

>> MG: Are we ready? Drum roll. Level Two. We are in. Where are we right now? We are in. We have done Part 1 of the pleasure symphony. Part 1 of the pleasure symphony was the overture, the creation of Sangha, on the first night. Part 2 of the pleasure symphony was the seven voices of pleasure. Part 3 of the pleasure symphony was what were once called “The Twenty Principles of Pleasure,” but are now, officially, “The 24 Principles of Pleasure.” What part are we on now? What are we about to do? So, now we’re in levels, which is Part 5. So, we’re Part 5 of the pleasure symphony. In Part 5 of the pleasure symphony, we are in the levels of pleasure. We’re in Level Two. So, we’re in Part 5 of the symphony, in Level Two.

I want to thank Laurie. Where is Laurie? Nice little corner seat, there, behind Tom. She’s got my back. Really, actually, she made a last minute decision that she would be able to join us. I, then, made a last minute decision, that Jeff knows to change the topic to Pleasure, which was not the original topic. God knows what the original topic was, but it was in the brochure. We changed it since then, and we were going to do laughter and tears. That was our intended topic. But since I wanted to share this material with Laurie for the Unique Self Recovery book, we changed the topic to Pleasure.

Here we go. We did this the first time -- I was trying to remember, now. We did it the first time with Tom and Nance, right?

>> Jeff and Nance.

>> MG: Was it Jeff and Nance. All right, it was Jeff and Nance. It’s all good. So, it’s come away since then. We’re now going to begin to deploy the Principles. We deployed about six or seven of the Principles, in talking about. So, we here we go. We are in Part 5 of pleasure symphony, in the levels of pleasure, in Level Two. We deployed six or seven of the Principles, when we talked about Level One, which was the pleasures of the five senses. Now, we’re going to Level Two. Now, the one rule we know has to apply is that all of Level One can’t get you any of Level Two. That’s the way it works. That’s one of the rules we haven’t actually applied yet, because we’ve only had one level. So, now we have Level Two. We get to test some of the other rules. So, all of Level One can’t buy you any of Level Two, and that rule was there’s no rate of exchange.

So, Level Two Pleasure is love, affection and relationships. Love, affection and relationships is Level Two Pleasure. Now, money, as the Beatles reminded us, can’t buy you love. It can get you marriage, but it can’t get you love. So, that’s really critical, meaning all of Level One can’t get you any of Level Two. So, Level Two is the pleasure of love, affection and relationships. Just notice that there’s no rate of exchange. All of One can’t get you any of Two, which is kind of dramatic.

Now, not only is there no rate of exchange, but it also works, as we’re going to see all through the levels, people are often willing to give up all of one to get another. So, for example, people are often willing to give up tons of Level One Pleasure in order to get a little bit of Level Two Pleasure. Other people, who have certain kinds of psychopathologies that haven’t worked out, they’re willing to give up all of Level Two Pleasure for Level One Pleasure. That’s a problem. In the converse, it’s a problem. It’s a very dramatic thing to notice, though. It’s powerful. This rate of exchange thing sharpens an

understanding, which is really helpful to us. So, all of Level One is not going to get you; it's not going to buy you, to get almost any of Level Two. If you've ever seen a parent who's trying to have a baby. Mariana was doing in vitro, so, we got to know a lot of couples doing in vitro. To have a baby is just wild. Again, that doesn't mean that has to be your life path, in this incarnation. But it's an example of one form of people being passionately committed to create a certain kind of pleasure. Obviously, having a baby is only one form of that pleasure, among many. But it is one form of that pleasure. To feel that, is powerful.

Now, let's go a little deeper. So, how does this work. One, that's a skill. What's the price you would pay, if you will. The price is not attention. Attention is insufficient. Attention is the price for Level One. What's the spiritual practice or the price for Level Two Pleasure? It's kind of obvious. This one's obvious. It is clearly, what?

>> Presence.

