



Love

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❖ *Why do people marry?*

✓ *Because of love?*



❖ *What is this thing called love?*

λ What is love?

λ Who do we love?

λ Why do we love?



- ❖ *Love before the age of the Renaissance was a communal affair.*
- ❖ *But in the 13th century, Renaissance thinkers in the West began to challenge individuals to question and discard these stifling traditions. “Now individuals are free to value or disvalue any attitude, any choice, any object. But as a result, they are themselves confronted with this same freedom that others have to value or disvalue them.” Individuals began to compete for the affection of others. And this struggle gave rise to a deep-seated insecurity.*

❖ *Brain drives*

- ✓ *Sex drive (lust)*
- ✓ *romantic love*
- ✓ *attachment*



❖ *Characteristics of romantic love*

- ✓ *Intense craving emotionally*
- ✓ *Motivation*
- ✓ *obsession*



❖ *Who do we love? (Is love blind?)*

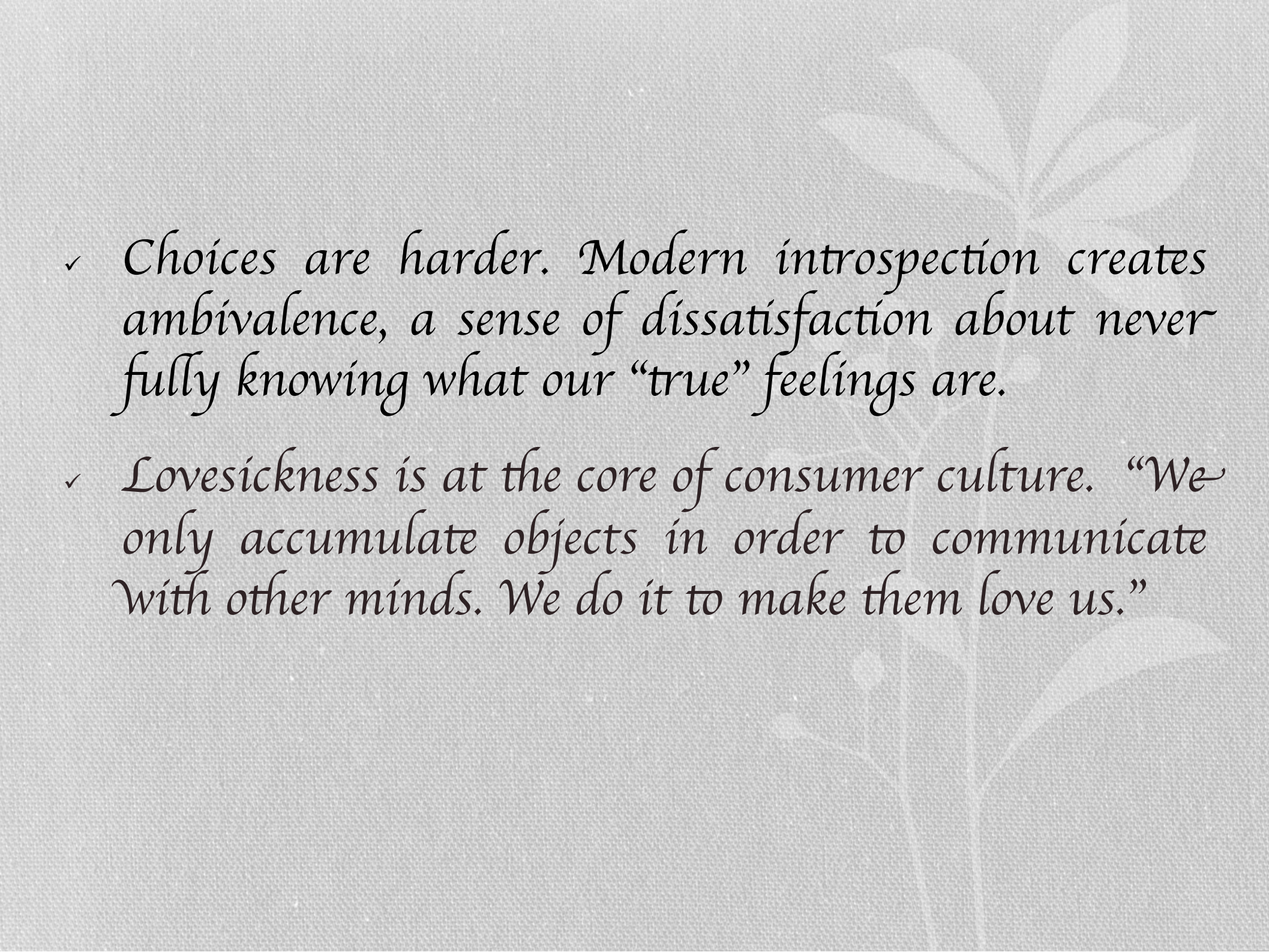
- ✓ *Love is not blind.*
- ✓ *Homophily – we tend to gravitate to people similar to us*
- ✓ *Proximity effect – physical or psychological proximity between people*
- ✓ *Contact theory – contact with another group is one of the best ways to improve relations among groups that are experiencing conflict (e.g., prejudice is seen as lower among online gamers who play with people from different cultures than those who don't)*



❖ Why is love important to study (sociologically)?

