

"Change your life TODAY. Don't gamble on the future, act now without delay"
- Simone de Beauvoir

I love this quote because it encourages us to take action NOW. This is important because none of us is promised tomorrow. We must live every day as if it'll be our last, because one day, it will be. I'm not trying to be morbid, but it was exactly two years ago today that my brother unexpectedly died. There was no warning. I'd literally talked to him the night before and in the morning he was gone. I'm so thankful for that last conversation. If you knew it would be the last time you would ever see or talk to someone, what would you say? Life is short and I've learned through a tremendous amount of loss and grief that I don't want to die with any regrets. So in the spirit of Christmas, I thought it was important to talk about the perfect topic for the season: LOVE. Not only do we need to love ourselves, but we must let the people we love know how we feel about them. How about you? Who do you need to tell that you love them? Do it NOW because tomorrow truly may be too late.

Yours in health,



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The Power of Love



Back in the 1980's, my favorite decade, "The Power of Love" was a popular song by Huey Lewis and the News. Many years later, Celine Dion recorded a song with the same title. I've learned a tremendous amount about love and loss since my brother's tragic death two years ago, as well as my parents' deaths. I'm compelled to share my thoughts about love as we approach Christmas.

Many of us have loved and lost, but others have found their one true love and have had the privilege of spending the majority of their life with that person. I haven't been so lucky, but what I've learned is that for most people, true love comes around once, maybe twice in a lifetime. When we find it, we need to hold onto it tightly and never let it go. If we ultimately lose it, we must be willing to fight for it. But unfortunately, sometimes it's out of our control, then we have to go on with our lives and hope for the best. I'm certainly no expert on love, but I've been around enough happy couples to notice they have several things in common. Honestly, the same can be said for close friends. I'm fortunate to have several who I truly love and who I know will always be there for me.

They feel comfortable with each other from the beginning. The happiest couples (and friends) I know felt some type of connection pretty much immediately. Something just clicked and there seemed to be a balance of friendship, respect and passion. That usually doesn't go away.

They don't hold a grudge. Most happy couples I know rarely fight. My parents were like that. I don't think I ever heard them fight...and they were married 55 years. I'm sure they fought behind closed doors but we kids never knew. They resolved whatever arguments they had and moved on. I've been told, "Never go to bed angry", which is good advice. Remember, we're not promised tomorrow.

They learn to change. I think most couples change throughout their relationship and in happy couples that change is usually for the better. You should never go into a relationship hoping your partner will change. But people DO change. When you love someone, you and they tend to change for the better over time.

They trust each other. My dad used to say, "If you don't have trust, you don't have anything." He was so right. You can't love someone and be with them if you don't trust what they say and do. I tell my son it takes a really long time to earn someone's trust, but only an instant to lose it. Sometimes once trust is gone, it can't ever come back. Personally, I couldn't be with someone I didn't trust.

How do you know when you're in love? You'll know when everyday ordinary things around you seem special: the blue sky or the green trees, the bowl of blueberries or cereal. You know when the little details about the other person, the ones that are completely insignificant to most people, seem incredibly fascinating to you. You also know it's love when you can't stop talking to each other and when you do stop, you can't wait to do it again. I also think you can tell you're in love if you can make each other laugh at some of the worst times.

Love is like a drug because when you're in love, it seems to create an altered state of consciousness. This could be because when you're in love, a chemical called phenylethylamine is released in your body. It gives you a feeling of serenity, joy and comfort. This is the same chemical found in chocolate, which often gives people the same feelings when they eat it. I talked about this in my November 2013 Newsletter. When this chemical circulates through your body, it can give you a "natural high". This is clearly one of the reasons why I love chocolate so much.

Many experts say there is no such thing as romantic love. But for those happy couples I know, they're living proof that romantic love does exist. After 10, 20, even 55 years together, they still excite each other. My friend Suzanne's parents are proof of that. I recently had the pleasure of seeing them again after many years. It was truly a blessing to see two people who have been together for decades, yet are still obviously very much in love.

Even though divorce rates are high and relationships end, I choose to believe that finding someone you love and who loves you back is definitely a realistic and achievable goal. The sad part is I've also learned that it's really easy to find people who tell you they love you. The hard part is finding someone who actually means it.

The truth of the matter is this: while love can be kind of a mystery, I do think it's as plentiful as oxygen and is all around us. We just have to know where to look because it's often right in front of us. Live your life well. Do things you enjoy. Spend time with good friends. Take care of yourself physically and emotionally. Eventually true love will find you. But in the meantime, make sure you tell the people you care about that you love them.

As I end this month's message, I want to tell my closest friends (you know who you are), how very much I love you and appreciate you and how thankful I am that you're in my life. Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and have a wonderful and loving month.