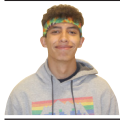


We All Need Somebody to Lean On



Haden Garcia
— Section Editor —

Various cultures throughout the years have had their own specific 'definitions' of love. The ancient Greeks believed that a magical flying baby with a bow and arrow was the sole reason that people fell for each other. Differently, some cultures in the Middle East and South Eastern Africa see love as a vice, or a temptation with detrimental effects.

Whatever one's view on love is, it cannot be denied that it exists. This is an easy claim to make, and a quite obvious one at that, but in reality, it opens up more questions than it answers. What is love? Who can love who? Will I ever find love? These are just a fraction of the questions that love poses. With Valentine's day rearing its head, it is important to understand what love really is.

According to *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, love is defined as the "strong affection for another arising out of kinship or personal ties." Notice how broad of a definition this really is. Instead of using

specific pronouns such as person, man, or woman, the dictionary uses simply 'another'. Love knows no boundaries, and this only further proves it.

Humans can love animals, for example. The bond between a child and a puppy who have been raised alongside one another can only be described as love. Carol Baskins, as disconnected as she may seem, loves all of her "cool cats and kittens." This brings up another important aspect of love: It doesn't just have to do with physical interaction.

Obviously, physical embrace is one of the most common ways to show someone that you love them. A quick kiss on the cheek or a bear hug from a significant other shows that they are there for you. However, it would be foolish to assume that this is what "love" is really all about.

Take the Internet, which is now full of dozens and dozens of dating apps and websites. Even the social media most people use, such as *Instagram* and *Snapchat*, are designed with advanced algorithms that bring like-minded people together. This results in millions (not an exaggeration) of people who fall in love with each other without

touching, or even seeing each other in person beforehand.

So love is not a physical 'thing'. Rather, it is an abstract concept that people have universally agreed upon within society. This makes the question of "What is love?" even more perplexing, as it can be picked up by all of the five senses. Take a mother or father's cooking for example. We've all heard the phrase "cooked with love" and this is expressed in the aroma that fills up the room, and the parent's attention to detail.

This covers the taste and smell aspects of love. Additionally, someone on a date may cook for their significant other, to show their love. But what about sound? Actually, this sense may be the easiest to connect to love because of a simple statement.

"I LOVE YOU!"

We've all heard it, (Or at least I hope you have) and know that it means you care deeply for someone. In other cultures around the world, it is not so common to throw around the phrase.

In Syria, if a man was to tell a woman he loves her, many, if not all would automatically assume he was implying marriage. Clearly, this is not the case

within the United States. People will tell everyone from their teammates in sports, to family, to teachers that the love them.

But how can you see love? Is it a wedding? Or maybe a picnic along the banks of a river? A mother breastfeeding her child? Sight is the trickiest to connect to love, because it brings us back to the original point made within this column, Love is subjective.

Syria's definition of love is miles apart from the United States'. Someone born during the 1930s would be taken back by the thought of someone meeting their lover through the internet, and a child's perception of love is far less developed and challenged than an adult's. So who am I to tell someone else how to love? Or who they are allowed to love?

We live in a world today, in which great progress is being made to allow the spread of love between anyone. LGBTQIA+ rights and social norms have changed immensely throughout the past twenty years. Gay marriage has been legalized for six years now, and you see more and more people unafraid to love who they truly love.

Sadly, not everyone is so

open to allowing other people the chance to find love. There are still instances where loving someone gets people kicked out of restaurants, publicly disrespected, and sometimes even killed. An article published in the *Rolling Stone* in 2014 details the experience of Jackie, a gay college student who found herself homeless after coming out to her stern Catholic parents.

It's quite ironic that something as pure as love can breed so much hate within the hearts of people. Too often, people become engulfed by their own ideals and ideas, and this damages their world view.

Moving on, the importance of empathy and self-reflection cannot be stressed enough. Since love is a subjective concept, people need to find their own definition of love, but accept that not everyone's definition would be the same as theirs.

So what is love? I can write paragraph after paragraph talking about all of the results, characteristics, implications, feelings, and thoughts that love produces. But at the end of the day, the answer can only be found within the soul of the individual, not the words of a high school newspaper.