>> MG: Presence might be an expression of it, but it's actually -- what is it? Well, it's actually knowing the Principles of how to have conscious, loving relationships. That's the price. If you will, if I could borrow a phrase, the skills are principles of loving. Now, we might evolve those skills of principles of loving beyond what's written on that wall, as we have, in these Wisdom Schools. They're always evolving. There's no canon. There's not like these are them. But the idea is that you need skills in principles of loving, in order to get this level pleasure. It's powerful. Otherwise, you can't get this level pleasure. You can't do the pleasure without it. So, for example, just to give you a very, very simple example. Just that simple example we talked about, of donkey smuggling, the other day. That's an example of a skill of loving. Knowing that donkey smuggling is happening, is actually very powerful, as a skill of loving. Because, then, you realize, "Oh, there's a donkey smuggler here. There's something else going on." We can actually work that issue and, then, you open up to love again. Without having the principle of donkey smuggling, then, you actually get stuck. Again, I'm using that, not as an absolute principle but as an example. You've got to have to know what's happening.

One of the things we want to talk about in this level is a couple of the skills and practices of loving and how they work. So, now, what's the counterfeit? We've got the Second Level. We know that all of Level One can't get you Level Two, so there's no rate of exchange. We know that it has a different price or a different spiritual practice. Attention is insufficient. You need the skills and principles of conscious, loving relationships. By the way, forgiveness has to one of those skills. Without forgiveness, it doesn't work. That's actually an essential skill -- how to deploy forgiveness and what forgiveness is. Now, we know that the greater the pleasure, the greater the skill. So, the more pleasure you're going to get -- and you've got to focus on the word pleasure -- the more pleasure you want to get from loving, the greater the skill you need at playing the sacred dance, the sacred game of love. So, the greater the pleasure, the greater the skill and the greater the effort.

Now, what else? What's the counterfeit? Every level has its counterfeit. What's the pseudo-eros? What's the counterfeit, again? A couple of people who have done this before, sit it out. What's the counterfeit, anyone? Yeah, Susan?

>> Status.

>> MG: So, status would be --instead of love, you're my partner and we have a sense of egocentric security together, if I'm understanding you correctly. I think that's correct. That's one form. That's what you might call, as Carol and I talked about earlier today, that's an obvious counterfeit. It's correct. In other words, it looks like we're loving, but we're really playing a game of egocentric security. That happens often. If you check the people that you love, and the people that you love, that every single one of them has given you egocentric security with no exceptions, you might want to check whether you're actually loving or not. It's a good plan. So, we've beware, says Susan, of not having egocentric security slip its way in and claim to be loved. So, that's an obvious counterfeit, but, again, counterfeits are subtle. So, what's the subtle counterfeit?

>> Projection.

>> MG: Projection. You can be projecting on to someone, so I'm not really seeing you. I think I'm in love with you, but, really, I'm just projecting onto you. Let's call that something. How that expresses projection is a form of it. What's the more obvious form of the subtle counterfeit, if you will?

>> Romantic illusion.

>> MG: Falling in love. I'm not going to call it yet a romantic illusion, but identifying love with falling in love, that would be, in the contemporary world, absolutely, the great counterfeit. So, what would we call that? We call that infatuation. Infatuation is the subtle counterfeit. All the love songs are either Western love songs, with a truck and somebody breaking up, possibility one. Or they're pop songs, with somebody falling in love in a car. Those are the possibilities available to us. We can give a general map of music, here. In all the falling in love song, it's not a song about, "Wow. We just came from our therapist, and we did this great work together." You just don't hear songs like that. They're falling in love songs, or they're heartbreak songs. The car and the truck, in the following in love songs and the break-up song are actually part of the same story. In other words, love is falling in love; it doesn't last; you break up. So, you move between pop and country and western, but that's basically your movement of love. That's how it happens. So, that's a subtle counterfeit. There's infatuation. It's one form of counterfeit. Egocentric security is another form of counterfeit. Infatuation is a big one. We'll get back to that. What else? What's another form of counterfeit?

>> Promiscuity.

>> Promiscuity. Loving many could be a form of counterfeit. It depends whether it's holy promiscuity or unholy promiscuity. How much is so many? Just to give me a number -- four, eight, nine, ten?

>> 69. [laughter].

