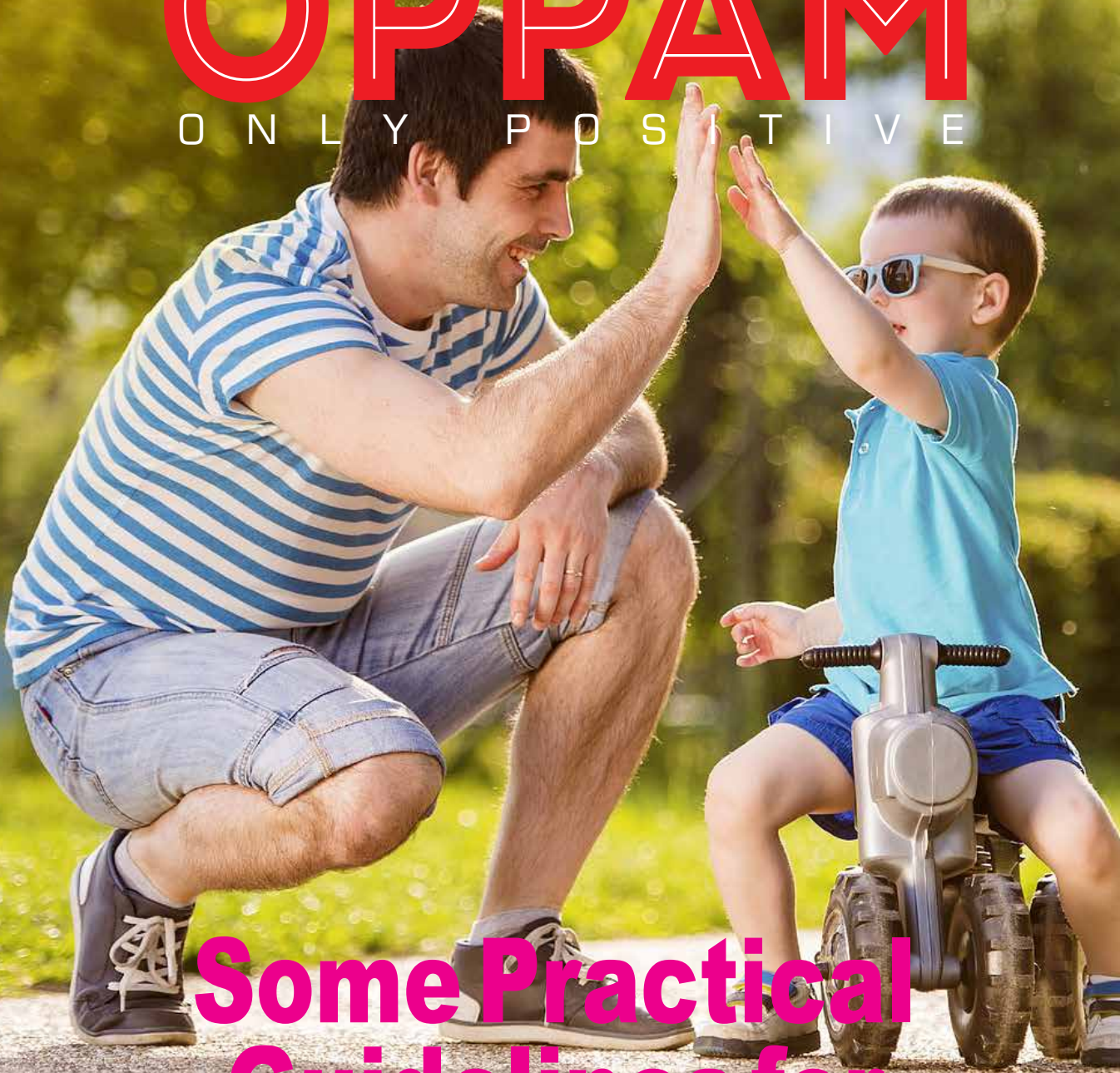


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Some Practical Guidelines for Being Good Parents



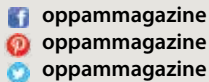
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Website: www.oppammagazine.com

E mail: oppammagazine@gmail.com



OPPAM

Managing Director: Prof Antony P Joseph
Botswana

(Gaborone University College of Law &
Professional Studies)

Managing Editors: Benny Abraham

Mariamma George, Alleppey

Chief Editor: Latnus K.D

Production Team

Editor in charge : Vinayak Nirmal

Sub Editor: Lincy Jijo

Printed & Published by : Shoby G.V.

