

Write Your Own Love Story

Valentine's day is that time of the year when we think about hearts, flowers, cupids & mostly love.

As human beings, we have a natural desire, a need to feel loved. We crave this feeling and look for it even in places where it does not exist, such is our search. We look for love in food and drink, in objects and activities. Yet this feeling of love originates within your heart and is most delightful when shared and mirrored by another. Living in the light of love breeds confidence, strength, joy and serves as a great cushion for the bumps and bruises of life. So how can we have more love in our life?

We increase love when we cultivate in ourselves:

1. The capacity and desire to be kind.
2. The capacity and desire to bring joy.
3. The capacity and desire to ease pain.
4. The capacity and desire to allow each other to be free.

*"One word frees us from the weight and pain of life; that word is **love**."*
-Sophocles

Romantic love may bring forth images of Romeo & Juliette, Antony & Cleopatra, John & Yoko. And who doesn't wish for the glory of exalted love? How will you get more love on this Valentine's day and the days hereafter? It starts with how we treat each other which can serve to enhance or diminish the warm tender feelings and intimacy that love creates.

The images you hold in your mind can serve to fan the flames or squelch the passion. Realizing that love is a conscious choice creates for you life's greatest opportunity. The benefactors of this choice will be your loved ones- your significant other, your children, parents, family and friends, even strangers on the street can benefit from a genuine smile and heartfelt good wishes. And you will benefit most of all.

You can choose to grow peace and freedom within, thus removing barriers to love's natural joy. This love will not be dependent on another, his or her reactions, choices or behavior. You and only you are responsible for choosing the path of love. No one can force you into that choice nor can you coerce another to choose love. Holding another captive and wishing or attempting to control the behavior of another is truly the antithesis of love, and is an expression of fear.

Start by using your creative imagination to choose loving images which help cultivate more loving feelings. You can just as easily choose negative thoughts that will lead you down a very different path. When you realize the power of this choice your life will

change. Choose love and use your intention to:

- Be Present - let go of the past let go of worry about the future
- Show appreciation and joy being in the presence of your beloved
- Demonstrate compassion and the ability to relieve suffering in the other
- Let go of pride and be willing to share your feelings and ask for what you need

"When you are aware that you are the force that is Life, anything is possible. Miracles happen all the time, because those miracles are performed by the heart. The heart is in direct communion with the human soul, and when the heart speaks, even with the resistance of the head, something inside you changes; your heart opens another heart, and true love is possible." -Don Miguel Ruiz

Forgive and let go of past hurts. Remember and nourish the qualities you appreciate and love in others rather than focus on what you do not want or what you think is wrong. The more you think about what you appreciate and love, the more it will grow in your life. Feeling gratitude for life opens the heart to love.

Valentine's Day this year, rather than waiting for love to find you, may you find love waiting within you. Take cupid's arrow and redirect it towards your heart and enjoy a day and a lifetime of renewed hope, happiness and love.

"I offer you peace. I offer you love. I offer you friendship. I see your beauty. I hear your need. I feel your feelings. My wisdom flows from the Highest Source. I salute that Source in you. Let us work together for unity and love." -Mahatma Gandhi.

This Valentine's day may you fall in love with life.