



When I responded to the call to live a soulful-life I knew I was stepping onto a path of new beginnings that would open a world to me that I had not yet discovered. I welcomed the opportunity to explore and go deeper within, however I was at the same time fearful and ignorant of what would be revealed to me. The soul's journey is one that moves us toward greater Love, Divine Love. However, to experience the rewards of greater love and wisdom, we must pass through challenges and soul lessons that enable us to strip away what is blocking the truth of our authentic spiritual being.

When we believe in the truth of what our heart and soul reveals, we are ready for this spiritual journey. We can sense a strong pull in our soul to release mental, emotional and physical restraints and move towards what feels lighter. We are driven by curiosity as well as a desire for something more. There is an intense excitement and trepidation, as we realise there is much we don't know or understand, and so our need for certainty can awaken our fears. We begin the journey with the

opposing tension of desiring fulfilment and growth, and fearing change and being exposed at our core.

Our experience of 'love' is usually tainted by the world's conditions and expectations, clouding and limiting our view of a vast spiritual landscape that can open vistas of the Divine realm should we choose to see and experience more. It's a spiritual journey of soul growth and expansion, of being willing to live beyond our fears and the walls we build around our heart and soul. When we experience enough pain or isolation in our life, we often come to a point of desperation to let go of all that holds us as a prisoner within. In that moment of release, the spark of the Divine touches our soul and we experience the truth of Divine love.

Many of us may not have experienced True love and yet, seeded within every soul, is this longing and desire to want more love, to feel and experience a love that has no bounds or conditions. A love that knows the depth of our soul and the truth of our being. We are designed to innately move towards this truth and return to our spiritual home of Divine Love.

What is True Love?

True Love is not something we attain, it is how we are 'being'. Regardless of our experiences, culture, society, the landscape and context in which we are living, every person has an innate desire to experience 'True Love' and 'be' one with Divine Love. When we are able to live with love and compassion for ourself and for others, we recognise we are all connected. True Love has no room for competition, comparison, fear or the concept that we are separate from others. Yet, to learn this we must experience the contrasts of our physical life through the joyful experiences, pain and sorrow, fear, self-doubt, disappointments, and our achievements.

The soul-growth we experience is a result of the life lessons we choose to embrace. We enter this world having already experienced previous soul lessons from earlier lifetimes. With each lifetime we

are gifted with different landscapes (people, places, circumstances) to continue our soul-growth. Through each life we encounter various challenges and experiences that provide us with further opportunities to learn and grow in areas we are yet to master and integrate into our soul-being. Our physical life is the vehicle and landscape for our growth, and our soul-path is the journey, as we move from separation to communion with Divine Love.

To grasp a fuller meaning of what True Love is, it's helpful to understand the different kinds of love we experience as human beings. These are known as *Eros*, *Philos* and *Agape* love. *Eros* is the love we experience and share with another person. Our focus is on experiencing this loving connection with another soul-being. *Philos* is an expansion of this and includes a more general unconditional love of the people we encounter in our soul-life, such as the love of our family and friends.

Agape is the fullness of Divine Love and a combination of both *eros* and *philos*. It is more expanded and includes the complete and unconditional love of oneself and the Universe (all living beings and nature). It is a love that permeates the way we see, hear, feel, sense and experience our life, both in the spiritual and physical manifestation. As we experience *Agape* love, the more we can live our life with unconditional love for ourself and others.

Life offers us a multitude of opportunities to learn about love, including the difference between conditional and unconditional love. Deep down we want to experience great love in our life, and yet often we struggle to know what great love looks and feels like. Unhappy experiences in love can leave us feeling pain and hurt, which can leave us feeling vulnerable and confused about what *is* 'great' love and whether that is possible to achieve.

Great Love leads to Awesome Loving

Great love is when you can first love yourself with compassion, acceptance, and a sense of humour. It's when you can embrace your quirkiness and your imperfections, as well as your strengths, talents

and abilities. Great love is when you choose to nurture and nourish your body, so that it can provide you with health and longevity, and a means of giving and receiving love with others. Great love is when you speak and think kindly about yourself, without judgment or self-doubt. It's when you honour your truth, values and your own measure of worth. It's when you forgive yourself with gratitude, knowing that life experiences provide you with golden feedback for your soul's growth and wisdom.

