

Spiritual practice can help us learn to love and establish true intimacy.

Who has represented true love on the stage of world history? Most of us would name figures like Jesus, Gandhi, the Dalai Lama or Mother Theresa if we were asked to think of an example.

Spirituality and religion don't enjoy the best reputation in our increasingly secular world. But when it comes to true love in practice, most of the names that spring to mind are those of deeply devout and spiritual men and women.

That's not a coincidence. Spiritual practice is a stepping stone to learning how to love.

It's important to be clear on definitions, though. It's not about blind faith in some kind of creed or dogma. It's a practice that nurtures happiness and helps us change for the better.

In fact, it's crucial if we want to master the challenges in our lives while remaining calm and collected.

That's because we're not just physical beings. Each of us has two bodies, our actual body and a second, spiritual body. Meditation and mindfulness techniques are simply about harmonizing those two bodies. Once we've done that, it's much easier for us to understand our emotions.

Getting in touch with our real emotions is the aim of spiritual practice. And that lets us recognize the suffering in others and begin to love them.

Awareness of how others are feeling is related to love because true love is a search for intimacy.

A good way of establishing real intimacy is deep listening, a technique that lets you discover more about your partner. All it takes is an hour or two in which you concentrate on being purely present for them. The process is endless because all of us contain fathomless depths.

Physical intimacy is another means of establishing intimacy. Sex rises above the mundane and becomes a thing of true beauty when it is simultaneously an expression of emotional and spiritual intimacy. That’s easier said than done though, and it only works when both partners are fully mindful and filled with love for one another.
