own potential
  - Existential: Complete separation from the world; "I am alone;" Thomas Wolfe in "Look Homeward Angel"



# Existential Isolation

- Unavoidable
  - “Exist” = To Stand Out
- Necessary
  - The process of becoming an individual
- Transformational
  - “It becomes clear...that existential isolation and interpersonal isolation are intricately interwoven.”
  - “It is the facing of aloneness that ultimately allows one to engage another deeply and meaningfully.”

# Isolation & Relationship

- “I believe that if we are able to acknowledge our isolated situations in existence and to confront them with resoluteness, we will be able to turn lovingly toward others.”
- Relationships assuage, but do not eliminate, existential isolation.
- Relationships characterized by “Need Free” Love make us become human.

# Isolation & Relationship

## Need Free Love

### ■ Martin Buber:

- “A great relationship breaches the barriers of a lofty solitude, subdues its strict law, and throws a bridge from self-being to self-being across the abyss of dread of the universe.”
- “In the beginning is the relation.”
- “Man is a creature of the between.”

# Isolation & Relationship Need Free Love

## ■ Martin Buber

- “I – It” and “I – Thou” Relationships

## ■ I – It Relationships

- Between a person and equipment; functional; lacking mutuality
- The “I” in this relationship holds back and is not fully real

# Isolation & Relationship

## Need Free Love

### ■ Martin Buber

### ■ I – Thou Relationships

- Between a person and a person; willingness to experience the other fully
- There is no “I” in this relationship, only an “I – Thou;” in each moment of relationship, the “I” is created anew

# Isolation & Relationship

## Need Free Love

### ■ Martin Buber

- “The basic word ‘I – Thou’ can be spoken only with one’s whole being. The concentration and fusion into a whole being can never be accomplished by me, can never be accomplished without me. I require a Thou to become; becoming I, I say Thou.”
- The young Buber and his horse (page 365 of Yalom); transforming an “I – Thou” into an “I – It” relationship

# Isolation & Relationship

## Need Free Love: Other Influences

### ■ Abraham Maslow

- Growth Orientation vs. Deficit Orientation
- Psychoneurosis = Deficit Orientation
  - Basic Needs have not been met: safety, belongingness, identification, love, respect, prestige
  - Relationship Style = Usefulness of the Other (I – It)
- Psychological Health = Growth Orientation
  - Basic Needs have been met; able to realize potential for maturation and self-actualization
  - Relationship Style = Others are Complex, Unique, Whole; Accepted (I – Thou)

# Isolation & Relationship

## Need Free Love: Other Influences

### ■ Maslow

- Growth Oriented People experience “Being Love;” “Unneeding Love”
- Deficit Oriented People experience “Selfish Love;” “Needing Love”



# Isolation & Relationship

## Need Free Love: Other Influences

- Erich Fromm: What is the nature of “need-free Love?”
  - The primary life task of the individual is to overcome “separateness”
  - “Love is the answer to the problem of existence.”
  - For Fromm, “Love is an active, not a passive, process.”
  - Love is either “mature or infantile.”

# Isolation & Relationship

## Need Free Love: Other Influences

### ■ Erich Fromm

- “Infantile Love follows the principle ‘I love because I am loved.’ Mature Love follows the principle ‘I am loved because I love.’”
- “Immature Love says, ‘I love you because I need you.’ Mature love says, ‘I need you because I love you.’”

# Isolation & Relationship

- Yalom's characteristics of a Need-Free Love:
  - Relating in a selfless way; no need for praise, adoration, sexual release...relating with one's whole being
  - Experiencing ALL parts of the other; not just the parts that may serve some utilitarian purpose
  - Caring about the being and growth of the other; helping the other to become fully alive

# Isolation & Relationship

- Yalom's characteristics of a Need-Free Love:
  - Caring is active; mature love is loving; one does not “fall for” the other
  - Caring is one's Way of Being in the world, not an elusive technique or skill
  - Mature caring flows out of one's richness, not poverty; out of growth, not out of need
    - Past loving is the source of strength; current loving is the result of strength

# Isolation & Relationship

- Yalom's characteristics of a Need-Free Love:
  - Caring is reciprocal; to the extent one turns toward “the other,” one is altered; one becomes more fully alive as the other experiences more life
  - Mature caring is not without rewards, which flow from (but do not instigate) genuine caring; one becomes altered, enriched, fulfilled;
    - Existential Loneliness is Attenuated
    - Frankl: “The rewards ensue from Mature Caring, but cannot be pursued.”