Great love is living your dreams, giving power and a voice to your Soul so that it inspires and moves you toward spiritual growth. Great love is loving so deeply and completely that your heart, mind and body are in synergy. Then, one day you understand that great love for yourself transcends the idea that you are separate from others and leads you towards experiencing awesome loving for another. The fullness of Divine Love within you expands so intensely that your soul radiates love to others, nature and all sentient beings. From this experience you realise you have so much love for yourself that you are ready to share that love with another. To experience awesome love in your life, you must start with great love for yourself. Then, as if by magic, through the Law of Attraction, you will see, feel and know the wonder of True Love that always surrounds you.

The path to great love is paved by experiences that are joyous, spiritually uplifting and satisfying to the soul. However, we also need the contrasts of what is challenging, painful and stretching. It's about diving deeper to understand our true essence, how we are unique, and at the same time universally connected to all other beings and to Source.

Our lived experience in the physical realm helps us to understand love and our spirituality. When we ground ourselves and become connected and rooted to Mother Nature, we connect with Spirit in a way that facilitates our understanding of love through our physical senses and our corporeal being. Through nature we connect with Divine Love that gives life to all living things and permeates all aspects of our physical and spiritual senses. Our physical life has huge value in helping us to understand the full expression of Divine Love, and thus becomes an expression of our soul's spirituality.

The contrasts of our physical life assist us to understand what experiences feed our soul and which ones drain our vital spiritual energy. Through the diversity of our life's experiences we can choose to rise up to see a broader view and higher perspective, as if standing on the top of a mountain looking down on a rich landscape that is deep, varied, beautiful and treacherous. When we are able to see beyond ourselves, we can recognise our connection to *all that is*, and that separation never truly exists.

In life we can experience a myriad of physical trials, and discover the multitude of inner landscapes of our soul, all of which form the growth and diversity of our spirituality. On our soul journey we experience life through our physical senses of the mind, emotions and our body. Our physicality helps us to connect with our spirituality and is a path that enables us to move towards Divine Love.

Our Soul's maturity is reliant upon our choice to make changes that will nurture our growth. It cannot occur by thinking about it or wishing for better circumstances. We must be willing to make changes and do things differently, to be open to the idea that we can experience even greater joy, happiness, wisdom and love in our life. The choice is always ours, to transform to a new way of being, thinking and believing, or to stay where we find ourselves today. Certainly, we believe there is a risk to change, and we can fear that the actions we take will not work out as we hope or imagine. There is the risk of rejection, and fear of losing something we value. Yet, often the risk is what we make up in our mind, and what we tell ourselves to be true, rather than what we know to be true from our Higher Self.

There have been many times I have progressed through cycles of pain and growth in my life. When I fall to a low point with feelings of self-doubt, despondency and low worth, I notice I have once again allowed myself to make others my focus and to be distracted from my soul-path. I have repeated an old pattern of seeking happiness and a sense of love and purpose from other people. Each time my spirit guides show me this will only create more pain and is not a path that will sustain me or take me to where my soul can grow and thrive.

Allowing ourselves to be imprisoned by our fear creates pain and

illusion that colours our perspective and causes us to make assumptions that are deceptive and destructive. As a result, we can unconsciously live in a way that is the opposite of our heart and soul's intention. Habitual patterns of fear-based thinking resists love and joy in our life. Love and fear cannot co-exist. Where there is fear, there can be little or no room for love. If we focus on obtaining love from outside of ourself, fear can only grow from the belief that True (Divine) Love does not already exist within. However, if we learn to accept the existence of fear, we can learn to recognise and appreciate the experience of True Love and joy. The dualities and contrasts are the valuable lessons that enable us to learn and grow in spiritual wisdom.

To experience True Love means we must first give love to ourself and have respect for our being, so that we can know what it is to live authentically as our true self and be aligned with the love and energy of the Divine. Only then can we 'be' that love. Our loving energy enables us to give and receive with wisdom, clarity and a deeper awareness of our connection with the Divine (God, Source, the Universe).