>> Everyone has a pleasure cap, and [Shai*] is trying to break 69. There we have it. So, there's this holy promiscuity. In other words, it's always how you do it. Promiscuity means being with a lot of people. So, we assume that's bad. That could be bad, or it could be a beautiful, Christian consciousness. It completely depends on how you do it. Again, I just want to notice something. Whenever we compare

styles of love, and we talked about relationship languages this morning. This is important, in terms of the skills of loving. This is our Level Two Pleasure.

Whenever we talk about different languages of relationship, we always make what I call a “level line fallacy.” A level line fallacy is a big mistake. What’s a level line fallacy? There’s different lines. Let’s say celibacy is a line. Monogamy is a line. I don’t like the word polygamy, but post conventionality, which is what I like to call it, is a line. Those are different lines of development. So, those are lines. Levels is the level at which you’re doing it. Let’s make a simple level -- really badly, poorly, average, good, excellent. Just simple levels. So, we make a level line fallacy, meaning we compare the utter, worst of one level, and we say, that’s what that line is. That line is the worst of that line. So, it’s a level line fallacy. We think we’re comparing lines, but we’re actually comparing the worst level of one, with the best level of another. By the way, that’s often how people compare monogamy and post-conventionality. They find post-conventionality completely, in the negative sense, promiscuous, uncommitted, cheating and a disaster; with the ultimate monogamy of this couple that had been together for 90 years. They’ve been together for 90 years. They’ve got 19,000 great grandchildren, and they’re all running charities. You know what I mean? Because they’ve downloaded such beauty into the transmission of the family. You compare that to some kind of woman or guy fucking around, not telling everyone and lying to everyone. You say, “Wow. Monogamy is so great.” It doesn’t work that way. You actually have to compare the best of both levels, the middle of both levels, the bottom of both levels, and, then, you can actually have a real conversation. So, you’ve got to watch that, in terms of the pleasure of love. That’s important. It’s seemingly obvious but completely missed in, pretty much, all of literature. So, it’s a big deal.

So, our counterfeit is infatuation. That’s one form of counterfeit. Two is egocentric security disguised as love -- what Susan called status. That’s how we’re interpreting that, with her permission. What else? Just give me one or two more? Nance?

>> I don’t know if I have the language right, but idolatry, where there’s projection going on, where it’s a one way -- it’s not really a relationship.

>> MG: That’s right. Which might be a form of one way infatuation. It’s a mixture of one way infatuation projection, connected to what she said. That’s definitely a form of it, meaning there’s no genuine relationship. So, one form of it is there’s not an actual relationship. So, it’s a one way infatuation, of some sort of father/mother piece. Now, a father/mother piece is beautiful, to be clear, when it’s a piece. In other words, in our relational context, we should have father, mother, sister, brother, uncle, new friend, harlot, mistress, angel, angelous. So, those are all great faces of relationship. You just don’t want to [00:15:50*] on one, which is a one way infatuation. Good. What else is a counterfeit? Yeah, Eric?

>> Pretense or lack of heart.

>> MG: There’s no heart connection? So, when there’s no genuine heart connection -- what else? Give me a couple more.

>> Playing house.

>> MG: Playing house. So, let's call playing house "comfort love." Comfort love. That's a big one. In other words, you're playing house. It's comfortable, and there's lots of reasons to do it. Now, again, this doesn't mean that comfort love is bad. I want to make that really clear to everyone. Playing house is great. If you know how to do it by the rules, that's a big accomplishment. But it just doesn't give you the pleasure.

Does everyone get what we're talking about here? We're talking about pleasure, here. Our issue is pleasure. This is not the Couples Workshop. It's not a Unique Self Workshop. We're in the Dharma. It just doesn't give you the pleasure. It might do other things for you. But to actually be a full, whole human being, to be a whole person, you need all the levels of pleasure. You won't get pleasure from comfort love. You won't get pleasure from egocentric security disguised as love. You won't get the pleasure you need from Level Two from infatuation. That's our point. I want to stay focused on that. Our issue here is pleasure. We're in the pleasure symphony. You need pleasure to be alive. Remember, you need ordinary pleasure. You need the maximal expanded, deepest level of ordinary pleasure, at all five or six levels, to live in the world powerfully and effectively. So, you won't get this level's pleasure through comfort love. Just give me one more, and we're done with this piece.

>> What about unmet needs?

>> MG: What about them?

