

# Living The Good Life

by Krysta Gibson



## Love Is All There Is!

The holiday season is here once again. Didn't we just do this a few months ago? People who have known me for awhile know that I used to hate this time of the year. I found it very shallow, overly-commercialized, and a sham. Besides, the thought of decorating a tree made me remember how one of my older brothers would never let me put tinsel on the tree because I didn't do it according to his idea of perfection. (Okay, I was a kid and I would sort of throw the tinsel on because all I saw was how pretty it glittered in the lights. He had this idea that each strand had to be put on slowly, one at a time, and be perfectly aligned horizontally. How boring. Yes, he is a Virgo.)

Fortunately, I have grown up over the past decade or so and I am able to have a much more tolerant attitude toward how other people do or do not choose to spend their time and money during this holiday season. It really is none of my business. For me, this is a special time of year to celebrate love. Not the plastic kind, the real thing.

No matter what holiday one celebrates or the reason behind the celebrations, spiritual or secular, I think most everyone is willing to see that love is the basis for all of the hoopla. People want to be loved and they want to express love. We just don't all agree on how to do it.

The question is: what is love?

For many people, love is all about controlling other people. "I will love you as long as you are who I want you to be and as long as you do what I want you to do."

For others, love is given in an attempt to have the other person approve of us. "If I cook your dinner, wash your clothes, and make myself available to you upon demand, then you will know I love you and you will love me back."

The people who go into debt so they can give gifts they can't afford are trying to trade the gifts for love and approval. This only

appears to work in some cases, and is not genuine love or approval since it is dependent on the gift-giving being of the right sort to make the other person want to love and approve of the gift-giver.

Don't misunderstand me. I love to give gifts and I love to receive gifts. I think gifts are one of the best things that were ever invented. Especially when they are wrapped in pretty, shiny paper or gift bags. My issue is that I never want to wait until a certain day to open my gifts. Once they are given to me I feel it is fair game to open them, even if there is a sticker telling me not to do that! I feel the same way about gifts I give. Once I give it to you, open it; don't wait for some arbitrary date.

Gifts are, however, only an outward sign of the inner feeling of love and/or appreciation for another person. If gifts are given from a place of wanting to manipulate the other person, in order to keep up appearances, or from the place of feeling one is obligated to give a gift, the giving loses its inherent value.

Back to love. What is the highest form of love? As taught by many wise teachers, the highest form of love that exists is allowing the other person or situation to be exactly the way they are without trying to change them. That's tough sometimes. Maybe that is why it is the highest form of love; because it isn't always easy or convenient!

"You mean I have to let my spouse beat me?"

"You mean I have to let my child use drugs and roam dark streets and bars alone at night?"

"You mean I have to let my boss make me work overtime without paying me?"

No, no, and no. That is not what I mean.

Allowing the other person to be who they are without trying to change them does not translate into accepting abuse or allowing your child to behave in an irresponsible manner.

Let's say your spouse abuses you in one way or the other. By loving and appreciating yourself, you let the person know that the behavior is unacceptable to you. They have the choice to continue or to stop. If they continue, you do not have to stay in the situation. The most loving thing you can do is leave and get some help from the many different sources that offer it. Your spouse then gets to choose if he or she wants to work on their issues or not. Yes, this can be difficult to do. It is also the loving thing to do.

As a parent, it is the most loving thing to insist that your child live according to the rules of this society by going to school, respecting his or her parents, being a responsible member of the family, and not using harmful substances. You can honor the child's need to be who he or she is while also honoring their need to get some help.

As far as bosses who take advantage of you? Give them a chance to run their company according to the law or move on. They don't have to change but you might choose to do so. As one friend of mine likes to say, "I was looking for a job when I found this one so I can do it again."

In less extreme cases, love is really about simply allowing other people to be who they are without insisting they become who you want them to be. It is interesting that this issue has come up in several sessions I have had with clients recently.

They had situations where people were treating them poorly, criticizing their choices and being totally disrespectful of my clients. How to handle this in a loving way that doesn't result in an argument or in my client feeling beat up?

Love, love, love. As the person is criticizing you, being mean, or otherwise belittling you,

simply listen and allow them to be who they are, while sending them loving and accepting thoughts. No need to argue. No need to be right. No need to change anything. Let them be, thank them for their opinion, and move on. Try it! The response to this is truly amazing.

Just imagine if we could all do this? Simply respect other people's beliefs and viewpoints, send them love, and live our own lives.

Isn't that the basis for peace? While we can't make anyone else do this, we certainly can do it ourselves in our daily lives and enjoy the difference it makes in how we feel and how we experience life.

I wish you the best holiday season in whatever way you wish to celebrate it!

I am going to throw a bunch of tinsel on my (artificial) tree however I see fit and I will let my brother hang his tinsel one by one. Now that is true love!

*Krysta is the publisher and editor of New Spirit Journal and is the author of two books and a CD. She is giving a class called "22 Steps to Success" in December. Go to her website for dates, times and details. [www.krystagibson.com](http://www.krystagibson.com).*

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## IF YOU SLEEP...

it may be time to wake up to what you are sleeping on.

Sleep constitutes an entire third of your life and your bed plays a critical role in your achievement of a wakeful and dynamic state of being. We are all trying to wake up and be present in the moment, finding that anytime we reside in the dead past or the non-existent future, it hurts. When we allow ourselves to be in the present moment we are alive—fully alive! Though not always easy, this is the most loving and gracious action we can perform for ourselves, everything and everyone.

We ask that you please take the time to wake up to what you are sleeping on and consider how sleep is often the most overlooked element of optimum health.

So, what are you sleeping with? Unlike beds of forty years ago, mattresses are now manufactured with increasing amounts of petroleum-based foams, volatile chemicals and fire retardants. In fact, you can be made ill by repeated exposure to these chemical emissions during the sleep process.

What can you do? You've taken responsibility for your food, your exercise, your environment...Isn't it time to take responsibility for the one third of your life over which you have absolute and complete control? A commitment to your well being is a blessing. It is a conscious creation of an alter/bed which provides you with the necessary profound rest essential for a dynamic wakeful life and the ultimate attainment of a relaxed and forgiving state of being.

Please, please allow us to serve you. We have found that the more we know about something the more we can appreciate it. We offer links to other like-minded sleep conscious companies along with exceptional resources through our website. We strongly encourage you to do your own research. Finding the right bed for you is our motivation—and it might not be one of our beds. All we ask is that you consider us in your process.

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Thank You and Sleep Well!

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