The Soul's Journey

How many of us see life as a time-line that starts at birth and ends at death? All that is between is seen as a series of events, joys and sorrows, milestones of achievement as well as those memorable points along the way where we have fallen short of hitting the mark. Life can be perceived as nothing more than a linear timeline counting down the years, spanning across the phases of our physical growth. Yet there is so much more to our being than just our physical existence from birth to death.

In some of those significant moments in our life we remember that perhaps there is more to our sense of who we are in the physical realm. It may be when we have experienced a triumphant moment and our spirit or soul feels lifted high, inspired by our own potential and beauty. Or we may be compelled to question our purpose when we have experienced deep sorrow, change that rocks our sense of certainty and what we

believe to be true from our experience of reality. It's when we have that moment of realization that perhaps there is more to our routine life, a depth we are yet to discover, meaning that lies within what we have yet to tap into. When life experiences touch us in a way that snaps us out of our unconscious living, a chord is struck in our heart to awaken our Soul and remind us that there is a reason why we are here.

The moment of awakening can feel like a whisper in our Soul or a thunderous storm that comes crashing into our life. Either way, it's the call of our Soul, beckoning us to come home, to draw closer to our true self and our Divine nature. Since many of us live noisy and complicated lives we can often miss that beautiful call, like a sparrow's early morning song that is soft, gentle and yet unmistakably speaking to our heart.

As human beings, we are accustomed to experiencing our world and our reality from a very physical and tangible perspective, structured and ordered by space and time, large and demanding of our attention. We can see the world as a logical sequence of events where one experience or event leads to the next, and to the next, until we have the outcome we want, or not. We come to expect certain results or situations based on our analysis and deductions and when they don't come forth in the way we hope, we can easily feel disappointed with the realization that our efforts are thwarted. It's a painful and limiting way to live and experience our version of reality.

Soul-living goes beyond what we immediately see and experience in our physical world. When we realise that the very essence of our being is not defined by our earthly reality of time and the experience of our five senses of sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch, we begin to move towards living a soul-life that is more reflective of our true nature and potential.

Our soul-journey is a reflection of our spiritual growth in love and wisdom, across the ages. Through different lifetime experiences we are provided opportunities to learn how to grow in understanding and wisdom, always leading us closer to what it is to *be* True Love and *give* love. This is our soul-purpose, and through our life experiences, our personalities, our circumstances, and the people that cross our path, we are given lessons to stretch and grow us. The choice is ours as to how

we respond. The purpose of our life is not to count the years away and measure our experiences in terms of time, but rather in lessons learned and the wisdom we have attained. As we progress through our life our soul evolves and takes shape, growing and expanding in awareness and in love. There are times the lessons need to be repeated, with different people and circumstances, presented to us in different ways and at different moments during our life on earth.

If we see life only through the eyes of time, it can be easy to feel frustrated, since we tend to measure our progress and success in terms of how long it takes to achieve our goals and our dreams. Our soul-life is more than a measure of time. It is a combination of our experiences and growth, and of the essence within us that is seeking to understand, to be and know more of love that is waiting to be expressed. The challenge for anyone is to actually see our true Divine nature and realise how we are not limited in any way. In this earthly life our physical body and existence provides us structure and context in which to learn and grow, but it is not a reflection of our true spiritual being. We are expansive universal beings that are both past, present and future essences of ourself in the same moment.

The key to living a soul-life is realizing our enormous potential. Our true limitless self is not out of reach, though many people are still yet to see their own Divine magnificence. There are moments when we may recognise sparks of our own Divine magnificence, or we may notice the unmistakable glow of someone else's soul beauty shining from within. Or there may have been moments where we feel we have witnessed the intervention of the angels, sensing something amazing and almost indescribable, as it deeply touches our heart and soul.

Do you remember a moment when you have seen something simply so beautiful it has taken your breath away? Such an experience does not need to be large scale. It may simply be noticing the beauty of a child's imagination and innocence at play, or it can be the awareness of the beauty of rain, the unconditional love of your pet, the pleasure of tasting nature's incredible food, or something in nature's beauty that has filled you with love and you don't even know how or why. Immersing into a

well of gratitude for what exists within our reality is how we experience the Divine both within and all around us.

