

A Deeper Look at the Word: Love

Love is as Love Does

By Rick R.

The longer I attend A. A. meetings the more aware I become of the evolution of the subject matter of meeting topics. In my early days in the 1970s the topic was normally about drunkalogues or whatever the leader wanted to talk about that day. Most of the meetings that I attend today are literature-based meetings and there is amplifying information in the literature that reinforces the topic. On page 164 in the Big Book, it says *"We realize we know only a little. God will constantly disclose more to you and to us."* Today we have access to all that they had learned up to that point in time plus everything we have learned since then and the sharing in the meetings is so much deeper as the result of those disclosures. I was at a meeting recently and the topic was *"Love without strings"* Sept. 28 in The Daily Reflections. It was interesting to hear the differing perceptions mainly based on the differing lengths of sobriety and how the word Love was perceived. I looked up the word in the Thesaurus and it is all about feelings like fondness, passion, adoration, affection, and many others. Over the years I have heard it said that "I can love him, but I don't have to like him." Is it him I don't like or is it his behavior I don't like? All of us come to A.A. with behavioral problems. It is not about him. It is about me being judgmental. There were comments about sexual attraction or *"erotic love"* which are common in most online definitions but that is not our purpose when dealing with the word Love. There are many definitions of the word LOVE and for our purpose, I believe the one that Scott Peck writes about in his book *"The Road Less Traveled"* and introduced it to Alcoholics Anonymous in 1996, He defines love as *"The will to extend oneself for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth."* He implies that it is not that version that we see on the movie screen. To me this means that love *is, caring for, and nurturing another person.* I can love everyone, even if they do not love me back. *It is not about them;* it implies that it's about me and my actions. As I took this approach, one by one I defused and neutralized all those mental conflicts and accepted everyone exactly as they are. *No longer do they crowd my thinking.* Do those people that still have behavior problems sometimes cross my boundaries? Oh yes, they do. Sometimes their EGO is threatened by something I shared at a meeting or in the community and they need to defend their position. Today I recognize these symptoms in others, and I try to be understanding about what I say at a meeting as to not make him/her uncomfortable. This takes time and I never respond to inuendoes when someone is trying to draw me into an argument. It takes two to tango and eventually, he gets to know who I really am, and he is no longer threatened by the thing I share. I try to Care for and Nurture everyone and at some point, in time I have run out of adversaries, that I know of, in fact, I become their best advocate. Today, the word Love is not a noun. Love is a verb. Love is as Love does. *Understand them, wish the best for them, and be willing to help them when you can.* Who could understand the behavior of an alcoholic more than another alcoholic who has experienced their own development in the program? The founding principles of A. A. is the caring for and nurturing of another alcoholic. If that is not love, then what is? With all my love, I rest my case.