

Luminous Heart: Awakening to your Loving Nature

with A.H. Almaas (Hameed Ali) and Zarina Maiwandi
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Hameed:

Good morning, good evening, everybody. Good to see you all at this introductory webinar for the course that will be offering about love, the most important ingredient that human being needs. So, I want to begin with a short meditation. I would like you to close your eyes and feel your feet, sense your feet. The sensation in your feet. the teeming sensation, both feet. This will ground us on the earth like a grounding wire. Feel your feet and as you feel your feet you feel its aliveness and sensation and pressure or temperature. Now you are aware of your breathing. Just feel the breath now while you are sensing your feet. Yes, breathing means we are alive, and we are in life. You can open your eyes now and add looking. Sensing your feet. You continue sensing your feet hopefully and stay in touch with your body during this hour and a half.

We are talking about love this time. We are discussing love. Talking about love is really for human beings like what is new. Everybody talks about love. All the literature, all the songs, all the art are mostly about love. Love is important for human beings. Human beings need love, thrive with love and grow with love. Usually most human beings feel they do not have love, do not have enough love, to not have enough love to give. So, there is a dearth of love in the world. Just look around you in the world. If somebody's heart is full of love, a human being whose heart is full of love cannot harm another, cannot kill another. Look at the world. Lots of violence, problems and hate. I mean, there is not enough love and that is how most people feel. They do not have enough love. They are not loved enough. They do not know how to love although everybody knows love is important.

Of course, the one big reason why there is not enough love is that most people when they were growing up did not get enough love from the people who parented them or took care of them. They either did not love them enough. They do not feel loved, or somebody got loved more, or they have love, and they lose it, or they get mistreated and there is violence, abuse, trauma and all kind of things that happened that limits the experience of love. We feel the need to be embraced by love, held by love, surrounded by love, filled by love, treated with love to be able to feel free and happy, and to grow and mature, to be what we are, to assume our true human potential. Love is the nourishment that is needed for humans to grow much more than any other spiritual quality. Most teachings have to do with enlightenment, or knowing what is reality, but those do not happen if you do not have love. If there is not love, we cannot be open enough to the other deeper parts of our spiritual potential which means the potential of being a true human being, a full complete human being.

The thing is not only that most people did not receive enough love, or sufficient love, or the right kind of love because most parents do not have it to give. They did not get it too. It is like what is transmitted through the ages is the dearth of love, the scarcity of love although all human beings know love is needed. It is not only humans but many of the primates know this. Mammals need love, need care. Human beings most of all because we are dependent on our parents for a long time, the first few years. Not only is there a dearth of love but part of the dearth of love, part of the skills of love is that most of human beings do not

know exactly what love is. Most people know love as some kind of emotion, some kind of acts you do which are important, which are expressive of love. But what is love?

When you really experience love and know it for what it is, we find out it is really a quality of our spiritual nature. It is a quality of spirit. It is a quality of light, a quality of consciousness. It has sweetness. It has goodness. It has beauty. We appreciate beauty because our heart can have love. If there were no love, what would it mean to appreciate beauty? If you appreciate love, you love beauty. You love nature. You love each other. You love yourself. But for love to really flower, to be available to us, for us, for our own development and growth and for us to give to others, to be human beings who contribute positively to the race, to life of earth and the environment, we need to know what love is. We need to feel and experience the love that is a true spiritual quality. We need to feel the essence of love, which is more like a soft medium, like a sweet nectar, like a pleasurable blissful liquid light, golden or pink filling the heart, filling the consciousness, filling the whole mind or atmosphere. It feels like pure goodness. Love not only appreciate but love is giving. It is generosity. It is wanting the good for the other, whatever you love.

So, if you love yourself, you want what is good for you. If you love another, you want what is good for them. That is true love. If love means you want something from somebody, you think you want something from them, you know, love mixed with desires, not just love. Maybe there is love. Maybe there is only desire. Not that desire is bad. It is also human. But love is primary. Love is what makes the world go round. The human race revolves around love. The development of the human race, the development of human beings depends on love, its availability, its understanding, its experience, its capacity to feel it, to know it, be it, and express it in our life. The interesting thing is when we know love, we know its nature which is like a nectar, light that has become nectar, that is sweet. It smells like jasmine or roses. Its essence is goodness.

