

LOVE

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Compassionate Love

The personage of Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara comes to mind. But how do you and I experience this highly celebrated and mythologized “Compassionate Love”. In our default illussional mind and consciousnesses of Samsara, all Love is conditional. Compassion is also conditioned in this way. Our perceived relationships with others, daughter, mother, friend, stranger, superior, inferior, competitor, or mirror, admirer, and so on, all feed and distinguish our level of compassion and love for others. The person who walks in Buddhahood, the Bodhisattva way, has none of this. No conditions, no differentiation. Because all others are not others but rather experience of self, the cosmic self that is all life. The awakened person experiences all Life as facet of self, and therefore not something else or other. To see others as separate entities is like a wave on the great ocean seeing itself as separate and other from the water that is the body of the ocean. Separatedness is the illusion of Samsara. Samsara is our greatest obstacle for the fully experienced life. In Samsara our Love is measured, our Compassion also measured is offered only as it is judged necessary. In Buddhahood, compassion and love are on offer without time and with the one objective to awaken and liberate all from Samsaric illusion.

Unconditional Love

The definition offered by Shakyamunibuddha to consider all sentient beings as though they were our only child, comes to mind. True unconditioned Love is a facet of True Compassionate Love as described earlier. To be truly unconditional, Love must be outside of Samsara. To borrow some words from Alan Watts, the man who walks alone and awakened is not alone at all. The awakened mind knows that all beings are themselves the expression of human potential just as he is. All others are actually manifestations of the same human and experience of consciousness that all beings as you yourself; like endless facets of the mirrors of self. Realizing this, all love is self love. But this “self” is all life, unseparated, complete, connected. When all life is you and you are all life, what conditions can there be? Buddhahood is unconditional, and singular focused on the movement toward enlightenment for all.

Self-Love

The incessant stumbling block of all Buddhist students prior to the Lotus Sutra. Self, the idea we seize upon to identify our differences from, well, from everything and anyone else. This primary assumption leads down the Samsaric road of possessions, ownership, separation and identification. This self, the self of identification, this collection of component parts and missing or lacking completion becomes more and more of the obsession of Samsara and the craving for completeness we seek from others. The endless stream of conditions created around the support of this illusion setup the most pressured of relations in the craving for completion from some other person or thing. Romantic Love is the experience of this illusion and sets us on the path of suffering deeply as this illusion and its cravings are exploded one by one to the point of profound misery. There are sublime moments to be sure, but, those are built on the false premise of incompleteness and separatedness.

To Self Love then, would be a futile endeavor as one is incomplete and in great need of repair. To Love the self or one's self is either an exercise in futility, or a conceit of huge denial of incompleteness. Unless, well, unless she is awakened and fully aware of the true nature of self as the full potential of life expressed in a multitude of forms representing the singular potential of all life as a cosmic "self" or consciousness of "Being".

If awakened, this "Self-Love" is actually acceptance of the mission to lead all sentient beings to enlightenment through the unconditioned and compassionate Love of Buddhahood.

Impermanence of Love

The inevitable realization that the tendencies and conditions of a "state" of Love remains only as a moment-to-moment invention of the Saha mind, and only sustainable as an abstract condition of enlightenment. We are the momentum of expressions of potentials. Energy moving and reacting in innumerable formations and influences in electromagnetic states, stable, unstable, or simply moving on. These energies are the foundations of matter, molecules, chemistry, biology, and consciousness.

All of this, the process of energy transmuting into forms is the process of Karma. Karma is the resulting formations from this process, pregnant with the potential energies that have amalgamated into a particular form and its further attractions and combinations in every moment-to-moment change and formations. Life. The mind of the sentient being has records of this in the fabric of its formations, and the consciousnesses of the mind act upon this record in each moment of life. This Karma, or, Engine of Life, is constantly re-expressing its formation as well as absorbing influences from the consciousnesses of observation.

The mind is in constant momentum of change and re-instantiation of the parameters of its formation.