Circulation Manager: Antony E.C. Kottamuri

Design : Abraham Thomas

IT Support: Job Joseph

Office

Oppam Magazine

Jominas Building

Nr. SNBS L.P School

Pullur P.O, Thrissur Dt.

Kerala, India, Pin: 680683

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Editorial

PROF ANTONY P JOSEPH
Managing Director

Don't Hesitate To Encourage Others

A boy who became physically disabled due to childhood paralysis had to live as a cripple. During that time, he lived with his grandfather and grandmother. The stories told by his grandmother nurtured a storyteller within him. But no one knew this. By the time he was eight years old and joined school, he could already read and write. He had a good knowledge of Spanish, Latin, French, German, and Italian, but he was weak in Greek. Because of this, his teachers did not show any special interest in him or recognize his abilities.

Time passed. One day, he attended an art exhibition at a gallery. Many distinguished personalities were present at the event. At the gathering, the famous poet Robert Burns spoke about a poem that inspired one of the paintings on display. However, despite his efforts, Burns could not recall the poet's name. No one else in the audience knew it either.

At that moment, our young protagonist stepped forward, not only revealing the poet's name but also reciting a few lines from the poem. Impressed by the boy's talent, Robert Burns embraced him and congratulated him. "You will one day become a great man of Scotland," he said. For the boy, this was the first recognition he had ever received. Until then, no one had acknowledged his abilities or praised him. Those words of encouragement changed his life forever. This is an incident from the life of the famous poet and novelist Sir Walter Scott.

Recognizing someone's talent and speaking kind words is not a trivial act. It is something many of us fail to do. The primary reason people hesitate to acknowledge others' abilities or praise them is jealousy-the envy of a talent they lack but someone else possesses. However, when we overcome jealousy and offer a kind word, it can transform a person's life. Praise costs nothing, yet it holds the power to illuminate others' lives. All it takes is a kind heart.

So, let us try to appreciate and encourage others from now on. Isn't it unfortunate that even those who pretend to be good often fail to acknowledge or appreciate others' talents? If our words have the power to brighten someone's life, why should we hesitate to say them?

Regards

Prof Antony P Joseph



Comment

The word 'comment' is something I first heard in my childhood. When girls used to walk by, it was common for men, who were unrefined and lacked proper education to sit by the wayside or on a roadside platform and speak inappropriate words. These men, who were generally uneducated villagers, used to comment in such a manner. Back then, the way the word 'comment' was used referred to something of that nature. I recall how girls would walk past, often turning their faces away in disgust, sometimes even calling them names,

and quickly running away. That's how 'comments' were understood to have a negative impact on those who heard them.

Maybe because we are in an era of generational change, those old kinds of 'comments' have dwindled. However, they haven't disappeared entirely. In the modern era, they have taken new forms. A vast space for them is social media. If you don't comment below a post or picture, it's as if you've committed some sort of crime or missed an opportunity. This shift shows how we,



as a society, have become more open to commenting. Posts left without comments are treated as though they are forgotten or unnoticed, like lifeless bodies that no one bothers to take notice of. People even insist on commenting on videos uploaded on YouTube and similar platforms. There were moments when it seemed like a comment had so much value attached to it.

Now, there are other kinds of comments too. These are responses to events or individuals, and they often appear on social media. Some of these comments have shocked me. Many of them push the boundaries of decency. Some express strong disagreements in a language that is even more intense and detailed. How is it that some people can openly express opinions they would hesitate to say privately?

When I looked deeper into the individuals behind these comments, I realized that many of them come from fake profiles. Once I understood that, my thoughts took another turn. It doesn't

matter if the profile picture shows a flower, a fruit, or an animal—there is still a human behind it. Similar to how we tick a box to verify we're not a robot, it's easy to create any profile name and claim to be someone born in some house, in some place. But how is it that this person thinks this way? How can they respond to others in the most hurtful manner?