When you feel that, we also can recognize at some point now, this love is not just in the human heart, but this love is part of the spiritual nature which is the nature of everything. The spiritual nature underlies the whole universe. It is the inner side of the physical world, the other side of the physical world. The inner side of the physical world, the whole world, the whole universe has a side. Usually, most teachings talk about the other side is consciousness or awareness, but conscious awareness can also have love with it. So, we can see love as imbuing, pervading the whole universe everywhere, everything. But for most of us do not see it that way. You want to be able to feel love, to experience it as a full human being, for individual being, for others, but to also know it. It expands as an ocean of love, an ocean without shores of sweetness, of goodness. That is what we call divine love or universal love and from that comes all the qualities of love that pour through the human heart.

So, the universe expresses love purely through the human heart. It is not expressed fully through rocks and mountains and oceans, but through the human heart specifically. This is just a little introduction about love both as a human quality, a spiritual quality but also as the underlying nature of everything in the universe. Zarina will talk more about love. She is the one who will be teaching this course.

Zarina:

Thanks for launching our webinar. Part of what we are going to spend time on in the course and also this morning is to sort of begin to give you a context for love, this most common of things and yet in a certain way subtle. In a certain way deep and profound and, as Hameed was saying, pervading everything. Kind of oneness or unity of love that is not exactly about subject loving an object. The kind of love that is the ground and the nature of all experience, all existence, all happening. We can of course have many objections to such a proposition. Let us call it a proposition for now as we entertain it. We can look around the world and find all kinds of exceptions to this oneness of heart, to this expanse or medium that Hameed mentioned whose very nature is goodness and generosity and a kind of care. The kind of consciousness that is so imbued with the goodness of being that the only word we have for it is love.

So, we will spend some time on that. Hameed spoke on the one hand about this pervasive expansive field of love, of goodness, of generosity and beauty and caring. And he also spoke about these distilled essences of love. These different specific flavors that the heart expresses the ground. What is the relationship of the human heart to this ocean of love? The shoreless ocean of conscious love. How does this one love become the many loves that we experience? And what does that have to do with our day-to-day emotions? What is the relationship of these three? The ground of love, the distillations of love in the human heart and the moment to moment living and loving of life and people and ice cream and nature. And what does that have to do with our usual emotions? Our dearth and scarcity as Hameed mentioned? Our I do not have love, got to get love, cannot get on side of love.

So, if we consider all the things that we love, we can discover an endless variety like the last time you fell in love. Maybe you are falling in love now. What is that feeling, that sort of excitement, that first blush of love, that liking, that wanting to see the person every chance you get, wanting to know every single thing about them. Like the smallest, oddest things about the person you are falling in love with makes your heart blossom. You cannot get enough. The way they eat their food, the way they chew, sounds they make. It is very specific feeling of love, falling in love. We can also love pistachio ice cream. We use the same exact word for our bowl of ice cream that we do for our lover. I love pistachio ice cream. What is that love? Very different inner feeling than I am falling in love with somebody. Although I see people blush from eating ice cream, it is not common. Or we love our grandbabies and our kids. We scoop them up and we want to eat them. There is a kind of melting love that we have towards children and puppies and the young of the species. A kind of cuddliness which is again different than the way we love ice cream or our favorite show or the person we are falling in love with. It is more a melting kind of love. Cozy warm, holding of our pets, our children, our nieces and nephews. That love has a very kind of lap feeling like being a big melty lap of love.

Love of jazz, of rock and roll, our favorite album. For all of these things we use the same word. For our favorite TV show, our lover, our favorite food, our best friend, dancing, climbing mountains. I love to dance. What does that love feel like? If we really get specific about love, about what the inner experience of it is, about how it impacts our consciousness, these various things we love, what can we discover? We see that they all share this pervasive goodness and generosity and richness that Hameed was talking about. That kind of divine universal love is in the background of all these different flavors and essences of love, all these different tastes of love. If that universal love is the ocean without shores, these flavors of

love in the human heart are its waves. We could say as the light of love, as that light of oneness passes through the prism of human consciousness, it begins to show the array of the human heart, the colorful facets of what the heart actually is, of what love is that is more than simply emotion or what love is that is more than only transaction, that is more than simply about getting or giving or not having, that is more than the distortions of love, its lacks.