- ✓ Love needs to be understood both as an intensely private affair and as a socially constructed/negotiated/performative experience.
- ✓ Romantic love is undergoing transformation in contemporary society in the fields of the 'architecture' and 'ecology' of choice.
- ✓ We live in an increasingly individualised, agentic and democratic world of personal relationships.

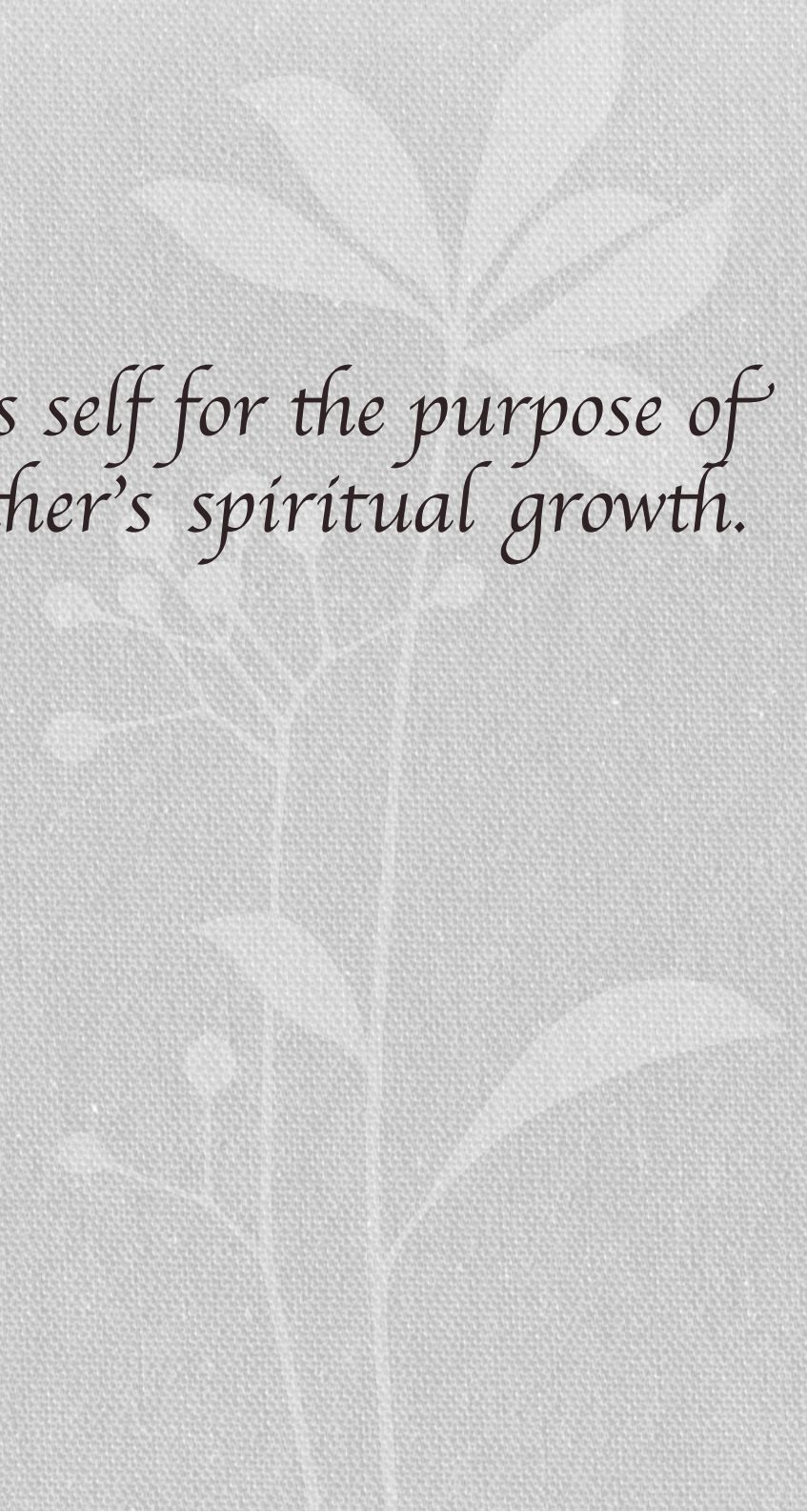
- ✓ The search for love today, while it looks like free choice, “entails engagement with a complex affective and cognitive market apparatus to evaluate partners.”
- ✓ When seeking a relationship we engage constantly in self-scrutiny. What sort of person am I really? What sort of person do I really desire? When I am in a relationship, how do I really feel? How long will this love last?
- ✓ Is this reflexive self-understanding helpful in understanding ourselves better?