# Wednesday Morning Break



# *the Mystery of Love*

*Explore the many kinds of love  
that give shape and meaning to life.*

# Nature & Nurture: The Power of Love

## ■ Review of Suggested Home Practices

- Which practices did you do?
- What did you learn from it/them?
- How will this affect your loving relationships?



# Conversation Three

## When It's Hard to Love

- The biological imperative to love... →
  - The biological agony of rejection and hurt
    - HEARTBREAK
- The biological imperative to protect oneself → *Resentment*
  - “Like drinking poison and hoping the other guy dies.”
  - One begins to filter sharing; judge others based on safety of sharing

# When It's Hard to Love

■ Love Betrayed → Resentment →

■ Hatred                      OR                      Forgiveness

- Forgiving: A relinquishment of my anger, because my anger is hurting me and not the other guy (Hatred kills)
- Decision to not hurt the other
  - Attempt to have an empathic understanding of the other
  - Acceptance of the Other and Myself as flawed humans who hurt others and are hurt by others
  - Decision to act benevolently toward the other

# When It's Hard to Love

## ■ Forgiving

- May restore relationships (may not, and that's OK too)
- Reinvigorates our self-understanding
  - The “I – It” of Hatred/Resentment becomes the “I – Thou” of Love

# When It's Hard to Love

## ■ Forgiving

- More of my relationships become “I – Thou”
- Reduces my emotional pain (Anger, Sadness, Fear, Shame)
  - Helps me to be more available in all my relationships
  - Ultimate reason to forgive is not to restore the broken relationship but to improve all of my other relationships

# When It's Hard to Love

- The Story of Azim and Ples: “Brotherly Love”
  - What is your reaction to Azim’s and Ples’s story?
  - How do you think you would have acted in this situation?
  - What do you think would have happened if Azim had sought revenge?
  - Have you experienced anything like this, or know someone who has? How have you/they handled it?

# Emotion, Energy, Practice, Force: What is Love?

## ■ Suggested Home Practice

- Write out an imaginary dialogue between yourself and someone you find hard to love or forgive. State what both of you need and desire, object to and wish for. See if you can have compassion for both yourself and this person as you “speak” to and for them, and describe the best-case scenario for resolving your conflicts with or about this person.

# Wednesday Lunch Break

*the Mystery of Love*

*Explore the many kinds of love  
that give shape and meaning to life.*

# Wednesday Afternoon Session





# Conversation Four

## For the Benefit of Others: Kindness, Altruism, and Volunteering

- Altruism: “Our moral and political obligation to serve others and place their interests above our own.”  
(Auguste Comte)
- “There is a light in this world: a healing spirit more powerful than any darkness we may encounter. We sometimes lose sight of this force when there is suffering, too much pain. Then suddenly, the spirit will emerge through the lives of ordinary people, who hear a call and answer in extraordinary ways.”
  - Sir Richard Attenborough

# For the Benefit of Others: Kindness, Altruism, and Volunteering

## ■ Altruism

- Residents of Le Chambon, a small French farming village, during WW II
- Paul Rusesabagina in Rwanda
- Ruby Jones, a nurse in New Orleans during
- Katrina

# For the Benefit of Others: Kindness, Altruism, and Volunteering

## ■ Benefits of Altruism

- Longer life span
- Better mental health
- Immune system boost
- Reduced stress
- The “Helper’s High”

## ■ Altruistic Acts → Release of Oxytocin

- Motivates the body to repeat altruistic acts

# For the Benefit of Others: Kindness, Altruism, and Volunteering

- Altruism bonds communities together
  - Enhances connectedness among people
  - Altruism “lifts neighborly concern beyond one’s tribe, race, class, and nation... (It) is an absolute necessity for the survival of man.”
    - Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Regardless of Class
  - Bono, Oprah, Bill Gates
  - Saiedi, a 35 y.o. Iraqi woman who finds blankets, slippers, towels, and clothing for displaced children in Baghdad

## For the Benefit of Others: Kindness, Altruism, and Volunteering

- The Story of BACA (Bikers Against Child Abuse): “Love and Altruism”
  - What is your reaction to BACA and its work?
  - What was altruistic about the bikers’ behavior? What was not?
  - Did they act unselfishly and make sacrifices?
  - Did they receive anything for their efforts?
  - Can their work benefit their community?

# For the Benefit of Others: Kindness, Altruism, and Volunteering

## ■ Suggested Home Practices:

- Is altruism natural? Necessary?
- Has someone's altruism affected you? Have you benefited from altruism?
- How does it feel to be altruistic and to witness altruism?
- What might hold you back from acting altruistically?

# *the Mystery of Love*

*Explore the many kinds of love  
that give shape and meaning to life.*

# Workshop Evaluation

