

## SABOTAGING LOVE

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Loving and being loved. It is a desire on the heart of every person I have ever known. Stretching toward an ideal or picture in our minds of what this means, the picture is different for each person. The search involves facing a dichotomy that can be most confusing. It involves a deliberate movement towards seeing both how one loves well and sabotages the love that is the goal of their desire.

The experience of being shamed for one's thoughts and feelings, expectations of sacrifice with no return, abandonment physically, or emotionally create the idea that one can search for but never achieve a sense of being loved. The movement towards intimacy, in any way, shape or form, triggers the past experiences. Usually, behaviors kick in that only bring distance. Here is an example:

“There have been times that my behavior or speech has been abrupt, harsh, or inappropriate in relating to those that I consider significant to me. What I am learning is that my behavior is a projection of the shame and denial of existence that I experienced in my family. An unspoken rule in my family is that I am expected to give, love, serve, and sacrifice with no expectation of any return other than an occasional morsel of affirmation or love. When someone expresses love for me this challenges the rule that I have learned. Without realizing it, I would find a way to push that person away or try to get them to think less of me. It has been a struggle to see both my desire to love and my pattern of sabotaging love. I end up acting in an abusive manner towards the one daring to love me just as was done to me. I can see how I have become so focused on protecting myself that I shut out the very thing I have longed for.” (Anonymous)

Allowing ourselves to see both sides of the process is not easy. However, it is necessary. God tells us that He has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind.

Facing down the rules, fears, and patterns are a part of God healing process. His promise to never leave us is our foundation. It is also the very thing that begins the healing process. We are not loved for our any other reason but the fact that God chose us from the beginning of time. This fact challenges any rule or pattern we have come face to face with. It can be trusted. Trust God's revealing love today.

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