>> Usually, in a relationship [00:17:42*].

>> MG: So, let's call that, just as a general term, codependency. Let's call that codependency. So, now, when I say codependency, again, I'm going to be really careful. Because the codependency literature is spotty, at best. With all due respect to Ms. Beattie. It's spotty at best, simply because it doesn't really understand the distinction between inter-dependency and codependency. We're all inter-dependent. We all need each other. Schleiermacher, a great German philosopher and Protestant theologian, talked about relationship to divinity as [00:18:23*], which is absolute dependency. We're totally dependent on each other. All the time. We totally need each other. We're totally desperate for each other. So, the codependency literature got caught in autonomy and didn't make the distinction clearly between deep, inter-dependency and pathos and codependency. But, given that distinction, I want to make in the room, let's use the word codependency as we're each using each other to fulfill a game, and that game is not leading to a deepening of love. Because, again, we're always using each other. I want to make this clear. We're always using each other. And that's fine. Use me away. That's the gift we give each other. But when it pathologizes, and that's when the heart is no longer there; where the passion is no longer there; where the commitment is no longer there, when the I/It becomes the whole story, when there's no I/Thou; that's when the problem happens. Because, actually, if you read Buber, I/It and I/Thou are always living together. There is no pure I/Thou or pure I/It. But what happens is, when it pathologizes over to I/It, then, you lose the I/Thou. Then, you have a form of counterfeit.

So, we've talked about four forms of counterfeit. Yes?

>> You could actually categorize those four in the category of objectification, in the sense that you're actually loving another person, not for themselves, but for your projections, for your status, for your security.

>> That's a great thought. I think you can do that with three of them, not with four of them. Now with infatuation, because infatuation, as we'll talk about, actually is a genuine form of love. That's the key. Falling in love is one of the stations of love. It's Station One. But, actually, it's clearly a form of love, and all the mystical traditions are powerful on this. In other words, one of the things in the literature, which I think is one of the big mistakes in literature, that it identifies falling in love -- all the classical books in psychology say, love starts when you fall out of love. That's when the real thing starts, because you're no longer objectifying. A deep review, that we'll talk about in a couple of minutes, that actually, infatuation is a station to one of three Station of Love, that we talked about in this room, many times. But three of them definitely fall into objectification. And if you remain locked in infatuation, then, it might fall in there as well. So, objectification is a great word to put into the piece. And, again, objectification is only problematic when that's the whole of the relationship. That's what we meant. The I/It and I/Thou are fine, to live together, as long as they're living together. There's an "Objectify me," and "Subjectify me." They've got to live together.

So, now, what do we have, here? We've got no rate of exchange. We've got that going on. We've got our skill. Our skill is knowing the principles of loving and forgiveness. We've got four forms of our counterfeit. So, we've got a lot of pieces, here. Now, I think the key that we want to focus on here, just for a couple of minutes. And, then, we'll close this and move it into practice. But we need just a couple of more pieces, here, to really get a sense how you get the pleasure at this level.

So, the skill, as Susan said earlier, the skill is how do you get the pleasure at this level? So, let's me introduce two short pieces. Each one of these pieces is a huge world, by itself. I'll give them very, very briefly. But just so we have them in the game. Then, we're going to move to Jeff and Shelly.

So, one, the three stages of love, in terms of what I was just discussing with Laurie. So, what are the three stations of love? The three stations of love are absolutely critical to navigate and to get the pleasure of loving. You cannot get the pleasure of loving without these three stations. It doesn't work. It's a clear map. We did a version of it, through pleasure, yesterday. Let's just hit it really quickly. Some of us have talked about this before, but it's utterly essential. So, the three stations of love -- Level One, Level Two, Level Three. Let's call them stations, not to confuse them with levels. That's actually how we got to the word stations. The three stations of love. Station One -- it goes something like this. "Honey, would you like to see a movie?" "Sure, honey, I would love to see a movie." "Honey, what kind of movie would you like to see?" "Honey, whatever you want to see, as long as we're together." That's Station One. Now, does anyone recognize that station? Show of hands. That's a great station. That is falling in love. That's infatuation. I'm going to write you a note every morning. I'm fully there, and I'm fully present. "Honey, we've got to move. I'm very sorry. I've got a new job." "Where, honey?" "Well, it's in Alaska, in this little town, about 200 miles north of Anchorage." "Sure, honey. Let's start packing." That's Station One. Station One is falling in love. In this moment of falling in love,

there's a sense that, oh my God, love conquers all. I'm powerful. We're invulnerable together. No more pain will ever find its way in. I'll never be alone again. I've entered into a new domain. I was exiled into the realm of the individual, and I've now been liberated into couplehood -- the great nirvana. It's beautiful. This is called by the Kabbalists -- and this is the key -- arousal from above, meaning it actually is love. This actually is love.

