

Self-love is the foundation of every healthy relationship. We must first encounter the "Self," for how can we truly love what remains unfamiliar to us? Once we at least mentally grasp the fact that a human being is equal to the universe—that all is contained within him and that every particle contains the whole—then our sense of self expands to embrace the entire world. This does not mean discarding even a single aspect of our “small” personality. We remain who we are, yet we are transformed. Our heart has opened, and the entire world can rest within it. First, we love the small self, and then the boundless self, which holds every creature on this earth. Compassion brings us closer to others, who are our mirrors.

Giving is the foundation of happiness in any relationship, because only when our joy spills over onto another human being can we feel the wondrous force of energy flowing through us.

In partnerships, we strive for reciprocity. As much as we offer, we receive. If we give everything, we want everything in return—or we move on. Expressing our feelings and needs keeps us away from conflict. We take responsibility for everything that happens to us. The world around us reflects our mind and shows where we are on the path of individuation.

If self-love is the basis of the Law of Attraction, then love for others is the basis of the Law of Spreading Love. One draws inward, the other radiates outward. We are not a void, but rather a powerful force.

By refining ourselves, our character, and cleansing our hearts until they are impeccable in virtue, we refine our “destiny” and the destiny of our children—and thereby the destiny of the entire world. The only way to change the world is to change ourselves. The fruits of good deeds will ripen when the consequences of harmful deeds exhaust.

We should seize every chance to contribute, even if it's just cleaning the house. We should never, on any conscious level, harm another being, for that being is us. The other is the Self. Everything can be spoken in kindness. When threatened, we say how we feel, not that the other is blind or foolish. We declare our need and insist that the other side respect us—or we lift anchor and go.

The essential novelty of this “practical philosophy of love” lies in ethics and compassion. These are not lofty ideals descending from the heavens, but simple logic. The law of reaping the fruits of prior actions is nothing apart from gravity, not in space but in time. Karma is gravity in time.

And being not submissive (as if worthless) but quietly content is not some abstract virtue—it is sheer pragmatism. If others are truly me, then serving them is serving myself. From that perspective, pride is simply foolishness—like a small child pretending to be Napoleon.

To enjoy true love is nothing other than to enjoy one's own being of light, which has attracted another being of light (not a dark one, clogged with debris in its energy centers). The light is

already there, beneath layers of mud and dust. Knowing oneself means stripping away illusions about oneself.

That is why everything unfamiliar within us seeks to be known through various, often unpleasant, circumstances. As long as there is an exaggerated emotional response (fear, anger, grief, melancholy), our reaction is driven by ego-structure and not by the Self. As long as we react—cursing, shouting, reaching for weapons, launching deadly arrows at the “enemy,” grumbling, frowning, coughing, rolling our eyes—we will remain exposed to provocations.

Let us look at people and events as images of our inner processes. We inhabit the realm of life, interpreting events as if they were figments of our imagination. By changing our reaction, we change the scenery of the magnificent waking dream.

Here is the good news, the evangelion: when we metabolize (truly process) our negative feelings—not repress or smother them so that others cannot see—we are cleansed and ready to move on.

Move on—but where to?