Each of these essences, each of these qualities or facets of love in the human heart, each one has its own gift and its own challenge. Every time one of these loves shows up and is experienced, it shows up places in us that we are not so sure about. Either we have not known it, or we do not believe such a thing can be possible. It can be in the realm of ideas or beliefs, or it can be that we have been hurt in certain ways or we have not known it through neglect. We have not known it through our lived relationships. So, each love answers a certain call of the heart. Each love that shows up, each presence, each palpable substance of love that is more than simply emotional love, fills a need in our lives, in our relationships. We can discover a nourishing kind of love, a love that feeds our soul. It grows us.

We can discover a love where what is foreground is a kind of kindness, a softness and a generosity. We can discover a love whose foreground qualities of satisfaction, feeling satisfied and satisfying at the same time. Feeling fulfilled and fulfilling. There are shy loves appreciative, shy, furtive. Flashy kind of loves where you blush. There is a kind of sensitivity and exquisite kind of sensitivity to the softness. Sweet honey melting loves where we kind of go gooey. Love can get more passionate. It can get deeper, more intense. A love that is driving toward a kind of union. It is like when the heart is on a march toward her nature and nothing else would do other than complete union. A passionate embrace of the human and the divine. There are erotic loves. It can have that full body sensual experience, a fullness, a softness that is full and deep and rolling and powerful. Each one of these essences of love, each one of these facets or tastes of love meet something specific in our lives, in our relationships and also in our inner journey.

Love as a presence, love as an expanse or ground is desperately needed for our lives, deeply relevant to the world we find ourselves in. It is also a vital element of our inner journeys. It is indispensable to knowing who we are, all of these loves that I mentioned. In order to turn inward at all, our hearts need to be stirred. In order to even be here this morning, afternoon and evening, something called to you. Something stirred your heart. What interests you about love? What brings you here? Which is more farfetched for you, this one ocean of love or the fact that there is a fountain of love essence inside your chest? What is more unbelievable? We all have tendencies. These are all the kinds of things we can explore and find out about ourselves. For some of us, the idea that the entire universe through and through, all the way down is made of love and goodness and generosity is pie in the sky kind of material. Nothing in us goes anywhere near that possibility. Others of us go oh yes, universal love, I love everything. Yes, cool. But my neighbor? No, not my neighbor. Not interested. The guy in bed with me?

So, we can have tendencies like this. We can either be all in for that universal kind of love, that can be more comfortable and avoid this kind of specific day to day moment in life differentiated qualities of love or the opposite. We can feel love in our relationships and our work. It may be emotional love, but the presence of love is not far from our experience. But we look at the devastation in Libya or Morocco or the war in Europe and we go love is everywhere? Come on. Get real. So, we carve out this kind of area



where there can be love and there is a strong border and beyond that no, there is just way too much chaos and disorder and violence. We can have tendencies either toward the universal or the more personal and we can find out about our hearts in that way.

Another access. Some of us are more comfortable loving. Oh, we are totally loving. We love everything. We feel love. We are saturated with love. All of it. Being loved? Not so much. Someone comes toward you with warmth and open arms and just wants to put their hands around you and give you wet kisses on your face and make you soup and take you out and we go whoa. Or the other way. We can really feel others loving us but then when we go to feel loved by another, we feel dry. We don't feel particularly loving. I do not feel anything like love. I am more empty. I see other people loving but it is a little alienating. It does not sort of make sense to us. We are not in touch with the feeling of loving as much as the feeling of receiving love, giving love. There are all of these kinds of tendencies and see saws that we have come by honestly. Meaning we have lived long lives that have influenced us and impacted us in different ways, that have patterned our hearts, that have conditioned how far we go and where we hold back, that have impacted how much we risk, how much we participate and step forward. We have all kinds of beliefs that limit what is possible.

So, part of exploration of the human heart of love as a quality and a ground of being is to know ourselves, to really find out what our story is. What is the story of your heart? What would you say about love, about being loved, about giving love? About everything being loved, that having liquified light nectars in your heart filling you all the way to your edges with love. What about the feelings of being unlovable? Or having been loved not in the right way, too much love, having been kind of suffocated with love. Kind of sticky love. I love that was not selfless, but that was after something. Having to fend off love. We each have a tale to tell. They are important. Part of the way of love is beginning to unwrap the story of our heart, beginning to know ourselves in that way.