One of the fundamental mistakes in Imago therapy, which mirrors the general mistake in psychological theory, which emerged out of a materialist paradigm. It views this level as being some version of objectification -- some version of unfinished business. You fall in love with the person, who is the composite of your primary caretakers, that you have unfinished business with. It's not that that's wrong -- stay with me, carefully. That's not wrong. That's true. The objectification piece in psychology is all true. It's just true, but partial. It's a big move. It's all true. It's just not the whole story. Actually, there's an intelligent cosmos. When you fall in love with someone, you're actually seeing something real. You're actually seeing something powerful. Your vision is actually true, which is why it's really critical not to bypass that level. You don't want to bypass Station One, because Station One is arousal from above. It's this free gift of the universe. You can see this person -- I can see clearly, you're gorgeous.

Then, what happens is, you get to Station Two. Now, you inevitably get to Station Two. Station Two is something like this.

>> It's more than all the unfinished business part, because what you see, is you actually see divinity.

>> MG: A thousand percent. You're seeing an early vision of divinity. You're not seeing it in clarified form. But you're actually seeing God in the person. I'm behind that a thousand percent. Actually, to be a lover is to see with God's eyes and to see God in another person. That's actually happening, for real, even though -- this is the subtle move -- even though it's also happening through prisms of unfinished business. Even though that person is some composite of your early caretakers or the opposite of your early caretakers -- and it can go on both sides. In other words, all the stuff that Harville put together, which none of it, as he writes in his book, it's not his original material. When he was writing, he took the best of different theories and literature and merged them together into Imago therapy and did it very elegantly. He did it very nicely.

But the weakness of it is, is that that's not the whole story. That's happening, but here's the same way I would say it is -- you don't reduce falling in love to serotonin and dopamine. Serotonin and dopamine are exploding all over the place when you fall in love, but falling in love is not serotonin and dopamine. So, in other words, when you fall in love, one of the triggers for who you fall in love with, is a psychological dynamic. But the same way it's not serotonin and dopamine -- it's not reducible to serotonin and dopamine -- it's also not reducible to that psychological dynamic. It's much larger than that. It actually is a process of your eyes being opened. I can see clearly now, and it's real. It's absolutely true. It's just not the whole story. That shift in understanding allows you to incorporate a lot. That's what we mean by a full vision.

Then, you get to Level Two. We're just going to spend another two minutes on this. At Level Two,

what happens? Something like this. “Honey, would you like to see a movie?” “You fucker, I can’t believe you’re asking to see a movie. You know that I don’t see movies. You know that I have work to do, and the fact that you’re asking to see a movie shows that you’re a pig. Get out of here.” Something like that. That’s Level Two. It’s harsh. That’s a harsh version of Station Two, I admit. But, I mean, how many people recognize some version of it or a fragrance of it? There, we go. All of a sudden, you’re in Station Two, and you’re mad at each other. There’s a power struggle. There’s stuff happening, and the accommodation is over. You’ve got to be able to get through Station Two. Now, Station Two is not the end of love. That’s the key. Station Two is still part of the love process. But this is the place where you decide, this is where I’m going to stay and delight in doing the work. This is the place I’m going to stay. That’s Station Two.

The first stage is called, in Kabbalah, submission, because you’re submitting to the love moving through you. You’re mutually submitting. It’s not the thing that Nance was describing, where only one person is submitting to the other. There’s a mutual submission. And, then, Station Two is called [00:29:22*], or separation. There’s a separation, but you’re still in the love process. You haven’t left. You’re in the game, but you’re working now.

