

Relationships

Do you feel loved?

Relationship Coach **Vicky van Praag** looks at ways to restore your loving ways



Remember when you stood at the altar, gazing into the face of your beloved? You looked into their eyes and felt the feeling that comes from loving someone with all your heart and being loved back. You

believed you'd found the one who'd strive to make you happy and never do anything to hurt you.

How long did it take before you were disappointed? The first time they shouted at you, when they rejected you in bed, when they no longer seemed interested in what you had to say? Eventually discussions about the kids, and the car, and the bills replaced passionate conversations that lasted all night. And one day you turned to the person sitting next to you and realised you had nothing left to say. Your dream of perfect love was shattered and you thought you'd never find it again.

We carry within us a heart bruised by a lifetime of hurts, and when we find the relationship we think will repair it we are once again filled with hope. And when we fall in love we're sure that we've finally found the place where we will be loved perfectly.

Unfortunately, while we are all able to love completely, none of us is able to love perfectly. We have our own internal

confusions. We battle with life and all its mundane and serious complications. We all struggle with doubts and fears that lead to withholding our love. Sometimes we shout when we'd rather cry, sometimes we are too caught up with our own worries to notice the other person.

When we fail to find in each other everything we'd expected, we are angry with our partner for not being all that we wanted them to be. After several years we can stop feeling that we love our partner at all. But buried deep under resentment is love. Even if you no longer feel it, it's still there. And finding it again is a matter of wanting to. Many people give up at this stage, but you don't have to.

If you want to find love again you'll have to forgive your partner for not meeting your expectations. When they fell in love with you they wanted to make you happy and believed they always would. But they weren't always up to the task, and when you forgive them for that, you'll realise that neither were you. It is impossible to love perfectly, though we all try and expect it from each other.

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When you forgive your partner their mistakes, their inadequacies, their human frailty, you'll discover a truer love than the unblemished ideal you always dreamed of.

You will see the love of humanity, perfect in all its flaws, because it wants to love, in spite of everything it has been through. And, if you decide to keep loving your partner like that, you'll discover just how much they love you too.



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To be valued is a human right not a nicety

Counsellor **Ian**

Woodroffe answers

your questions



Q My boss keeps treating people in such a way that we all feel demoralised and devalued. Ian Woodroffe asks, what can we do?

A I am amazed at the number of times that I hear people say 'I am not valued'. I hear it all too often in the work-place and I hear people saying it about their relationships and family life.

All those years ago Aristotle said 'Pleasure in the job puts perfection in the work' How can anyone have pleasure in the job if they are not valued in the workplace?

How can any employer think that they will have the best from their staff if the staff are treated as if they were worth nothing?

It amazes me that the basic principle of treating people as if they have value is so often ignored. One of the problems of targets (financial or otherwise) and such so-called growth indicators is that employees become a means to an end. The product of that approach will often be unhappy people in the workplace. All of us grow in confidence by 'doing, reflecting and receiving help'. One of the basic building blocks for the growth in confidence is to receive affirmation from others.

Critical comments stunt our growth affirmation. And yet how many times do we receive (or give) affirmation to those around us?

It may be the way they have done a job, the way they dress or even a thank-you for the extra effort that has been given. Even a small comment can make a world of difference.

As I have said we have to have integrity – we need to give affirmation to others as well as expect it from others.

So think about your own relating style and the style of those around you.

If life becomes really dreadful in the work-place because you feel that you are not valued then you may have to have the courage to face it and talk about it with the people who you feel de-value you.

At a more formal level you might wish to explore such concepts as 'Duty of Care' and the 'Psychological Contract' that exist to stop de-valuing happening.

Learn about Grief and Loss- an exciting day workshop June 4th phone me for details.

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