As I said, love is certainly vital to our lives. It is certainly needed for human relationships to be rich and deep, what is needed in the world. All kinds of situations we can point to. Most importantly, it is needed for our inner journey. It is the heart that intuits truth. It is the heart that wants to draw nearer to it. It is the heart that can know what is real intimately, that can participate in it, that can engage it. On our path, it is this love of truth that is central. What does that mean, love of truth? It means a kind of selfless love. The way love is when you love another human being at the depth. It is genuine and generous and selfless. There is no gain in it. You are not doing it to get something. You cannot help it. It is a choiceless kind of love. We can love the truth that way. By truth, I mean what is real, what we are, what life is, our nature, our spiritual ground. We can love that truth in this genuine selfless way.

As the heart that loves the truth, loves what is real, it draws us nearer to it. The love of truth can reveal the truth of love. This love of truth can reveal the substance of love itself. The kind of softness and goodness, the kind of liquefied light that melts, that erases, that lubricates the way deeper into who we are. That ignites the fire for our search for what we are, for what reality is, that enriches the spiritual path. That makes it technicolor and techni-taste and techni-smell. That vivifies the inner path. We can start to feel this loop that we love the truth, and our love is like a magnet. It is like there is this call in response, songs if you have heard them. In certain traditions where half the room makes the call and the



other half of the room responds in song. Our love is like this magnet that draws what we love closer and what we love is the heart of Being itself. It is this ground of love. Consciousness imbued and pervaded by love and as our call for love, as our love of the truth, as this magnet draws that Being closer to us, as Being nears us, it manifests its qualities in our heart in all the ways that I have mentioned.

We want it. We need it. We are interested. We are exploring our hearts, and something meets us. Being meets us. Its meeting of us sparks these qualities in our consciousness, in our heart and the innermost part of who we are. We put in a dime, and we get back a pot of gold. Put in a dime and we get back a heart of gold. What I am saying is that your personal heart is a conduit to the spirit world. The spiritual world finds its human home in your heart. That the relationship between divine love and this distillation of love in the human heart is a mutual relationship. There is nothing unrequited in it. Divine love will not ghost you. This one love and the sweetness in your heart are in a dance. They're in an eternal embrace. Sometimes it is a tango. Sometimes you forget the steps. Sometimes one nudges the other with an elbow and you lose the beat, but the dance is there nevertheless.

That feeling that love is unrequited is a kind of signal. It is a certain call to draw even closer, to get even nearer. The feeling of a lack of love when we really allow it, when we do not push it away and automatically assume that the lack of love means there is something wrong with me. When we simply feel its lack, we can feel in that lack an opening for love to come in. The true soulmate of our heart is Being. Our one and only BFS (best friend) is Being. The heart that is steeped in love expresses; shines in everything we do. It imbues every interaction we have. This kind of love we see grows things. It enriches them. It makes them thrive. We can see it in all kinds of physical objects. You cook something with love, and it tastes better. You sing songs to your flower pot and spray it lovingly with misty water and it grows. Our animals thrive when we pet them and coo at them. Things grow more fully and dimensionally when they are loved. Love has this enriching and growing natural action. It does the same for the human soul as she searches for her nature. Love makes our inner life thrive and grow.

I am always surprised when I hear people say that this path, the Diamond Approach is heady or that it is dry. It tells me often that they are missing this kind of central element of the path, of the teaching. For me personally, the biggest discovery and the greatest development have been in the realm of heart, has been this kind of ignition of love. Inner love, outer love, relational love, functional love, all the way to love that we cannot even call love anymore. All the way to love that is so love that it does not have an opposite.

This is some of what is possible. We are sort of going in a kind of speedway through the possibilities. There are many more details that those of you who will be participating in the course will get more into the nitty-gritty of it. We will push up our sleeves and really explore and engage the material. I think I have said enough. What did I leave out, Hameed?

Hameed:

I think you left out a lot of things if you are going to sell the course. I like what you are saying because they are the major outlines of the course that is going to be introduced. I am thinking about everybody who has been watching and listening, what will be useful to sort of learn or hear, what we are really

giving out that might be useful for people. It might be good to say something about why most people do not know what are the specific reasons that you and I know that love is fundamental for human beings. For most people even though they talk about it, want it, they do not know it and they do not know they do not know it. So, what will you say about how come most people do not know that they do not know? What is your impression of that?