Because there is no face to these comments, they have turned into outlets for various internal frustrations. These comments reflect everything from personal hatred to extreme aggression. When some comments are made with good intentions, they nurture and comfort individuals, but the venomous comments are like foul, rotten air that pollutes our surroundings. The stench of the speaker's internal negativity becomes something that others have to bear as well.

This creates a situation where anyone can say anything about anyone. Will this situation ever change? Or is it something that needs to change?

Some Practical Guidelines for Being Good Parents

Many parents of the current generation struggle to balance family life and work life. As a result, they often feel like failures or become disconnected in their roles as parents. Here are some suggestions for parents facing such challenges:

Children Are Keen Observers

Parents are often enthusiastic about teaching their children obedience and imparting good values. However, many parents fail to practice the good things they preach. When children do not follow these teachings, parents tend to get

angry or punish them. In reality, children are always observing their parents. They pay close attention to how much their parents practice what they preach. When children realize that their parents' words are not backed by actions, they too begin to mimic this behavior.

Parents who get angry and scold their children without realizing that their own actions influence disobedience need to recognize this truth: children are learning by observing them. Parents are obligated to model the behaviors they expect their children to



By implementing these practices, parents can navigate their dual responsibilities and raise well-rounded, virtuous children capable of leading meaningful lives.

follow. Children cannot practice what their parents do not. Therefore, as the saying goes- let your words and actions align.

Teach Responsibility

Responsibility should not be taught

only after children grow older; it should be instilled from a young age. Assign them age-appropriate responsibilities. Give them small tasks to complete and ensure they follow through. This practice helps build their confidence and sense of accountability. Children also learn to take ownership of their actions and decisions.

Additionally, teach children how to manage money wisely and responsibly. For instance, guide them to use their pocket money for meaningful purposes and help them develop a thoughtful approach to finances.

Cultivate Simplicity and Gratitude

A common issue among children



today is their desire for a luxurious lifestyle and an obsession with owning expensive items. Premium phones, bikes, and watches have become essential needs for teenagers.

Teach children the value of simplicity by sharing stories of modest living from your own life. Make them understand that it is simplicity that earns admiration from others, not extravagance.

Luxury often leads people astray, and it is crucial to convey this truth to children. Remind them that behind the allure of extravagance lies potential danger. Simultaneously, teach them to be grateful for the blessings they receive and the joy they experience. Children raised in an environment where parents express gratitude toward others and God will naturally grow up to be grateful individuals themselves.

Provide Quality Education

Give your children a good, value-based education. A meaningful education is key to living a purposeful life. Children who grow up seeing their parents read books will likely develop a habit of reading. Teach them, through your example, that nothing can replace the habit of reading.

Instill Compassion and Patience

It is the responsibility of parents to cultivate compassion and patience in their children. A parent's own qualities of forgiveness and kindness play a significant role in shaping the character of their children.

By implementing these practices, parents can navigate their dual responsibilities and raise well-rounded, virtuous children capable of leading meaningful lives.





Kaizen

改 Kai = Change
善 Zen = Good

Illustration: Kaizen by Graham & Stewart



Shall we try this Japanese technique?

1. Ikigai

Discover the purpose of life. This is one way to free yourself from excessive stress. To free the mind from negative thoughts and guide your thoughts and ideas toward meaningfulness, you need to find the purpose of life and live according to it. Identify what brings you

happiness in life and set your life's goals in that direction. Many times, we fall prey to overwhelming stress when the meaning of life is lost or remains undiscovered.

2. Kaizen

This refers to continuous improvement. Start small and keep working



consistently. Success in life doesn't always happen overnight. Small beginnings can lead to great achievements.

3. Shinrin-yoku

Live in harmony with nature. Spend time in nature to reduce mental conflict and bring peace to your mind. The universal surroundings of nature can brighten our thoughts and create inner peace.

