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Helping People Make a Difference

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Passion: LOVE vs. HATE

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As we make plans for the celebration of Valentine's Day our hearts and minds turn to love. We think of the passion that comes with romantic love. Most of us who have lived long enough, know that the loving passion that is felt for another, can, given the right amount of hurt, turn into a passionate disdain. What is it that turns the tides of love?

Inevitably, the one ingredient that consistently changes the tides of love is hurt. When we are hurt we go into a protective stance. Sometimes, the hurt is intentional, sometimes it is not. Either way, the dance of passionate love becomes a dance of passionate disdain. It is a dance that is riddled with anger, resentment, abandonment, and of course, a sense of failure. So what do we do to protect ourselves from this paradoxical predicament?

Have you ever played tug-of-war with a full grown bulldog? I have! Bulldogs are built to hold on to an object with their ferocious jaws forever! No matter what one would try and do, the bulldog will not let go of the prize! Every ounce of strength and determination that the dog has is applied to winning the war because the bulldog will not be deterred by the size of the opponent on the other end of the rope! No matter how insurmountable the task, they are tenacious and will not relent regardless of weary exhaustion.

I can't help but to admire the bulldog just a little for these characteristics. If each of us could apply this same tenacity to our relationships, **love** can become a very powerful tool. This tenacity can prompt us to sacrifice ourselves, to give when it is illogical to give, to act for the sake of growth and well-being, to believe in another's potential when their behavior tells you there is none, and at all cost, to **protect the dignity** of the one we love. When **two** people apply tenacity, the love continues no matter what.

When we are hurt in love, we may become so entrenched in the hurt that we are paralyzed to love again. Being deeply hurt can cause us to become emotionally unforgiving toward the one who hurt us. By not forgiving at the heart level, we are punishing **ourselves** for failing at love. At one time I was there and was freed from my own self-contained prison because someone loved me enough to push me to own what I was doing to myself. As I gave up the right to hold on to my pain forever, I began to love myself which made it easier to be loved by others. By forgiving deeply, I was free to love deeply.

For the last 25 years I have loved & been loved by my husband. I am fortunate because my husband loves like a Bull dog plays! He is loyal & passionate learned these traits from his parents. If you know a couple who has been married a long time, look at their love. Do you see just a mere tolerance of one another or do you see a passionate devotion to one another? My husband's parents, Rev. Charles & Isabelle Pearce have loved each other deeply for over 57 years. They are referred to by many as salt of the earth people who care for others deeply. They have loved each other and their children with bulldog tenacity. With God's help, each of us **can** follow in their footsteps. Love like a bulldog plays & when you get hurt, forgive with the same fervor!

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