Zarina:

I imagine they have never experienced it certainly in themselves but also in relationships with others. Or in order to really get what we have been talking about, you have to be able to sense your immediate experience. There is a way you need to be able to -

Hameed: Are you saying that people do not sense their immediate experience?

Zarina: That is right. I am saying most people are a few inches outside their body.

Hameed: Just few inches?

Zarina: I am being generous.

Hameed:

Yes, you are being very loving. It is true. As many Sufis say, humanity is asleep. What does that mean humanity is asleep? Asleep means not awake to what it is, to what is possible.

Zarina: That there are, you know, a thousand people here and another four thousand that were interested enough in love means it is possible to stir awake.

Hameed:

Obviously, the people who are interested do have some sense, some experience, some wisdom that love is important, or they want to know about love. They want to experience love I imagine because they want to experience it, or they want to experience love more and more fully and understand more fully. I want to hear what they really know about love that they do not know. There is a whole ocean of knowledge, a whole ocean of understanding and experience about love that is in a spiritual path. Most of humanity is simply not aware of what is known. Humanity is too busy. I think most human beings are too busy surviving, busy working, taking care of their family, taking care of business, making sure they are healthy, making sure their body is okay. They get engaged in more social and cultural events that they think are satisfying and they are somewhat satisfying. So, in the human consciousness in general, there is not the required specific inner directedness that will show oh, there is something I really do not know. I am completely ignorant about myself. Most people are not willing to know they are that ignorant about themselves. Most people think they know themselves.

Zarina:

They actually have to show up to see that they do not know. Like for example, the way we began the webinar with you having folks sense their feet and take a few breaths. All the knowledge of love,

everything we said exists a thousandfold, all of its wisdom. But for someone to actually be here as they listen, for the heart to be what is listening, to be present enough in themselves to hear what we are saying, that is when they can say I do not know.

Hameed:

I think that is one thing that the course will do is to illustrate and teach what does it mean to be and to be love? Most people do not have that concept. For most people to be myself means I am this physical body with its emotions and thoughts and its history. To be as pure beingness is a whole other universe of experience that is alien to most people. They do not think about it, do not hear about it. It is not in the general literature. You have to go to very specific spiritual literature or teaching to really hear about it. So, the news has not reached the larger field of humanity, you know.

Zarina: And the news is experiential.

Hameed: That is the thing.

Zarina:

Not abstract news. So, part of what I am really hoping in the course is to be love in a felt embodied, inner kind of way actually be in touch with it, to have that sense of being in touch with it, to feel the textures and the temperatures and the weight and the taste, to be engaged with it in that way. The news is experiential. No amount of us talking is really going to do it if someone is not in themselves.

Hameed: And you cannot get on social media.

Zarina: Maybe on Tiktok.

Hameed:

Tiktok. Yes, maybe it will take time. I always wonder whether some paintings, some drawings can show something of our experience. I think some painters come close to it but do not really get the whole thing. Still a painting.

Zarina:

Music does it to me. Part of the preparation for the course for me has been listening to a lot of music. There is a way that sound kind of enters and resonates the human drum where the usual filters kind of are a little more easy. So, we are going to make it fun and interactive.

Hameed:

Even in music like when Mozart or the Beatles sing about love, are they are really experiencing love the way we talk about it? Or do they just know it is an emotional thing. Maybe they know and are getting a drop of that inner substance. I wonder, I do not know. I know it is not easy, it is rare to know pure love and its essence. Even the greatest masters of music and art, they really do not know it in its essence. I wonder maybe they get touched by it somehow which inspires them to make a piece of music or symphony or painting or whatever.

I wonder when you mentioned about the liquid light, that experience of love is like a nectar. It is more like liquid light. So, why do we use that expression liquid light? We are trying to say something about the experience. What does liquid light mean? Why do we say liquid light that tells us something about love? What can you say about it to people?

Zarina:

Partly that it is a fullness, light liquified. It means that there is a kind of fullness to love. There is a dimensionality to it. It still has the softness of light. It is illumination but it kind of blooms and blossoms. The liquification of light gives it a sort of weight and a softness. It gives it a touch. A touch in a way. What would you say about it?

