

The Many Shades of Love

Among terms which are used the most often, there is the one which is the most widespread among people. It is love. People use this term in various situations to describe many different emotions. According to Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, love is a "strong affection for another arising out of kinship or personal ties"; it is also an "attraction based on sexual desire" as well as "affection based on admiration, benevolence, or common interests" (n.d.). Nevertheless, love can mean many other different things which are not included in this definition. Love may not necessarily be directed toward relatives because it may be the feeling directed toward all of the people. Thus, love is a state of mind which brings a person happiness and makes him or her share this happiness with others.

There is a certain reason for me to define this term in this particular way. I believe that love is about sharing and caring. Love may be a person or an object which makes another person happy, but mere happiness is not enough. A person's happiness makes him or her want to make others happy. For example, one can truly enjoy one's job, and he or she may value it greatly. Nevertheless, he or she may be mean to his or her coworkers and create a gruesome atmosphere for them. This way, an emotion of an employee is not love since love excludes any possible mistreatment or negativity toward others. Love, on the other hand, encourages people to help others. For example, if an employee truly loves one's job, he or she is going to perform very well and do one's tasks perfectly. Even more, an employee is going to encourage other to perform as well because he or she will be concerned about the company and its future. Thus, a person will help others, so they will work better, and create a healthy and friendly atmosphere with his or her coworkers. Hence, love requires making others happy.

Another dimension of this term is about being happy oneself. For example, a person thinks he or she loves somebody who does not love the person back. Thus, a person becomes very miserable and upset since he or she cannot be with the loved one. Nevertheless, it is not true love. Love can never make a person upset because love's primary goal is to make people happy. If a person truly loves somebody, he or she will be happy for the loved one no matter what. The person will not require the loved one to love him or her back; but the person will be happy because the man or the woman one loves is doing well. Whenever a person loves somebody, he or she wants this person to be happy and enjoy life no matter what. Thus, true love does not ask for anything in return. If a person expects something and is unhappy when he or she does not get it, it is not real love. Imagine the situation when a woman says she loves a man, but the man does not love her back. The woman becomes very depressed and sad because she feels lonely and not needed. Her behavior and mood affect people around her including the man she has feelings for. This man feels sorry and ashamed for his lack of love, and he becomes just as miserable as the woman he has not returned his feelings to. Thus, in the end everyone is miserable and unhappy. The woman realizes that her depression made a person dear to her upset, but it did not make the man fall in love with her. Hence, it is not love. If a woman loved the man, she would respect his decision and appreciate his honesty toward her. She would be happy that he is well, and she would let him go. Thus, love will not bring a person pain; on the contrary, it will make her enjoy the valuable experience she has got.

In this case, it is also important to look at love as not only romantic emotion. This feeling can also be absolutely platonic because love does not necessarily require romance. For example, the feeling mother has for her child is love because taking care of the baby makes mother truly

happy. She does not expect anything from the child; a woman does not need proof or anything else because seeing her child well and happy is enough for her.

I want to add that I have created this definition of love thanks to my own experience. I believe that love is not only a feeling between a man and a woman. One's favorite book can be an object of love because a person may cherish it greatly and encourage others to read it. I believe that love is something pure and light. If a person has negative thoughts or ideas, it means that he or she is definitely not in love. If a person plots something in order to "get" the loved one, it can only mean that this is not love, but a mere amorousness. Even worse, it is dictated with selfish reasons which have nothing to do with a pure love.

I believe that love is a state of mind which makes a person look at the world from optimistic perspective. A person cannot love only one thing or another person. If a man loves somebody, his love will automatically spread to everything around him. If he loves a woman, he will love a city she lives in. He will love the nature around him as well as people who surround him. It proves that love is a state of mind which sets people to positive feelings.

Those who speak about love being a reason to suffer have never experienced love. I, for example, have loved a person; but the relationship ended abruptly. My partner did not want to continue relationship any longer because of lack of love. I, on the other hand, loved my partner very much. At first, I was upset, but then I realized that it was much better that we were not together. I was happy that my ex-partner was free and able to find somebody else. My love for that person made me understand that I wished that person well no matter what. It did not matter that we were not together because true love did not force anybody to anything. My love made me happy because I had a wonderful experience with my ex-partner, and I was very grateful for the time we had together.

Thus, I think love is not a mere attraction based on sexual desire; it is something much greater and purer. Love is not a mere emotion; it is a state of mind which changes the entire person and makes him or her happy to experience what he or she feels. My life has taught me that lesson about love. Sometimes I am upset because people I love are far away or not with me; but then I realize that it is all good as long as these people are well. This realization makes me happy, and I want to share this happiness with the others. I want the world to be happy so people I love will see its beauty and enjoy it. In my opinion, this is what love means.

References

Love. (n.d.). In *Merriam-Webster's online dictionary*. Retrieved October 8, 2013, from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/love>.