

Love requires you to trust and respect both yourself and your partner.

So now you know the key traits of true love. What else do you need to know?

Well, there are two other crucial elements to love – respect and trust.

Love isn’t just directed at its object; it’s also a matter of respecting and trusting yourself.



In fact, love always begins by looking inward. To love, you have to learn to trust your goodness and compassionate nature.

That’s a kind of self-love. To achieve such a state, you must respect and trust your body as it is. By accepting yourself as you are, you’ll find that your body becomes a sanctuary in which you can seek rest and shelter in troubled times.

Think of a meadow covered in flowers. No two flowers are the same. We’re like that too – each of us a unique blossom different from those around us.

But we’ve become accustomed to taking a critical view of ourselves and others. We look at a flower and say that it’s not perfect, that this leaf could be trimmed and that stalk uprooted, rather than doing what we should by looking for beauty in things as they are.

So we have to learn to recognize that we’re already beautiful and remind ourselves, and others – especially impressionable youngsters – of that truth. Wouldn’t it be absurd to criticize a rose for its color rather than simply admiring the shade of its petals?

Love is a two-way street. Once you’ve started to trust and respect yourself, you’ll need to learn to extend that to your partner as well.

Love is impossible without trust. If you can’t trust someone, you won’t be able to experience true love with them.

But it’s not enough to simply respect and trust your partner in your mind – you also have to prove it to them.

Take an example from the author’s experience of meeting a couple from Bordeaux who’d come to his retreat center in France. The woman was unable to hold back her tears during their three-way conversation. Something was missing in her life – she was like a flower that needed watering.

So what was it that she needed? The author told her husband that what she lacked was love and respect.

Over lunch later that day, the husband acted on the author’s advice. He started to tell his wife everything he loved and respected about her and didn’t stop for several hours. Their sadness was instantly transformed into joy.