Hameed:

Well, I agree with you that the liquification brings in the fact that more like liquid it gives it fullness of substance and texture and all of that. We say it is light, liquid light. We do not say liquid air because it is luminous. It has a sense of luminosity and radiance and illumination. It looks shiny and luminous the way light is radiant. It also illuminates the consciousness, you know, brings in more understanding, more light, more openness, more intelligence. So, we know that shedding light on something means you understand it. Liquid light is both light, which means it is luminous, it is consciousness, it is awareness. It makes us see and understand. But also liquid means it is a fullness, it is a texture. It is a fullness of heart and a fullness of Being and a fullness of soul, spirit. Because you just talk about light, it is very ephemeral, insubstantial. Light has no weight, has no substance. Photons have zero mass, so they do not have big bosons to them. You take light and give it big bosons, liquefied light.

Zarina: You just lost four thousand people, Hameed.

Hameed:

I think one thing that the course is going to show is to help individuals learn to experience as both the luminosity and the fullness, radiance and goodness because consciousness is pure awareness or consciousness, illumination but love brings in more the sense of texture and not only touch but also the feeling of pleasurable, happy, appreciative kind of affect to it. Both fullness and abundance but at the same time, there is a goodness and a delight or blissfulness to it. It is not obvious to most people when we say that consciousness or awareness has a pleasure or ecstasy in it. But when you say love most people know if you are in love, you are sort of really in heaven, in ecstasy. So, the fullness is really referring to that part of some things and, hopefully in the course people will get to experience that, to have some impression, some experience of that. So how are you going to do that?

Zarina: I am going to call you every day.

Hameed: I do not think you are going to call me. I am saying, what are you going to do for people who are going to be listening to you?

Zarina: I am going to walk the talk.

Hameed: Yes. What does that mean so people can understand you? What does it mean to walk your talk?

Zarina: I am going to be as present and in touch with my own experience as possible.

Hameed:

That is just one thing that many people might not know. In spiritual teaching you only teach what you know from experience. You only teach what you can be. We do not teach information. We do not give out information. We give out experience that help people experience what we experience by us experiencing it during the teaching. This is a very important part of teaching.

Zarina:

And our practices as we experience what it is we are teaching; our practices aim in working away to clear what is in the way of that experience so that people during the exercises actually can come closer to that direct experience themselves.

Hameed:

So, you are mentioning exercises which is something we do in our teaching. We do not just give talks and people ask questions. We put people through exercises. They do interpersonal exercises with each other. If please have been to other spiritual tradition, they do not know the kind of exercises we do, the kind of exploration we do that is very important, very powerful in bringing out the experience, accessing the experience. They think practice means meditation or chanting which we will do but we do other things also. What do you think is the power of those exercises?

Zarina:

Immediacy. Immediacy and this liquid light functioning at the same time. The love of truth and the truth of love can come together in that kind of radiant immediacy wherever it might be. Our exercises to me are really the technology we have that is unlike any other teaching I know. They have the potential to make experience immediate. The more we practice, the more heart and interest and real effort we have in our practices, the more we can be at the right place at the right time for that spark of immediate experience to light.

Hameed:

And we help people get the immediate experience not by telling them experience this and that or by telling them visualize this and that. By exploring their experience right now, whatever it happens to be, they get how mundane it is their experience and that becomes an entry, a portal or jumping gate to the depth. Our way of doing exercises and practices is how to utilize our already existing experience which is available and use it to go deeper into the depth you are talking about.

Zarina:

My sense is that comes from the deep wisdom of this path about how mundane experience is a portal to the depths of spirit. The reason our exercises function that way is because we have the wisdom that

shows that anything that is happening in any moment, be it a thought an emotion, a sensation and gripe, happiness, whatever is connected to our nature.

Hameed:

And because partly I think this path does not take ordinary mundane experience to be wrong, to be a delusion which most teaching, especially eastern teachings take it to be. It a delusion, it is wrong, it is not relevant, it is not the way things are. In some sense, there is a truth to that, but from our path it is more of a limitation or a distortion of the truth. It is not just simple error. And by understanding the distortion it gets undistorted and we find the undistorted truth. You see, we do not say leave it and go do something else because the two are connected. If you distort something it is still there except not appearing exactly as it is, so you untwist it. It shows what is really true.

Zarina:

There is no reason to have a goal if every moment is a portal to the depths. Why aim at anything? It is kind of inefficient.