And, then, Station Three is called sweetness, [00:29:33]. Station Three is when you reclaim the original experience of falling in love, but at a much higher level of consciousness. Because what you’ve done up to this point, you’ve stripped away part of what Laurie was referring to -- the objectification part. You’ve made it conscious. You’ve stripped away part of the Imago constellation, the re-enactment work. So, you’ve gotten beyond a lot of the reenactment. You’ve gotten beyond a lot of the objectification, and you’re actually at Level Three. So, you reclaim Level One, at a higher level of consciousness. That’s Level Three.

Now, you’ve got to know this map. This map doesn’t happen, necessarily, in a linear way. It’s not, “Okay, we’ve got four years of this one; three years of that one and a decade of that one.” They can all happen in 15 minutes. You can actually go through all three of them in 15 minutes. But if you see them, it changes the love game. You see that? It changes the love game, because you actually realize what’s happening. You realize, “Oh, that’s Station One, that’s Station Two, and that’s Station Three.” You’re able to work it in an entirely different way. That’s an example of what I’m calling the skills of loving. Take it away, Diane.

>> So, is it completely linear, or does it cycle back around?

>> MG: It cycles back around, just like evolution. Evolution is not linear. Evolution meanders. So, these stations meander. That’s good. Eric?

>> It sounds a little bit like David Deida.

>> No. David’s thing -- this is a Kabbalist structure. Dave and I once sat and talked about this, in a hotel room for four or five hours. I shared with him this structure. He shared with me, his. David comes from two other places. His first two levels are built on Warren Farrell, which comes from Warren’s book, *The Myth of Male Power*. And the last level that he added on, really, from [00:31:30*]. David put

Warren and [00:31:29*], in an original, beautiful, David mix. But there's a certain similar structure, that they're about something else. David's first level is about -- I use an version of that -- based in submission, separation and sweetness, which would be something like utter dependency, mutuality, and, then, mutual, utter dependency, in different ways. But let's bracket that, for now.

So, let's just do one more piece. Then, we're going to do a little exercise on the spot with Jeff and Shelly, and they're going to take us the next step.

So, we've talked about the Three Stations of Love. The Three Stations of Love is its own seminar. It's its old world. You've got to really work each station carefully, and we've done that before, in this room. So, I don't want to go back into it now, but I want to add on what I call the three faces of love. Three stations; these faces. I'm not going to call it three faces. Let me give it a different name. Names matter, actually, when you're creating a Dharma together. The three verbs of love. Let's call it the three verbs of love. Three faces actually refers to something else. I'm going to do each one of these, and each one of these, as some of the people in the room know, each one of these is a day. I'm going to do each one for like one minute.

So, One --love is not merely an emotion. The understanding of love as an emotion is a huge category error. Love has an emotional expression, but love, at its core, is not an emotion. Half of the people in the room can finish this sentence with me. Love is not an emotion. Love is a...

>> Perception.

>> MG: Perception. Love is a perception. That changes the game. Love is a perceptive faculty that you can awaken. Again, everything changes, when you get that. That's One. It means, you can develop that capacity for perception. There's an entire chapter in the *Mystery of Love* book, Paul and Carol, about perception. Love is perception, which is key to our discussion during lunch. So, the first verb of love -- it's a quality of love -- is love is perception. That's a whole world.

Two is -- we wait to fall in love with someone, and, then, we're going to give him everything we have. But, actually, it's the reverse. It's not that you first fall in love, and, then, you give. First off, giving, itself, opens love. But more than that, love, itself is giving. There's no separation between the two. In other words, hav -- "love," in Hebrew, also mean "to give." To be a lover is to be a radical giver. So, the definition of love from the perspective of perception is -- to be a lover, is to see with God's eyes. The definition of love from the perspective of radical gifting -- hav;love is giving. -- is to be a lover is to be willing to bracket your own egoic needs, in order to continuously and spontaneously give towards the evolution of the one that you love, towards the evolution of your beloved. So, that's two. Here, love's got a different definition. Love means I'm willing to bracket my own egoic need, in order to spontaneously and regularly give, to support the evolution of my beloved. That's a second definition of love. It's a beautiful definition.