Views on Valentine's



Freija Dutton
— Staff Writer —

Valentine's this year is going to be way different than any other year. Typically on Valentine's, you would take your significant other to the movies, out to dinner, to fancy restaurants, to fun activities, or even the arcade.

This year is completely different. Due to COVID-19 regulations being placed on restaurants and other businesses, the best you can do is stay home and order take out. But as COVID-19 is slowing down some restaurants are open to a limited number of customers.

Now they are allowing 50% capacity in restaurants. And restaurants on Main Street have opened up new outside seating areas.

Valentine's Day at the High School is not as exciting as it sounds. However most of the time high schoolers are worried about passing math classes and not worried about planning Valentine's Day activities.

Mr. Dionisio says "I would imagine that students are going to have to get creative since the movie theatre is not open."

But for some students they are not going to change a thing and will go about the day as if it were any other day. For example Kyler

Liddell took care of the sheep his family has. While others like Davion Chavez and Case Zimmerman chose to go with the flow and just see what the day brings.

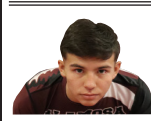
For those who do choose to spoil their significant other this year, here are some ideas to make your Valentine's day better: you could write a sentimental note, order flowers and chocolates, make a meal together, do each other's favorite things, or have a home movie day.

As Valentine's Day has past it is clear that people not only in high school but around the community celebrate Valentine's Day differently, but no matter how people celebrate there's one thing that is evident this year Corona virus has made things difficult to celebrate this holiday.

Even though with the Coronavirus it is harder to show love and affection on this special day we still have 364 other days to spread love. COVID-19 has not only made Valentine's hard to celebrate but other holidays as well. It is difficult now more than ever to be with families and friends on holidays now that the Coronavirus is here.

Just like Valentine's day individuals are going to have to get extra creative for all holidays in the future. Creative or not, it is always best to spread love to others.

An American Comeback



Brandon Reveles
— Staff Writer —

The Coronavirus pandemic has reared its ugly head, and in utter defiance, the human race has once again begun to overcome this challenge.

The long cumbersome months of 2020 have produced a counter attack against the virus that is only now reaching the American people.

The United States government alongside the CDC have ordered millions of the vaccines from the *Moderna* and *Pfizer* companies and have distributed them throughout the United States.

Attempting to reach as many citizens as possible, the incoming Biden Administration has rolled out an ambitious plan, seeking to vaccinate the American people in record time.

So far around 15.6 million people have received the vaccine, with many more being planned. The end goal is to reach the full 328.8 million population of the United States.

Vaccines are being prioritized and geared toward essential workers, high risk individuals, and the elderly. This group includes Alamosa native and healthcare worker Yvette Reveles,

who has received the vaccine within the last couple of weeks.

"After the first shot, my arm was really sore," said Reveles after being asked how she felt in the first hours after the vaccination. "I had the side effects that most other people complained about, low grade fever, flu like symptoms, tired and achy. But all of those symptoms were mild and I was able to have a normal work day."

When asked about her thoughts about the pandemic and the future of the country she remained optimistic. "It'll pass, we'll get through this, it's just like any other crisis the world has faced," along with her advice to people who are afraid to receive the first wave of vaccinations.

"Go with your gut feeling. If you don't feel that it's safe, do your own research. Everyone is encouraged to get the vaccine just like the flu vaccine. I think the positive outcomes of the vaccine outweigh the negative that we have seen in this pandemic."

As this continues to progress and grow, and more information is gathered, one can only shed a tear as the end of this pandemic is now in sight. The loss and hardships that have been experienced will no longer be a daily occurrence in the American

mind, and instead they can begin to look towards a brighter future, because with the vaccine there comes another great need for every citizen in the United States. For the first time in a long time, the American People have hope.

Although this pandemic may seem like it is coming to an end, everyone still needs to follow the pandemic rules such as keeping six feet apart and wearing your mask at all times.

Not only do Americans need to follow these regulations, the common courtesy of something as simple as washing your hands, and staying home if you feel any symptoms whatsoever, is also a must.

Everyday, not only in America, but other places around the world that are greatly affected, are having a great number of losses of friends and family. It is important that we stop this spread, and beat this virus so that the number of devastating losses comes to an end.

The spread of COVID, will come to an end with citizens all around the world following all the regulations that the WHO is giving along with this newfound vaccine. So far the results of this vaccine are positive and lets keep it that way for the future of the world.