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- A faint, light-colored image of a flower, possibly a lily or similar, is visible in the background of the slide. The flower is positioned in the upper right quadrant and is rendered in a low-contrast, almost ethereal style.
- ✓ *Choices are harder. Modern introspection creates ambivalence, a sense of dissatisfaction about never fully knowing what our “true” feelings are.*
 - ✓ *Lovesickness is at the core of consumer culture. “We only accumulate objects in order to communicate with other minds. We do it to make them love us.”*

- ✓ A lot of the research shows that people want a lot of things, a lot of ideal traits or characteristics in a partner. But prioritising the order or the importance of these traits would be a wise thing to do. Because there are some studies that find that people wish for everything and then they end up getting very little of what's actually important to them in a romantic partner. So if people can have their top three prioritised, the good news is they have pretty good odds of getting those traits in their romantic partner.



✓ *Parting is all we need to know of hell. - Emily Dickinson*

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- ✓ *Love is the will to extend one's self for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth.*
- Scott Peck

❖ *Love is not blind*

- ✓ *We see each other's faults, but we forgive them and with this forgiveness, our self-esteem grows and we grow to love ourselves more.*

✓ “The point of marriage is not to create a quick commonality by tearing down all boundaries; on the contrary, a good marriage is one in which each partner appoints the other to be the guardian of his solitude, and thus they show each other the greatest possible trust. A merging of two people is an impossibility, and where it seems to exist, it is a hemming-in, a mutual consent that robs one party or both parties of their fullest freedom and development. But once the realization is accepted that even between the closest people infinite distances exist, a marvelous living side-by-side can grow up for them, if they succeed in loving the expanse between them, which gives them the possibility of always seeing each other as a whole and before an immense sky.” - Rainer Maria Rilke

The Experimental Generation of Interpersonal Closeness: A Procedure and Some Preliminary Findings (Arthur Aron, et al. 1997)

Set One

1. Given the choice of anyone in the world, whom would you want as a dinner guest?
2. Would you like to be famous? In what way?
3. Before making a telephone call, do you ever rehearse what you are going to say? Why?
4. What would constitute a “perfect” day for you?
5. When did you last sing to yourself? To someone else?
6. If you were able to live to the age of 90 and retain either the mind or body of a 30-year-old for the last 60 years of your life, which would you want?
7. Do you have a secret hunch about how you will die?
8. Name three things you and your partner appear to have in common.
9. For what in your life do you feel most grateful?
10. If you could change anything about the way you were raised, what would it be?
11. Take four minutes and tell your partner your life story in as much detail as possible.
12. If you could wake up tomorrow having gained any one quality or ability, what would it be?

Set Two

1. If a crystal ball could tell you the truth about yourself, your life, the future or anything else, what would you want to know?
2. Is there something that you've dreamed of doing for a long time? Why haven't you done it?
3. What is the greatest accomplishment of your life?
4. What do you value most in a friendship?
5. What is your most treasured memory?
6. What is your most terrible memory?
7. If you knew that in one year you would die suddenly, would you change anything about the way you are now living? Why?
8. What does friendship mean to you?
9. What roles do love and affection play in your life?
10. Alternate sharing something you consider a positive characteristic of your partner. Share a total of five items.
11. How close and warm is your family? Do you feel your childhood was happier than most other people's?
12. How do you feel about your relationship with your mother?

❖ Set Three

- ❖ 1. Make three true “we” statements each. For instance, “We are both in this room feeling ...”
- ❖ 2. Complete this sentence: “I wish I had someone with whom I could share ...”
- ❖ 3. If you were going to become a close friend with your partner, please share what would be important for him or her to know.
- ❖ 4. Tell your partner what you like about them; be very honest this time, saying things that you might not say to someone you’ve just met.
- ❖ 5. Share with your partner an embarrassing moment in your life.
- ❖ 6. When did you last cry in front of another person? By yourself?
- ❖ 7. Tell your partner something that you like about them already.
- ❖ 8. What, if anything, is too serious to be joked about?
- ❖ 9. If you were to die this evening with no opportunity to communicate with anyone, what would you most regret not having told someone? Why haven’t you told them yet?
- ❖ 10. Your house, containing everything you own, catches fire. After saving your loved ones and pets, you have time to safely make a final dash to save any one item. What would it be? Why?
- ❖ 11. Of all the people in your family, whose death would you find most disturbing? Why?
- ❖ 12. Share a personal problem and ask your partner’s advice on how he or she might handle it. Also, ask your partner to reflect back to you how you seem to be feeling about the problem you have chosen.

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