The Divine love within connects us to the Divine love in others, nature and the Universe; souls connecting with souls; pure love reaching out and touching us all. Words are limiting, but we know what it *feels* like when we experience those special moments, no matter how insignificant they may seem at the time. When it happens there is a knowing that resonates deep inside and quite simply, makes us feel so good. If you have felt like this before, and the moments are occasional or fleeting, don't you want more of these moments? Is there not something there that sparks our human curiosity to want to know and experience more of this Divine wonder?

To consciously live from our soul-being, we need to become the observer of our life, aware and in tune with our internal radar or intuition. As we release and relax into 'being' rather than thinking or rationalizing our experiences, we become more sensitive to the deeper meaning of what we sense at a soul level. When we connect or resonate at the same vibration or frequency of another person (including animals), we understand where they are coming from. There is an inner knowing or awareness that helps us to understand the person's energy or intention. When we are open to connecting energetically with others, we are in the space to love from our heart and soul and accept all that is. From here the seeds of self-love and compassion are planted in good soil and wait to be nurtured so they can grow into the full magnificence of our soul-potential.

When we choose to live a 'soul-life', we are choosing to be open and learn to live in a way that is not dominated by fear, but instead is inspired by a loving purpose that is connected to God (Source) and reflective of Divine love. With increasing awareness of our own soul and how we are living in our current lifetime, there is an opportunity to tap into how we can become our greatest version. The *way* is always through love, and acceptance of our true self. Love is not about reaching perfection nor is it about our misguided intentions to receive love for our own gain. True love is birthed from a deeper recognition that we are all created from the one Divine Source, so we are never missing or lacking

in anything other than what we believe and perceive as our own truth. As we recognise we are not separate from others, and we water the seeds of love and kindness within, those seeds of love grow and mature, and in time our soul shines more brightly and is ready to bear fruit through contribution to others.

“Watering the seed of loving-kindness in ourselves and others is a way to cultivate love and peace in our lives”. (Jerry Braza)

True Love is always expanding. Living a life with deeper awareness of your soul-journey will lead you to the question of ‘what is my purpose in life?’ Or more poignantly, ‘what is my soul-purpose in this lifetime?’ Before we enter each lifetime we make a contract with ourself and our spiritual guides to agree on what people and experiences we will need that will most serve our soul-journey and provide us with the landscape, context and lessons to facilitate our growth in love, wisdom and understanding. As we enter each lifetime we bring with us the accumulation of what we have learned in previous lives, shaped by our experiences, pleasant and unpleasant, and the energy of unresolved lessons. Our soul-purpose is to work through those lessons we have yet to master, and move toward spiritual growth, understanding and freedom. In essence, during our lifetime we learn to love more deeply so that we become more aligned with our true Divine and spiritual nature.

However, as we move along the path of the soul-journey we discover it is not all a bed of roses. Our energy and vibration fluctuate as we slip in and out of alignment with the experience of living and being True Love. As human beings we are prone to the dualities and contrasts of living a physical life. There are many times we forget our soul-purpose and we sink to a level of disconnection and separation where we feel and believe we are alone. How many times can you remember feeling very low and believing that no-one else is experiencing what you are experiencing, or having the same thoughts and feelings as you? We can be very adept at berating our own sense of self-worth and value. It can be easy to veer from the path of True Love and become disoriented. When we become confused, we lose sight of our true self, and we fall

into the mental trap of isolating ourself and believing we are not good enough or worthy of love.

The truth is, you are never alone, unless of course you believe that. As we grow in love, wisdom and understanding, our very sense of self and connection with others expands. It is not possible to grow in love and be separated from other souls or the Source of pure love.

When you turn on the light in a darkened room, the dark ceases to exist.