4. Zazen

Accept thoughts without preconditions and practice meditation. Often, it is preconceptions that unsettle the mind, leading to over thinking. Without these preconditions, thoughts gain greater clarity.

5. Wabi-sabi

Embrace imperfection. Accept the imperfections and limitations of life. This philosophy is about understanding that nothing is perfect and that perfection is unattainable.

6. Kintsugi

Embrace your mistakes. Accept that mistakes are a natural part of the journey of life.

7. Gaman

Patience and resilience. Gaman teaches how important it is to be patient when facing life's challenges.

These techniques, rooted in Japanese philosophy, offer practical ways to live a balanced, peaceful, and meaningful life.



Do the Difficult Things

Everyone prefers to do what is easy. However, true success lies not in doing what is easy or enjoyable but in doing what is challenging and unpleasant.

Think of an exam paper with options. We often choose the answers that seem easy and more likely to score marks. But in the test of life, you become a true winner not by opting for the easiest path but by tackling the hardest challenges. Achievements and victories

feel truly fulfilling only when they are earned through effort and struggle.

Consider games like tug-of-war or kabaddi. Football is another example. These are all contests that involve fierce competition. In tug-of-war, when equally strong teams compete, the struggle is intense, inch by inch. This struggle is what makes victory sweet.

If there were no intense competition or passion in these games, neither side would feel pride or joy in winning. They

When given a new responsibility, duty, or task, it is not right to shy away from it. Undoubtedly, such responsibilities may come with many difficulties. You may have to face obstacles.

might still receive a trophy or a winner's announcement, but it wouldn't hold the same value.

The same applies to life. Some people cheat, bribe, or take shortcuts to achieve success. They may get certificates or salaries, but these easy paths are also deceptive ones. When you look back,

the only satisfying and proud moments will be those when you chose to face challenges head-on.

When given a new responsibility, duty, or task, it is not right to shy away from it. Undoubtedly, such responsibilities may come with many difficulties. You may have to face obstacles. But overcoming these difficulties to achieve success gives immense satisfaction, a feeling that is unparalleled.

That's why motivational speakers often say:

"Throw your mind into what seems impossible first; your body will follow."

Yes, be willing to take on difficult tasks. That's where the true thrill of success lies.



Uplift Yourself

One of the biggest mistakes people make in life is waiting for others to help them grow. The truth is, no one else will truly uplift you. At best, they might provide some support or create opportunities-but that is it.

You can plant a sapling, water it, and give it fertilizer in the beginning. But the rest is up to the plant itself. Its roots must stretch out to absorb water and nutrients, and the blooming of flowers and bearing of fruit are all internal processes.

While humans might protect or care for a grown plant, growth itself is a natural process. Consider the strength of wild trees that sprout on their own compared to those deliberately planted and nurtured by humans. Many of these wild trees grow from seeds dropped by

birds or carried by the wind.

Once sprouted, they grow independently. The forests we see today are not creations of human planning but rather nature's own work. Similarly, we need to focus on growing independently. We must take charge of our own growth. There will always be people who, for various reasons, may try to pull us down, suppress us, or hold us back. They may even try to share the limelight of our success and claim credit for walking alongside us-like small plants trying to thrive in the shadow of a big tree.

But our growth must be for our own sake. Regardless of whether others try to discourage you or step on you, resolve to keep growing. Stand firm with the conviction that no matter what, you will rise on your own strength.



Repetition

If we evaluate life objectively, we realize that much of it is a cycle of repetition. Today is a repetition of yesterday, and tomorrow will mirror today. We repeatedly meet the same people, walk the same paths, eat the same meals, sleep in the same places, and often pray and speak in similar ways. Life, in its movements—be it in stillness, action, or speech—often lacks novelty and unfolds in loops.

Writers and speakers, for instance, frequently revisit and restate their ideas. A closer look at their works reveals

recurring themes. This repetition often arises from a lack of fresh inspiration or moments of deep introspection and meditation.

Yet, not all repetition feels mundane. Night must follow day, and day, in turn, gives way to night—a cycle that cannot be broken. Similarly, certain relationships, loves, and experiences never lose their charm despite their recurrence. There are people we long to see repeatedly, songs we cherish hearing over and over, and places we yearn to revisit.

