

An Interview with Siegmar Gerken, Ph.D. on

Love, Sexuality & Relationship

©Siegmar Gerken, Ph.D.

1) "Your work encompasses body, mind, emotions and spirit. How does love affect people's lives?"

S.G.: CORE EVOLUTION addresses body-emotion-mind-spirit as a unity. Love is the resonance with the flow of life; therefore, the experience of love unifies all these aspects and therefore affects every state of people's lives. A person in love will communicate and create from a place of harmony, well-being, peace, joy and a sense of fulfillment.

2) "Is love between human beings an experience you can feel without guilt, manipulation, power fight, envy, possession, attachment, dependency etc.?"

S.G.: Once we agree to experience love with someone in a personal and social exchange - we agree to share the everyday life and we act from the consciousness of our personality.

In our CORE EVOLUTION workshops and trainings we lead participants into the experience and recognition of the reaction patterns of their personality, so that they can become more conscious about himself or herself and learn how s/he has developed these personality patterns and how s/he is still structuring these today.

By understanding these principles, we open up for new choices in our thinking and behavior. This is very important for a healthy relationship so that you can differentiate love, needs and wants. You can learn to recognize your own abandonment issues, unintegrated triggers, attitudes, desires and demands that arise and with that also your longings, fears, jealousy, attachments, etc.

When these unintegrated moments become active we protect and we often lose the contact with the flow of love and our radiance. Then, driven by the shortcomings of our personality, we are not any more "in" love; we have stepped "out" of the flow of love.

3) "What is fidelity?"

S.G.: Fidelity is a natural intention and arrangement to resonate with each other, explore life in all its depth and to be with each other.

If you really want to be in a committed relationship, then it requires the whole being and focus. Sometimes when personal needs, desires, and expectations are not met, people want to change the arrangement and they try to justify their change in attitude by comparing it with other types of relationships or suggest a more open, uncommitted life style.

Others may claim that they look for enhancement or diversity in life, including sexuality, etc. - but the bottom line is, that the partner is not any more 'enough'. Often then, it lacks the willingness, courage or consciousness to direct the energy toward the exploration of life with each other, to find out the deeper origin from where the perception of 'not enough'

comes from.

I sometimes get critique from people spiritual movements for this statement – that love is unconditional and can be shared with many people. In general that is true. But as soon as we address the whole person, I enter also into an emotional and social interaction and with that, we touch into the levels of our personality and our individual needs as well as distortions. I see this in the work with couples, again and again. The consciousness of the personality is limited. The personal work we do expands this limitation.

If you care for another person and hold this with integrity, you explore the nature of your changed attitude. Only from that depth can you make a decision, whether a separation may be healthy or if there are other possibilities for both partners to expand in their relationship.

Sometimes people come to me because they want to be supported in the process of separating in love. They became aware that they are not able to live the love that they felt or envisioned together. We must understand that love itself does not disappear or betray! It is the person who cannot sustain and integrate the flow of this energy and thus has a hard time relating from this place.

On the other hand, fidelity based on a limiting family-, religious- or cultural model and not emerging from the lovers truth for each other, is already distorting the free flow of love.

Two birds fly and sing beautifully and they meet in their freedom and creativity with natural intention - what happens if you bind their wings together!?

4) "What is passion?"

S.G.: Passion is the energy mobilized to move life. For me, passion is not just related to the general idea of love. Here it often gets confused with desires, lust, intensity, etc.

In a situation where people feel attracted to each other they move the energy with each other. People wonder why passion fades. Most often, they don't realize that it is like a flame. If you want it to become a fire, it is necessary to attend it, breath life into it and put a log onto the fire – meaning that you give an active personal commitment to keep the flame alive – and not just on Valentines Day.

5) "Is marriage an institution that supports love?"

S.G.: Any arrangement or social form can be filled with love, but a social form cannot create love.

Certain arrangements of security may make it easier for a person to stay in the process of love and not let underlying existential or irrational fears overshadow the relationship. Therefore it is good in a separation that people take care of each other financially or make other supportive arrangements.

Many couples live together unmarried with children and also in many countries this open form of living together is protected legally.

