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- *Spiritual love*
- *Accepting those who are a challenge*
- *Growth through faith and failure*

God rejoices in your loving union together. You are indeed united spiritually. There is a closeness among you and among others who are also a part of this group but not present. This closeness serves as a kind of kernel or seed. It is from such closeness that openness develops and is nurtured, and it is through that openness that love is more freely given and received.

Love requires trust. When you love another, you have trust in the other. There may be things about the other that you disapprove of, but there is a trust that acknowledges the wholeness spiritually that belongs to another. Everyone has a spiritual wholeness as defined by a filling of the spirit with the light of God. There is no one who lives in the shadow, but it is obviously difficult for you to recognize the light which everyone carries. When there is no recognition, there is no love. Evidence of this recognition is the acknowledgment of trust, not trusting that someone will always do the right thing, for no one can do the right thing on all occasions. But if you trust that someone is filled with spiritual presence, you create an environment where that presence feels free to be exhibited, to shine.

It is much like a normal human personality taken quite separately from the spiritual personality. When one feels criticized, judged, felt to be somehow unworthy or beneath another, that person will not express what is in his or her heart. If you feel completely at ease with another, you feel freed to be who it is you really are. The expression of love is therefore the ability to be open to allow others to become and to reflect who they are at that moment. Doing this is bringing another one into your life with trust. You trust God's presence in another, and therefore you respond to the other as you would wish to respond to God.

Your sense of unity in this group provides an atmosphere for trust, the kind of trust of which we speak. Love *is* trusting. Love is believing in another. Spiritual love is believing in all others. When you are filled with spiritual love, you accept yourself as well. You cannot be critical of yourself, recognizing your own spiritual value, for then you would be criticizing your spirit, and that you cannot do. You must find yourself in a place in your life that allows you to accept your own spirituality and the spirituality of all. It is through this acceptance that God is given the strength to be influential in society.

We have said on other occasions that you cannot live by yourself. In a similar manner, God's presence in human life cannot be fully realized without the participation of humans. It is you who give life to God's presence. It is you who are the hand of God, the heart of God, the feet of God, the eyes of God. It is for you to reflect your own view,

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imperfect as it may be, of God. Such a reflection requires the trust that we have spoken of.

You may be human, but you are all also spiritual. There is a spiritual side to your personality which is unique. There are, of course, many common elements that unite all people together spiritually. But each of you has something which is also unique, and it is for you to recognize somehow the uniqueness and value of others with whom you are in contact. The expression of love is a recognition of the spiritual uniqueness and value of another.

There are times in the past that you can recall, and there will be times in the future where you will be challenged to recognize any spirituality in another individual. It is too easy for you to respond to what someone else does, even to respond to what someone else says without really understanding what someone else means. Just as you cannot come to a full understanding of God in your human form when you are alone, neither can others. They need your presence as much as you need theirs. This presence may be compassionate, it may be a quiet presence, it may be a directive influence, it may be consoling, challenging—there are many ways.

Life as you experience it will never be free from the challenge of recognizing the spiritual validity of others. You will not get to a point in your development where all you see is purely spiritual, is only the good of another. That is not for you to experience. If you were to reach that point, there would be no more growth, for you would have essentially arrived at an all-knowing spiritual brilliance.

For human beings, there will always be the challenges of individuals that bring to question the issue of spirituality, of spiritual presence, of a godly light. But it is in accepting those who challenge you, those whose behavior or ideas you may find repugnant, that you are given the food so essential for your own spiritual growth. It is not realistic to look at life through the proverbial rose-colored glasses, for you never see the true colors that surround you. Do not be disturbed, therefore, when you feel you are failing in your abilities to accept others whom you find in some way offensive. Take those challenges as opportunities for developing the grace of love, the gift of trust. It is a leap of faith that you are asked to express, to exercise.

Your lives really are not governed by vision; they are governed by faith. You are moved along more through your actions of faith than through your actions based on knowledge. What you know makes you no stronger. What you learn is the basis for growth, and that learning can only take place when faith in an outcome is a ready participant.

The expression of love, therefore, is the expression of faith, of action not based on knowledge but on hope, on a belief that something may happen. Your growth, then, is steady and strong and your spiritual lights are burnished and polished and radiate an enormous brilliance. Individuals who grow through life only on the basis of what they

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know will learn nothing more, for learning is discovery, and discovery is encountering what is not known, and that is faith.

Embrace those uncertainties, whether they are personal or professional. Be willing to reach out to those uncertainties with a belief in their ultimate conclusion in a manner that is appropriate. Indeed there is nothing that you do in life that results in failure, for it is in the failure that you learn. It is in failure that you learn about yourself and what it means to be humble, what it means to be human, and therefore you are more able to accept failure in others and thereby develop trust. When you expect a resolution to a question and find a different solution is presented, that is not failure—that is discovery. If you had never taken the chance, if you had never taken the step of faith, you never would have discovered, and without discovery there is no growth.

Accept the challenges that confront you daily. Be willing to act in faith and be patient, not to be led only in the direction that is based on full knowledge. Certainly your lives have to recognize what is known. You cannot ignore what is known, for what is known is the result of knowledge. But you must be open to the expansion of knowledge in your life through the act of confrontation with uncertainty.

Your lives will become richer when you are more ready and willing to interact with those who are in themselves considerable challenges to you. You are then beginning to exercise the faith in a spiritual fulfillment of another. You are then acting not out of judgment but out of love. You are giving your love and not merely receiving. There are, of course, benefits to both, but the exercise of faith can be seen as the giving out of love, the recognition that there is value in reaching outward. There is value in reaching across the table. There is value in sharing. There is value in listening. There is value in just being there.

Yes, this group provides a wonderful opportunity for you to exercise your faith. It provides an opportunity for expressing trust. It provides you an opportunity for enormous growth. We encourage you to continue to work together in your understanding of God, for it is through corporate sharing that the greatest growth is accomplished.

Our love for you is constant and is expressed to you because of our faith in your capacity to accept, because of your ability to listen without judgment. When you question the source of your insight from these gatherings, you are really judging, and such judgment stands in the way of your understanding of what is being shared with you. We are not subject to the human frailty of backing away if we are judged, for we understand that judgment is so much a human component, and so we persevere. And when you doubt what you hear, you doubt what you feel because you don't understand fully the source. You provide a barrier of your own that prevents you from concentrating on the content, as you all recognize.

We feel blessed by your openness, your ability to suspend judgment, your ability to listen and to take in and to consider. We feel blessed by that openness, and it makes

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our activities as your guides greatly enhanced, more effective for you and easier for us. Take that same acceptance, take that same willingness and turn toward your fellow human beings, and you will be surprised and warmed by what you learn from others, for you have much to learn from everyone.

There is much that we still have to share with you, and we look forward with great joy to these opportunities for spiritual union with each other and with us. Your guides are all together as well as the guides of all for whom you pray, the guides of all whom you think of and remember who have joined us. It is indeed a large and joyous assembly, one of peace, one of great light, and one of gratitude for your memory. All of us together surround your lives with God's most glorious light.

Amen.