

# ~POINTS OF VIEWS~

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Issue 3

## Love Is Not a Choice

“The greatest healing therapy is friendship and love.”  
– Hubert Humphrey Frederick Tsoukas

“The giving of love is an education in itself.”  
– Eleanor Roosevelt

“To live is like love, all reason is against it, and all  
healthy instinct for it.”  
– Samuel Butler

“And yet, love knows it is a greater grief  
To bear love's wrong, than hate's known injury.”  
– William Shakespeare / Sonnet 41

Love. The word itself conjures up myriad emotions and definitions. Does anyone really know what love is all about? The easy responses occur so quickly. I can see them rolling off my tongue as I write this newsletter. “There are all kinds of love.” “There is love of money. There is love of a child. There is the love of a parent to their child. There is one’s first love. There is puppy love. There is sensual love. There is the love of abiding friends. There is unfulfilled love. There is one true love. There is unselfish love. There is tough love. There is spiritual love. There is human love. There is the love of a pet. Some say love is simply biology.”

We can think of many ways that love is thought of, felt, and expressed. But is love one feeling, one thought, one longing, one need? Is love so easily compartmentalized and defined? Do we know what we are talking about when we use the word love? When we think of love? What is the importance of love in one’s life? Are we able to love when we are alone? Are we able to experience love when we face difficult circumstances and choices? When we must face our own sadness and grief and isolation, can we still feel any love within

ourselves; for ourselves and for others? In a world longing for love, do we really know what we are longing for?

The older I get the more convinced I become that love is not easy to define, and even harder to accept. It is inside us the day we are born. Love is a part of our essence. It is not this glowing orb that is waiting to be tapped into and create in us a new wonderful human being. It is akin to a seed that must be watered, fertilized and nurtured. And fertilizer is not always very pleasant!

Love is not a choice. It is the capacity to grow in affection, understanding, and grace for ourselves and others. It is the capacity to forgive and to have a wonderfully poor memory!

Love, I believe, is our capacity to embrace who we are and allow others to embrace us as well. Love is the ability to not hate our own existence. Love is ACCEPTANCE of ourselves.

Love is not something we can trigger. We cannot turn it on or off. But we can grow it by working hard on ourselves, to understand who we are, and why we do what we do. It will surprise us and grab a hold of us when we least expect it, perhaps when we think we are the most unlovable and unworthy creature on the planet. It is quirky, strange and ill-defined. Lastly, it can never exist in a vacuum. For in its essence, love grows by nurturing relationships, including getting to know ourselves.

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*"Wild horses run unbridled or the spirit dies." – Anonymous*

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One cannot own love or others. That would be possession, not love. And that would not be a relationship, but slavery. A slave to neediness and insecurity. We do not achieve love. There are no guarantees. Love, like relationships, cannot be static or concrete. And, like truly equal and unpossessing relationships, love can be a bittersweet experience. We discover we can love, but only if we never try to own those we care about.

And that means we allow those we love to be free to live their lives; even if it means our paths go in different directions. In the end, love is not about having. It is about living and respecting ourselves and others.

Truly, self-acceptance is the beginning of our capacity to love in all its forms.

- Helen Hill

## Help in Time of Need

**Suicide/Crisis Intervention**  
213-381-5111

**Teen Suicide Crisis**  
800-852-8336

310-855-4673 (6pm-10pm)

**Domestic Violence Hotline**  
800-799-7233

**Battering / Rape Hotline**  
310-392-8381 (24 hour)

**Elder / Dependent Abuse Hotline**  
800-992-1660

**Child Abuse Hotline**  
800-540-4000

**Daniel Freeman PET Team**  
310-742-8650 or 310-823-7928

**Psychiatric Emergency Team**  
310-618-9687  
800-854-7771 (after hours)

**LA Free Clinic (Ages 12-24)**  
6043 Hollywood Blvd  
Los Angeles, CA 90028  
323-462-4158

**LA Free Clinic**  
8405 Beverly Blvd  
Los Angeles, CA 90048  
323-653-0950

**Alcoholics Anonymous**  
310-474-7339

## HOW TO ARRANGE TO HAVE HELEN SPEAK OR PERFORM A WORKSHOP



### Please provide the following information:

1. Your name and job title/responsibility
2. Site name: business, educational institution, health care, or other. Please be specific.
3. Address and telephone number.
4. Best time of day to contact you.
5. Your name and job title/responsibility

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Non-profit/Agency fee: \$150 per session

Private / For-Profit fee: \$500 per session