

The High Point Pook

HPC strives to guide, educate, encourage, and support

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Volume 29

OMG!! It's February! Again!

Preface

Oh, it is February again. The month of love, romance, prince charming, and despair. The world around us turns into a bloody, red storm of hearts, roses, crepe paper, and broken expectations. A lot of people find this month completely debilitating and depressing because they are alone and not in a romantic relationship; or they compare the love in their life to the idealistic version the world is trying to sell us and feel like they come up on the short end of the stick.

The real problem starts with the fact that most of us do not understand what "love" is, or isn't, for that matter. The world around us tells us we feel "love" and if we don't "feel" all gooey, gushy, hot, and wobbly we can't really love a person. The fact of the matter is that this just is not true. We have to start by realizing there is a large and significant difference between an emotion and a feeling. Feelings come and go with or without our help, but emotions are strong and steady and require action on our part. To confuse the two is a huge disservice to ourselves. We deserve to live lives full of rich emotions and not tormented by deceptive and fleeting feelings.



Feelings and emotions are one of the main driving factors in addiction. As I've said many times before at talks I have given, happy people do not become drug addicts. One of the main problems with people who suffer from addiction is that they may actually not even have any definition of what "happy" is. It is not unusual for children who grow up in a dysfunctional family to have had such a miserable childhood, full of abuse and sadness, that they don't even know what the word happy means. If they were not loved as children, they may not know what the word love means either.

In the field of addiction medicine, we actually have a term for this, it is called alexithymia, which means that someone either doesn't have a word for their emotions, or they don't really know what words like "happy" and "love" actually mean. Since we have Valentine's Day coming up, a holiday that celebrates Love, it might be good to talk a little about what the word love means. It is much more than just a warm fuzzy feeling. It involves trust, mutual respect, and a desire for the other person to do well, be happy, and succeed in life. A person who takes you hostage, and cares nothing for your hopes and dreams does not really love you, they are only interested in getting their needs met. This may be difficult for someone to understand or accept. If we love someone, we may desperately want them to love us back, and it may be hard for us to accept if that person does not truly love us back or for us to understand why they don't or can't.

It could be that we ourselves may not truly understand the word love and repeatedly choose people who are not healthy for us because of our own flawed understanding of the term. That is why we have wonderful counselors like Amy and Emily here at HPC. They can help us explore our feelings, and learn the true meaning of terms like "happy" and "love" so that we have a much better chance of, as they say in the movies, living happily ever after!

—Vance Shaw, MD, FASAM

To truly "know thyself" one must accept each emotion, each feeling, each mood without judgment for their existence is part of the human experience. If you desire to be a more joyous person, then plan to give a little more joy out into the world. It doesn't cost you anything in rubies or gold. You may just be surprised who benefits the most.



Of all of the emotions and feelings which are experienced I believe the emotion of "love" has been the most studied, the most pondered, and the most misunderstood. In a society where the phrase, "I love you" is often uttered many times a day to others, I thought it would be appropriate to give a correct definition to this "love" that many of us claim we feel for other people. Love is not simply a word but an action and as such, I believe it to be best described in the Bible in I Corinthians 13, best known as the Love Chapter. And, as we embark upon a new month, the second month of the new year, the month that carries within it Valentine's Day and thoughts of love; it would be appropriate to describe the most valuable and treasured emotion of all. If we are going to say love is important, than it is very important for us to know exactly what love really is. Here is the best definition of what I believe to be the most important thing we can do for ourselves and one another—love."

—Rene' Shaw, Executive Director

Ponder This:

Reason and emotion counsel and supplement each other. Whoever heads only the one, and puts aside the other, recklessly deprives himself of a portion of the aid granted us for the regulation of our conduct.

- Luc de Clapiers



Feelings are much like waves, we can't stop them from coming, but we can choose which one to surf.

- Jonatan Martensson



Emotions make us human. Denying them makes us beasts.

- Victoria Klein



Inner peace begins the moment you choose not to allow another person or event to control your emotions.

- Pema Chodron



Emotional health is not about squelching one emotion to obtain a better one. It is more about recognizing and observing each as they arrive and then learning about their stories. For each has a specific arrival and departure, much like a chapter's beginning and ending, awaiting for the next.

- unknown



Feelings are finite. There are no new feelings. None of us experience different feelings from another. Feelings connect us with one another. Once you can tap into your own individual feelings, without being afraid of them, you are more able to recognize them in others.

- unknown



I Corinthians 13

New King James Version

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

**Newsletter edited by Larae Thompson—Office Manager, Ass't to Executive Director