Weddings, legal or spiritual, are important events in a person's life. In many countries you

may be more pressured by the culture or the church to marry. In all cultures, you find different arrangements that try to bind relationship into a religious or social context.

If you truly love, the outer frame does not matter – in any case, you want to keep the love alive and celebrate life so that you can also meet difficult phases in your relationship.

6) *My son asked me a few days ago, mom does love end? What would you say?* S.G.: As long as there is the flow of life, there is the capacity for love. It is our beauty and responsibility as parents to educate this capacity and the willingness to resonate with that flow.

7) *There are instances where people who loved turned mad - can love turn into illness?"*

S.G.: Illness is always a result of an interruption or distortion of the free flow of life. Therefore, love can never be an illness since it is the resonance with the flow of life. When people feel '*in love*' and then project all their worldly hopes on it or go into idealization or are consumed by it - sexually or with their fear of betrayal, loss, etc., then they lose the contact with the original pulsation of love and they lose contact with the expanded state of consciousness, which the state of love creates.

To love someone means to support their unfolding in life. If love becomes attachment, it lacks the deeper meaning and understanding of passion, empathy and compassion, which then can lead to acting out or even to psychosomatic symptoms or illness.

Most people don't recognize that when we are *in love*, we perceive the expanded reality of ourselves and the other - that means we '*see*' the greatness, qualities and possibilities of each other. These impressions stay with us when we come back into our ordinary state of everyday reality. This is where these possibilities and qualities are more difficult to live by and to keep them aware, since then they face the limitations of the personality and society.

8) *"The longing to be with someone, the butterflies in your stomach, the physical attraction, the sexual desire, the ideas of perfection and the acceptance and enduring of situations you thought you will never accept; are all these deep feelings related to love?"*

S.G.: Love can transcend all differences. People of different colors, races, social classes, types, etc. cross boundaries and bridge differences when they open to love and feel their cords struck by another being. They resonate. They tune into the music of life and feel the desire to orchestrate a symphony of expression from the finest tune to a passionate crescendo. The continuation of this cycle then calls for an ongoing new creation of love.

In this state we become aware, that all images of life and about the world that we have developed, carry a personal flavor. With the experience of love and the expanded state of reality we can open the attachment to these images, ideas, philosophies or other fixations. They become options and then the person makes choices and practices the experienced freedom.

In love we transcend cultural and personal differences and gain the ability to heal and create harmony and peace. If you love someone, set them free!

9) "What role does sex play in love?"

S.G.: If people feel attracted and open the flow of life to each other, they may also want to unify the forces of sexuality with each other.

Love with the mature and free expression of sexuality, can enhance the physical experience of love, leading into a state of fusion in which lovers can transcend the duality of 'you' and 'me' and feel the oneness.

This fusion into oneness can also happen without being sexual with each other. You may tune in with somebody's love in a meditation and feel unified. You can see the love of a mother or father for their newborn in radiant ways. You may also feel that you want to share your whole physical, emotional, mental, social and spiritual being with another person.

Lovers may choose on which level they want to share their experience and communion of love in different ways at different times.

10) "It is a well-known fact: long marriages frequently say they get tired of sex; they find no passion after awhile. What is the matter?"

S.G.: In long marriages there may be a shift of priorities (children, work, etc.), or a natural shift in physical conditions (age, change of hormones or other). That does not necessarily mean that the desire for each other must be less. It shifts to another level of expression, understanding and acceptance. Their intention to meet and share life can still come from a place of care and lovingness and they still can be happy and radiant with each other, with less sex or even without sex.

But, if the loss of sexual desire and exchange is due to a withdrawal, disappointment, resentment, fantasies, etc., then we must carefully look at the reasons and how they relate to people's images about love, expectations and disappointments. In CORE EVOLUTION we support the individual or lovers to gain clarity in their emotional confusion or misconceptions and to find more integration, so that they feel open and good again to allow the flow of love and direct their energies.

11) "As a health professional, how frequently do you come across 'sick' minds, bodies, emotions and spirits due to love deceptions or misconceptions?"