Some repetitions carry an inherent



Repetition, therefore, is not monotony but the foundation of creation, rhythm, and meaning. Life itself is built on repeating cycles-seasons, waves, heartbeats, and the ticking of time.

beauty. Consider the unnoticed, yet vital rhythm of our breath-a natural and pure repetition that sustains life. When this rhythm ceases, we yearn for its return, recognizing its irreplaceable value.

In art and creativity, repetition often leads to novelty. With the same letters, we craft new stories and poems. Using

the same musical notes, we compose diverse melodies. Repeated colors on a canvas yield infinite expressions of beauty.

Repetition, therefore, is not monotony but the foundation of creation, rhythm, and meaning. Life itself is built on repeating cycles-seasons, waves, heartbeats, and the ticking of time. Each repetition, when viewed with awareness, offers an opportunity for appreciation and renewal.

Repetition is unavoidable and indispensable. It is the rhythm of existence. While some repetitions may feel mundane, others become the essence of joy and beauty. Acknowledging this duality helps us embrace life's cycles with gratitude and grace, finding meaning in the patterns that define our journey.



Attention Teenagers

Our children have many faces. Many teenagers pretend to be well-behaved in front of their parents, but their true nature may be different outside the home. At home, they appear disciplined and well-mannered, but outside, some of them reveal a different side. Think of some recent incidents—parents believe their son is asleep at home, but later find out he has died in a road accident. How did it happen? After everyone went to sleep, he secretly took the family vehicle and went out with friends. Similarly, parents may think

their daughter is staying in a hostel, but in reality, she might be living with her boyfriend. In such situations, it is the parents who are deceived. However, we cannot entirely blame the parents—who else would they trust if not their own children? That is why certain things need to be told directly to teenagers.

Friendships, unhealthy relationships, and modern lifestyles can influence teenagers in various ways. In this context, teenagers must recognize certain truths.

Alcohol consumption and smok-



ing are often portrayed as glamorous in movies. It is natural to feel tempted to imitate on-screen heroes. However, avoid falling into harmful habits that endanger your life. Some friends may have such habits and may pressure you to join them. Do not give in out of a sense of obligation or fear of hurting them. Learn to say a firm 'no' when necessary. Friendship is important, but your health and future are even more important. There is no evidence that alcohol or smoking has ever brought any real benefits-only harm. These habits negatively impact financial stability, health, and other aspects of life. Stay away from them permanently.

Value Relationships

Maintain healthy relationships, and if any relationship negatively affects your mental or physical well-being, do not hesitate to end it. Those who do not understand the value of relationships are the ones who create conflicts and spread toxicity within them. Do not let

such toxic relationships ruin your life.

Physical curiosity and attractions are natural at this age. There are many opportunities today to satisfy these urges, but it is important to understand that maintaining the purity of one's body is crucial. Self-respect is not just about abilities or external achievements-it also comes from how you respect and take care of your body. Only those who maintain the sanctity of their own body can truly respect another person's body. No form of love should lead you down the wrong path. At this stage of life, constant vigilance is necessary. A lack of self-control often leads to regret, guilt, and a loss of confidence. Attraction and affection toward the opposite gender are not wrong, but failing to maintain proper boundaries is.

Physical and Mental Well-being

Taking care of physical health and hygiene is equally important. Proper exercise and a balanced diet are essential during adolescence. Junk food and



a sedentary lifestyle can be harmful. A healthy mind resides in a healthy body. Proper sleep and personal hygiene, such as regular bathing, are crucial.

This is an era where mobile phones, the internet and social media platforms like Whats App are unavoidable. However, teenagers must use them wisely and in a time-conscious manner. Many adolescents waste a lot of time on social media, which only provides temporary pleasure. This happens because they fail to realize the value of time. Those who use their time productively are the ones who succeed in life.

Understanding the Value of Money

Many teenagers do not understand the value of money. Loving parents, who do not want their children to experience hardship, provide them with everything they need. However, teenagers must realize that their parents sacrifice their own needs and desires to fulfill their children's wishes.

