

# The Age of Aquarius? Unconditional love

You probably remember the words singing in your head, "Peace will guide the planets, And love will steer the stars... Aquarius!" The dawning occurred in the 60s, so we've been waiting a long time, but spiritualists tell us that the new age is imminent. Although we have one more year of unrest before the great shift, they reassure us that the future holds great promise. Many of us are weary and stressed and in no mood for what appear to be empty promises. But during this time we can take steps to improve our lives and the social and emotional health of mankind.

The great spiritualists and religious leaders of the past have assured us that love is the answer, loving thy neighbor as thyself: unconditional love. Interestingly enough, modern-day research is finding that the state of unconditional love improves health and welfare as well as happiness. I'll be telling you about a spiritual and research-based approach to this goal which we can use immediately to get us through the difficult year of 2012. In this article and future columns I will be bringing you information from several sources, including the new book "Love for No Reason; Seven Steps to Creating a Life of Unconditional Love" by Marci Shimoff and Carol Klein, Free Press, 2010.

## Advice Line

by Dr. Betty Phillips



Unconditional Love can also be called Higher Love. We're talking here about cosmic love, not romantic love. In religious, cultural and spiritual traditions this love is related to the love of the Divinity which is shared with all humanity and the natural world. Because this love is universal, it is present within all of us; we can find it there in our hearts and souls. Access to this higher love is often not taught and can certainly be blocked by negativity such as stress, anger and fear. You've all had moments of unconditional love: a beautiful sunset, soaring music, a baby's smile, special moments when your heart wells up and your mind floats away on waves of happiness. As the sunset or music dims, you will continue to feel buoyant, joyful and happy. We are used to loving something or someone. However unconditional love is a heart-based state independent of loving a specific object. Conditional love will wane but unconditional love will continue on.

Shimoff describes unconditional love as "love for no reason," an innate state of pure love in order to contrast it with love for bad or good reasons. She feels that "love for bad reasons" is primarily the need to be loved to escape feelings of internal emptiness. While Shimoff indicates that "love for good reasons" is healthy, the reasons could change, leaving you without love. "Love for no reason" is actually an experience from the inside out, where you bring love to your experiences rather than looking for love outside yourself.

There is a scientific basis to unconditional love. Different parts of the brain are activated than in conditional or romantic love. The brain region involved in empathy is also involved in unconditional love. The hormone oxytocin transmits unconditional and maternal love. While all parts of the body are involved in unconditional love, the heart is seen as central and more important than the brain. The HeartMath program research has demonstrated that the heart is actually more influential than the brain in many respects. We also need to consider quantum physics and the role of energy in and around our bodies. From this point of view, everything is vibrating at different frequencies, with the frequency of love being a high energetic vibration. There

are two basic forms of emotion, love and fear, with unconditional love being the highest positive energetic vibration, expansive and uplifting. The vibrations of fear, including anger and depression, constrict you into a negative state. Both subjective and objective measures show the difference. For example immune functioning improves when people feel loving compassion while it is suppressed for hours after episodes of fear and frustration.


You can start now to increase your unconditional love without waiting for advice in future articles. Expose yourself to peak incidents of higher love, noticing the warm feelings radiating from your heart. Then practice. Conjure up the images, sensations or feelings and let the love well up in your heart. You might use an object such as a crystal or piece of jewelry or simply post it notes to remind you to practice unconditional love. A beautiful experience is to silently project blessings onto people as you encounter them in your daily life. And whenever you look at yourself in the mirror, send unconditional love!

*Need Advice? Send Dr. Betty Phillips questions about individual, relationship, marriage or family issues to BettyPhillips@BellSouth.net or 466 Eagle Point Road, Pittsboro 27312. Questions can be anonymous. Betty looks forward to hearing from you!*

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