S.G.: From my experience, all 'sick' minds - if you want to call it like that, come from the distortion of the original pulse of life. Not being able to resonate with the flow of life after awhile leads to stagnation, despair and also acting out, and results in the whole spectrum of psychosomatic appearances and disorders.

In psychology, we study 'Abnormal Psychology' which in general is the many descriptions of fear manifested in a human body-mind-soul-unity. We need more and more the courage to teach a new Psychology of Love! That is why our teaching is a Whole Person Psychology.

The Core is seen as the center of the individuated universal life; it is a part of the essence of a human being.

Neglect of the Core then becomes apparent on all levels of our system:

- The Body: its formation, expression, and dynamic capacities.
- Emotions and Feelings: the way we process impressions, inner and outer impulses.
- The Mind: the structuring, processing, and directing of our thoughts.
- The Will: providing us with the larger capacity for life, the energetic impulse for realization.
- Consciousness: the perception of the totality of our existence, which is perceived and expressed as a state of love, connecting us with something larger in life and existence.

In CORE EVOLUTION we address all these levels, so that the person can reconnect with the flow of love and center in the Essence.

12) "It seems that Love can also harm. How can the most beautiful human experience cause harm?"

S.G.: This is another misconception. Love can never cause harm - it is the distortion that people attribute to love, like jealousy, fear of betrayal and loss, holding on, demanding, idealizing, etc., which cause suffering.

Love is not always answered with love. Love may even agitate or provoke people. Since love penetrates the deepest resistance, it may also activate the energy held in this resistance and with that, makes us more vulnerable. People may then act defensive, aggressive or just withdraw, especially if the other person or group is threatened to meet on this direct level of love. Infants and children who have not been traumatized or indoctrinated (which can also be traumatizing) will always show a direct open reaction to the expression of love.

13) "In many countries there is a divorce rate of over 50%. What can those parents do for their children's future health?"

S.G.: In spite of all the freedom we have developed to explore sexuality or relationship, men and women seem that they are still unfulfilled. A commitment for relationship takes a deep understanding of one's own capacity to love and the ability to direct this love. If a couple does not feel fulfilled in their relationship and they decide to separate, they can still direct this love in a mutual respect and care for each other and for their children. Children who have caring parents, even when they are separated, will less likely be destructive with themselves or others.

14) "How could you live a healthy love? How do you teach your children about healthy relationships? How does family works for that purpose?"

S.G.: As you may understand by now from my teaching, there is no healthy or un-healthy love - there is only love.

In an undistorted way, love finds its expressions in harmony, mutuality and being caring. Ideally, these are the first experiences in our life from the womb to the early interaction with our mothers, fathers or caregivers.

We need to teach by living and affirming love and put it into action in our individual life; in the way we treat our children, partners, others and how we approach life in general.

15) "It is said that love is the true teacher in life. What does love teach you?" S.G.: The state of love allows you to recognize and experience the larger dimensions of life and with that also, the larger dimension of another person. Everything ordinary will be perceived with another intensity, it will have more meaning and appear more colorful. Love will also support us in recognizing, embracing and overcome our limitations. Love teaches us to fully receive the beauty of life.

- Interviewed by Alejandra Balcazar

Siegmar Gerken, Ph.D, ECP, HP (Psychotherapy) studied psychology, Education and Anthropology. He has pioneered Body-Oriented and Heart-Centered Therapy and Humanistic Psychology since 1971 and is the founder of the Energy & Consciousness programs, www.EnergyandConsciousness.com and of Core Evolution, www.CoreEvolution.com. Siegmar is adjunct teaching faculty at the Santa Barbara Graduate Institute at the Chicago School of professional psychology as well as at the Esalen Institute, Big Sur, California, the renowned Institute for the development of the Human potential. He conducts body-oriented therapy and mindfulness-based trainings at the Behavioral Therapy Training Institute in Hamburg, and specialized Management and Coaching Seminars at Systema Management Trainings. Besides his own trainings in Core Evolution, he lectures and teaches at universities and private institutes worldwide on the interconnectedness of psychosomatic processes as they manifest on the levels of body, emotions, mind, will and spirit. His research in energy field documentation of psycho-emotional states opened new horizons to scientists and practitioners.

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