Understanding this will help them use money wisely and avoid placing unnecessary financial burdens on their parents.

Respecting Rules and Discipline

Following rules is crucial. Many lives are ruined because people neglect the importance of laws and regulations. Every environment-whether it is home, school, or a place of worship-has its own set of rules. Discipline is upheld by adhering to these rules. Most unfortunate incidents occur not because people follow laws but because they disregard them.

Final Advice

Dear teenagers, you may have great friends-best friends and trusted companions. However, your parents are the ones who can offer you the greatest safety and support. They can solve problems that even your best friends cannot. When you face difficulties, do not try to resolve them alone or rely solely on friends. Instead, approach your parents and seek their help. They may sometimes get angry or scold you, but they will never abandon you. Understand that no one in this world loves you as much as your parents do. Accept them with all their imperfections, love them, and trust them wholeheartedly.



Are you strong?

Have you ever seen people who remain unshaken in the face of unexpected events? When confronted with death, accidents, and such situations, ordinary people may crumble, but these individuals act as if nothing can affect them or they have the strength to rise above it. Looking at such people, we might say, "What a strong person!"

People with emotional stability are generally referred to as having a strong personality. Let's look at some common traits of these individuals.

- They do not show their emotional state to others. They don't shout or raise alarms. They don't display their sadness outwardly. They might cry once they are alone in their room or go into the bathroom, turn on the tap, and cry silently. However, emotional outbursts do not spill outside of their private space.
- They do not wait for praise or applause from others. They do not seek anyone's attention or validation. They work quietly toward their goals.
- They are able to understand the emotions of others and respond accordingly. They are compassionate and willing to help those in need, sharing in their sadness.
- They respect every person they meet, regardless of age or gender.
- Through their actions and behavior, they inspire others. They encourage their friends and offer comfort to those in distress.
- They are always willing to take on any task. They will not shy away from challenging work. With time, they know that what seems difficult initially will eventually become easier.



The Dangers Behind Tattoos

The practice of tattooing has been around since the mid-1800s. However, it has only gained widespread popularity in recent times. Many celebrities have tattoos, and their fans often feel motivated to get tattoos themselves. But how many people are aware of the potential dangers that come with tattoos?

There is a common belief that tattoos are linked to cancer. While there is no direct connection between tattoos and skin cancer, some substances used in the ink have been found to contain elements that may contribute to cancer. Specifically, the black ink used in tattoos has been identified as containing benzopyrene, a substance known to cause cancer, according to the International Agency for Research on Cancer. When

tattoos are done on the skin using ink, the changes in the skin's appearance can sometimes go unnoticed, potentially masking signs of melanoma or other cancers. Additionally, sometimes the same equipment is used to tattoo multiple people, increasing the risk of transmitting infections like hepatitis or HIV.

People with allergies should never get tattoos, especially those who have reactions to perfumes, makeup products, or lotions. Also, tattoos should never be done over scars or birthmarks. Some studies have shown that individuals with tattoos may experience less accuracy in MRI scans, which can affect the results.

Therefore, it is important to think twice before getting a tattoo.

(Source: Internet)



Are You in Love?

Have you ever felt that there is love between two people just by hearing their conversation or noticing their gestures? But have you ever realized that you are in love with someone? When you start paying more attention to someone than to yourself, when you think about them, when you want to see them, then you are in love with that person. Love is the experience of finding someone else as your own soul.

Since the beginning of humanity, love has existed, and people have been in love. The main theme of our literature and arts has been love. According to some theories of love, there are three components to love.

The first is closeness. It refers to the emotional and mental connection that

two people feel for each other. Emotional attachment and mutual closeness are what intensify the bond of love. Even if the connection is felt by just one person, that too is considered love. However, love doesn't always have to be openly expressed.

The second component is attachment. It refers to the physical attraction and behaviors that may even lead to sexual intimacy.

The third is commitment. This is the decision to love this person for the rest of your life and to live with them.

The strength and intensity of love, as well as its duration, depend on how powerful and deep these three components are. When these three elements come together, that is when love truly becomes love.



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