Three -- with this we finish the Dharma on this level of pleasure. With this, is to be a lover is to be open and not closed. So, to love, to decide again and again to open and not to close. Each one of these is a world. To be lover, is to decide again and again to open and not to close.

So, this is a quick take of, if you will, skills of loving, reloaded. Which we've done again, pieces of it, in this room. Now, what that means is, for example -- and this is going to take us directly into the exercise. There's a sentence that half of the room knows well. It means your love lists are usually too short. Because our love lists are too short, because the people that we put on our love lists are people that we either have some codependent thing going on with, that we've got some comfort going on with or giving us egocentric security or the four people that we're infatuated with.

Usually, our love list comes from the pool of people that we were getting some form of counterfeit love from. But if you generally understand love as perception -- that I see the infinite beauty of God as being radically open and not closed. His radical gifting that emerges from love and creates love -- you can actually love many, many people. More than that. Let's take it one next step. You can actually decide to fall in love with many people. Instead of falling in love being a process of objectification, based on a composite of early caretakers, you can make a decision to fall in love with many people -- that's why I made the distinction, Steve -- not romantically. I'm not talking about romantically, and I'm not talking about sexually. You can decide to fall in love with many people, as a practice. Not this summer, but the summer before, we did an eight day Mystery School on the practice of falling in love, with about 100 people. It was, maybe, the most ecstatic Mystery School you can imagine. We just did deep practice -- serious practice, not casual, half-assed. Deep serious, Sufi, Kabbalistic and post postmodern practice, that we created, practicing, a year ago last summer, falling in love. So, falling in love could kick in, not as a function, as a kind of automatic, romantic imago objectification. It can be, actually, a choice you make. You make a choice that you're going to fall in love again and again and again. It's my belief that this actually gives you an enormous pleasure. That's actually one of the ways you get the pleasure of loving.

Now, that doesn't mean you have the same relationship with every person. Obviously, you don't. It doesn't mean you have the same level of time commitment to every person. Obviously, you don't. But it means that you're actually able to open your heart and to let your heart be blown open, by the utter, outrageous beauty of another person and completely fall in love with them. Now, again, let me say it one last time, it doesn't mean that you're romantically enmeshed with them. It doesn't mean you exchange bodily fluids or even touch. So, we're not talking about either a sexual or a romantic loop. We're not talking about either. We're talking about falling in love. We're actually disambiguating falling in love from the romantic/sexual, one. And two, disambiguating falling in love from the objectified process that's kicked in, when your old, imago caretaker image is called forth, but turning love into a capacity decision changes your entire life.

I'm going to stop here, because this is my favorite topic in the entire world. So, we could talk about this for the next seven days and just go into bliss and practice it. So, out of a sense of boundary -- I'm putting a boundary on this. I'm going to take Lynn's question, if it's still in the space; or if it's not, we can let it go.

>> When you align your heart, aligned with your divinity, you can will yourself to love. It's a choice.

>> Love is exactly what we're talking about. Love is a decision. It's a decision, but because you

Wisdom School: The Dharma of Pleasure
Audio: Saturday Afternoon, Part 1
TRT: 00:42:11
Speaker: Marc Gafni

actually realize that love is not an emotion -- that's why this Dharma is so critical. As long as it's an emotion, it's very hard to will yourself to love. Because the emotion is energy in motion, happening to you. But once you make the paradigm shift, that love is a perception -- I've shared with people, and I'm not going to tell the story now, but when I spent that one full day, hanging and chatting with the Lama Dalai, in Dharamsala, the thing he got most excited about was this idea. We were exchanging Dharmas, and I was sharing with him what I call Hebrew Mystical Dharma, even though we've evolved it, somewhat. When I start talking about love as a perception, you can look at it. It's on our website. He got so excited about it. "Beautiful, beautiful," because it changes the game. Everything changes, the whole map.

So, when you get that your love lists are too short, then, you begin to make your love list. Let me turn it over to Jeff and Shelly. We did the shortest version of this level of pleasure ever done. But I think we got the level clearly. We're not going to go longest than this in any of the levels, because I want to get through them. So, let's take it to Jeff and Shelly. Let's practice this level.

Are we good? Let's give a big drum roll. Big drum roll. Working it, brothers and sisters.