Because our sensations and perceptions are formed in discrete moments, one after another (*the cycle of "birth" and "death"*) all sensations are in "existence" in only one discrete moment at a time. Whether or not a particular sensation continues to be present or "felt" is a direct function of the persistence of influences and reformations of energies collected and imposed upon those formations (karma) to be maintained, modified, or terminated. "Love" then is like all "things", impermanent. Love is a condition of being created from moment to moment in the service of a conscious entity.

The exception to this understanding is the "Love" we ascribe to Buddhahood. In truth, we should understand that this use of the word "Love" should always be replaced with the word "Compassion". To clarify, we must understand that the Buddha, the Buddha state, the Buddha mind, and Buddhahood, are all names or labels we give to the expression of Tathagata-field potential as manifested in the physical or Saha* realms within the sentient mind, or even more specifically, the qualities of the 9th consciousness. The Tathagata-field, like all other quantum fields has the specific potentials of its natures, like the electron field, quark fields, boson fields Higgs field and so on. The Tathagata field nature is described in texts like the Nidana or 12 linked causal chain. A fundamental field, the Tathagata is a field of potential for *observation and appreciation* of the Engine of Life.

The "Engine of Life" describes the expression of the Tathagata-field as it instantiates its potential through formations and amalgams of form (*Karma*) into the physical realms.

As instantiations of "Observation", the Buddha state is clear and pure or unencumbered in its view and understanding of all cosmic processes and minds. As instantiation of "Appreciation", the Buddha state of Tathagata is unconditioned and singular in its appreciation of Karma, Life, and sentience. Therefore, Buddhahood is one-hundred percent compassion through understanding and love of all Life.

**Sahā or more formally the Sahā world in Mahāyāna Buddhism refers to the mundane world, essentially the sum of existence that is other than nirvana. It is the entirety of conditioned phenomena, also referred to as the trichilocosm. As a term, its usage is comparable to the Earth or entire Cosmos as the place where all beings are subject to the cycle of birth and death. It is the place where both good and evil manifests and where beings must exercise patience and endurance.*

Interconnected Love

The enlightened experience of Buddhahood requiring no individuation. Once awakening becomes the default mindset, the illusion of separateness, the Samsaric craving for other "selves" to complete you, it, the illusion, no longer holds. Once enlightened to all consciousnesses equally experiencing the cosmos, the game of pretending that one is a subset of features or skills to be compared to others, has no basis in reality. It becomes totally transparent. There is the recognition of the game being entertaining and all those people in the grips of that entertainment cling to it as more real than the truth. And that makes the enlightened person someone that cannot be possessed or be attracted at the prospect of being possessed or "completed". The "game" of Samsaric identity building becomes moot.

This truth becomes a source of deep compassion for the awakened mind, as all those locked into the Samsaric illusion maintain their distance from the awakened person who seems to “need” no one, and collectively suffer emotional pains of their own making. The awakened person simply shares the truth of inseparateness without any need of the cravings or clinging of those who seek to complete their illusions of incompleteness from other people. The interconnectedness of all people and Life itself, is the field experienced by the awakened mind. And so the desire for all people to know this awakening becomes the driving force for the awakened person to stay in the Saha world to coax, lead, train, and share the methods of enlightenment for all people and sentient minds. The dichotomy could not be more stark, from the Samsaric experience of the Saha world, constructed of myriad pieces of identity in search of a complete and unknowable self, compared to a Tathagata-field instantiation of total clarity and cosmic embrace of unity and love. Interconnected Love can be understood as another way of understanding the Tathagata-field.

Romantic Love

The intoxicating delusion that our deepest cravings are reciprocated in an object outside our mind. What we call romantic love is actually possession. We say “My boyfriend”, “My lover”. We create a “NEED” that can only be fulfilled by some other. An awakened person knows completeness, the universal truth of all people playing the game of Samsara while knowing the self as an integration of the cosmos, having no needs to crave or possessions to cling to. The awakened person is offering one’s “self” completely, and yet, those who continue to seek completeness in others, craving, hunger for possession, validation, etc. People seeking this “love” is of no interest or use for the enlightened person.