We are all souls experiencing similar soul lessons for the purpose of ultimately growing in love, wisdom and understanding. As you become more consciously aware in your life, you will notice that the people who surround you are exactly who you need at the time. If you choose to see your life through the eyes and heart of love, you will see them as your mentors, helpers, and guides to light your way. It may not always feel comfortable, and at times the challenges and inner struggles we experience are there to stretch us and reflect our shadow side to mirror where we need to work on ourself. All of our experiences are brought into our reality as a result of our energetic vibration. What we believe to be true, where we choose to focus our attention and how much effort we apply in our life, will create an energy that will attract a certain outcome. The beauty is knowing that our results, or what we experience, is the feedback to help us see more clearly what we are yet to learn and understand about ourself and about Divine love. Everything is there to help us become more aligned with the path to Divine love, if we choose to let go of control and be open to the soul- journey.

Our soul-journey is simply all that we experience mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. What we learn along the way becomes the lessons of our soul-journey. Once lessons have been learned and integrated, and we experience a soul-transformation, we do not need to repeat them. We may be tested to see if our understanding and commitment to the path of love is for real, and that transformation is actually completed. When the learning is done, we can move on.

As we move through our soul-journey, the key is to embrace the challenges, the learning and growth opportunities, and to discover our

own soul-purpose in this life. What's important to realise is that we are not here to live another person's soul-journey or life purpose. We are here firstly for our own soul growth, and this is the number one priority.

We can recognise when we have veered from our own soul-path when we have become attached to another person or situation in our life. Whenever we make our purpose about someone else and we find that our sense of joy and meaning is tied to another person's actions, thoughts or intentions, then we have become misaligned with our own spiritual path. Adopting someone else or something else as our complete point of focus is actually indicating we are attempting to fulfil a need of our own, to fill a void, to feel needed, or to feel approved of in life. You are not fulfilling your soul-purpose if you are piggy-backing the life-path of someone else. If you are feeling regular bouts of anxiety, disease, anxiety, doubt and confusion, then these are indicators that you are off track. It's always a good measure to check in with your emotions, and to listen to what your body is telling you. Signs of stress, tension or poor health when you are focused on someone or something else other than your own soul-journey is a red flag for your attention.

Along the way, there will be times when people enter our life and we experience the immediate benefit of their presence. It can be for a short time or it may be for the long duration. They will likely match our vibration in an unmistakable way, as we sense their energy resonate with our own, and so there is a feeling of alignment. It may be that we share the same values, or that we connect mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually. The magic of the meeting is that we can sense an ability to 'read' each other or speak each other's language with ease. The purpose of the meeting is to mutually assist each other with soul growth, whether it's for a moment, a few days, weeks or years. When we connect with someone for the longer term it's often for the purpose of long-term soul growth. These relationships are often termed soul-mate relationships and can be between any gender, regardless of age, race, background, religion etc. They are relationships with a spiritual connection to facilitate soul-learning. Some soul-mates become partners due to the close intimate communication and connection, but this is

not always the case, nor is it necessary. The purpose of a soul-mate, is to assist and support the other person's soul growth.

Unlike popular belief, soul-mates are not limited to an intimate heterosexual relationship. A soul-mate relationship can occur between a parent and child, between two same-sex friends, or between a male and female in a partnership. When soul-mates show up in a male-female partnership the connection is often a very intimate and expressed as a strong physical bond. The important thing to remember is that this kind of relationship exists to firstly assist each other's soul growth and the path towards greater Love.

It's a blessing when we recognise our soul friends and the mutual gift of supporting each other's soul journey. However, it's important to remember we are only ever responsible for our own soul growth and our soul-purpose in this life. We cannot live for someone else or do the growing that they require on their soul journey. To attempt to do so is a selfish act, as it robs them of the opportunity to learn and grow from their own initiative. As any teacher will advise, you can guide, support, and shine a light, but we cannot do the learning or make the choices for someone else. Through our own life experiences, with the challenges, struggles, joys and soul connections we encounter, we can come to know ourself more deeply and the more direct way to Divine Love.

Learning to raise our vibration and conscious awareness will help us to be more in tune with our spiritual essence and the truth of our spiritual nature. As we learn the lessons of Love, we feel drawn more closely to the Divine and the experience of 'coming home'. Our journey towards True Love is greatly assisted when we master deep listening, stillness of the mind, a healthy body, and an open heart. When we are tuned into the present moment of being, then we may more aptly hear the call of our Soul.

