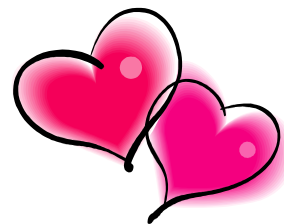


Prosperous Meditation: How to Choose a Love, True Friends and More

A Valentine's Day Special

How does one choose a love? Does not love choose us? Fate? Chemistry? Do these things not play a part in how we “fall in love”? Do the words “fall in love” indicate an involuntary response? Today we will begin to explore the issues of love and friendship; and I will discuss the three tools or modalities if you will, available to us in choosing a love mate or a good friend.



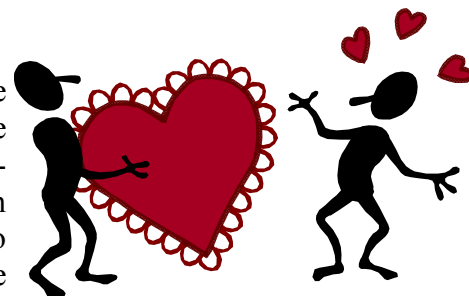
What is the Difference Between a True Friend and a Love?

It has been said that a true friend is a rare find and that to have one or two true friends is indeed fortunate.

I have asked the following question to many of the couples I work with, “What is the difference between a true friend and a love, (boyfriend, girlfriend, wife, husband etc.)?”. The answers are always interesting and thought provoking. The idea of sex being a difference is brought up but of course in today's world (friends with benefits) that is not always true. The idea of a wife or a husband carrying emotional and legal expectations is discussed along with the fact that it is those expectations that often drag the relationship down. In the end it is generally agreed that there are no major differences between the two categories and that if anything what most truly desire is to have a mate that is not only lover but a true friend as well. So how do we get to this Shangri-La?

How to Choose a True Friend? How to Choose a True Love?

How do we get to Shangri-La? How do we choose a true friend? How do we choose a true love? Sorry, but these have been trick questions of a sort to make the reader think. Does one really choose a true friend? No, a true friendship involves many choices over many years. Choices to be there for the friend through thick and thin. Choices to tell the truth when it is the last thing a friend wants to hear. Choices to step up and stand with a friend when nobody else will. We know our true friends by the fact they have and will drop everything to come to our aid when aid is truly needed. The idea here of, “Are we a true friend to anyone?” is good one to consider but I believe merits a newsletter in and of itself.



If we know that a true friendship is something that is worked at, is earned; why do we tend to think that true love just happens? Something to think about?

Okay, okay, it wasn't a complete trick question because true friends and lifetime loves have to start somewhere. Beautiful friendships like beautiful gardens begin with good soil so how do we start?

The Three Modalities:

- 1) The Heart
- 2) The Mind
- 3) The Soul

It is by using these three modalities as tools we can work to “choose” friends and “choose” who to enter and maintain a relationship with

The Modality of Heart

Remember when you were a kid back in the school yard or back in high school or even more recently on a soccer field with the other parents? There were a number of people who found themselves there with you; some you never spoke to, others you may have been repelled from, finally there may have been one or more individuals that you felt an affinity for. This affinity or attraction could have come in many intensities and flavors. This is how the modality of heart begins whether it is a friend or love object. How attraction proceeds, for example the thunderbolt of love or the slow



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burn can be different from person to person or from experience to experience. Who has not had an intense reaction to someone only to have it fizzle like a dud? How one experiences emotions and uses “feelings” to gauge the world is a highly individualized phenomena and therein lies the rub. Sometimes because a feeling is so big we feel that then “love” or even friendship must be self evident, that this is the person for me. But what if the one you have fallen for is a gun toting drug addicted anarchist?



The Modality of Mind

If one is only using the modality of heart without thought whatsoever then the answer to the above may be, “but he is an excellent anarchist, tops in his field and he is kind to his dog!” Love can sometimes produce a single mindedness and blindness that our friends and family see but we refuse to see in spite of their protestations.

In the space of an hour we can have upwards of two thousand thoughts. Accompanying these thoughts are feeling tones of various intensities and color. Emotion follows thought, yet unexamined thoughts (meditation is helpful here) can run amuck overwhelmed by the emotions of love, the “want” of friendship and by that “anti-love” emotion, fear. The application of mind here is what is necessary. The behavior and actions of others need to be observed with applied mind. What are those behaviors about? What are they not about? (Last issue!) Should a “good friend” treat you in this manner? If not then perhaps it needs to be discussed. So while being in love is a heavenly thing, this isn’t heaven it’s earth where love is a double edged sword. Certainly it is good to experience having your heart bruised or to have love and lost then to have never have loved at all but at some point we must understand that common sense applied to the affairs of the heart serves self best.

The Modality of Soul

Now, thoughts and feelings are influenced by our beliefs and our belief systems which in turn reinforce what we believe. Often if we become too rigid and this can become a closed system; all emotional and factual information appears self evident fitting in perfectly with what we believe about self and the world. In short we are fooling ourselves; the camouflage we create blinds us. This is why we need to use the modality of soul so that information can become available outside of the conscious loop. The idea of allowing information from the unconscious or the inner self is helpful here. What does this mean? Many of the world’s greatest inventors used this creativity to work out problems; they would go to sleep and awake with the answer. How does one tap in to this information or the modality of soul? There are many ways to do this. The idea of play is one, asking a question before sleep is another. **Meditation** allows for the gentle opening of a closed feed back loop. Allowing intuition is another. All of these kinds of activities can give you access to inner senses, to eyes that do not see, ears that do not hear.

Taken together the modalities of heart, mind and soul can help you find and nurture true friendships and provide for lasting love for self thereby creating the closest thing to heaven on earth.

On Love and. Fear

Fear is a primal emotion, the opposite to love.
Fear contracts, closes down, draws in, hides, hoards and harms
Love expands, opens up, sends out, reveals, shares and heals
Fear is the hawk screech and claw
Love is the mother and gentle law

←*Poem Up!*



Frank Nichols, LCSW is a Social Worker, Speaker and Consultant who in addition to individual and couples counseling combines psychotherapy with meditative practices. Groups are available, corporate workshops as well as meditation coaching. Please see his web-site www.prosperousmeditation.com