Hameed:

I think that is one thing that many people will be learning in this course. How to practice that way, how to use their own immediate experience, not having to find something rare like having to go hunting for a treasure that is hidden someplace and you need a special map and all that. No, the map starts where you are.

Zarine: Like our own GPS system. When you try to find a way to go somewhere, first it has to find your location.

Hameed: Yes, exactly.

Zarina: We find our location, step one. So maybe we will take some questions. You and I could keep talking.

Hameed: Good time. We did enough talking, I think.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Q&C 1

STUDENT:

I have a question I have been curious about for a while. The books *Love Unveiled* and *Nondual Love* are both beautiful books and I notice that the material from the books were originally delivered in the 1990s. This was kind of refreshed for me because, Zarina, you spoke about how sometimes people think that the Diamond Approach is a little heavy. I was wondering why the delay? Did you think this was the right time? Just curious about that because it had such a great effect on me. Just wondering.

Hameed:

Good question. When I first wrote my original books, I was trying to put out in the spiritual field an understanding and a knowledge that had not been written about before to introduce new things about spirituality and a way of approaching spirituality. Books like *The Point of Existence*, *The Pearl Beyond Price* and *Runaway Realization*, nobody really had written much about those things, so I was introducing new elements. In some of the books like *The Point of Existence* and *The Pearl Beyond Price*, I tried to use psychological knowledge more extensively than in other books partly because I wanted more of the psychology people to connect to it and partly because most of the older spiritual teachings incline more toward philosophy. They use philosophical language, but our modern era is more psychological than philosophical. So, I use psychological language. But because I use a lot of psychological language people think it is mental. However, psychology refers to what you feel actually, what you experience.

At some point, I recognized that a big important element of our path that had not been explicitly written, although I referred to it in many places, is love. So, I decide to complete the introduction of the teaching by bringing out the thread of love that goes through the whole teaching which, as you said, I had taught in the 1990s. It was not like a new thing. So, the spiritual field knows that love as an important part of this approach, the Diamond Approach and also to introduce love in ways that had not been introduced and to bring out things about love that had not been discussed. Like, you know, people when they read about love, they read Rumi for instance which is a beautiful expression, but even Rumi does not come down and describe exactly what is the experience of love. He describes how love affects him. So does Kabir.

In these books, I am actually giving a phenomenological description of love that has never been done before. It is still introducing new things about spirituality here as love. So, it is both bringing out something about this teaching that would not have been obvious in the previous books and presentations and also adding to the understanding of the spiritual literature about love.

STUDENT: That is great. Thank you for that open answer. I really appreciate that.

Hameed: That is great.

STUDENT: Zerena, I will definitely see you in the course. It is great.

Q&C 2

STUDENT:

First, I would like to say thank you. My question is, when you were asking, Zarina, why most people do not know that type of love or it is not as common, I am wondering, I want to know in terms of the course if you are going to - When I think what the answer would be and what affects me is the identity of the body as being primary and not knowing beyond, just the matter in terms of the importance of seeing yourself has only the body. Is the course going to deal with how to get beyond that being so primary? I mean I know that I am spirit but intellectually. But to really get beyond the block of the body being secondary in a real way because I guess it goes back to basic trust. Are there going to be types of

exercises to really see that we are not this body primarily? I mean, even though the body is important, but it is not really important.

Zarina:

You hit something on the nose which is that the identification with the body is one of the main things we encounter as a barrier to the kind of pervasive divine love that Hameed was talking about. One thing I would say is we will not try to get beyond that. We are really going to feel what that means. We are going into it rather than beyond it.

STUDENT: Into what?

Zarina:

To get beyond the identification of what the body means, we have some idea that there is something wrong with it. We reject it. We want to go somewhere else. And you might have heard Hameed and I talking about the way our path, the way revelation works on our path is we do not aim to get beyond anything. We get really right into it in terms of getting into the identification of the body, what that feels like, what that story is, how that came to be. We really want to know with love what that is. It is a kind of move in a way. We do not try to get rid of that sense, idea, identification. Who would be trying to get rid of it? Being does not get rid of anything. Love does not get rid of anything. Love wants to know that illuminated. I was talking about how love wants to know that illuminated, radiant light that Hameed and I were talking about. That love wants to know what the identification is. So, we will do that.

Hameed:

So, the teaching really tries to go beyond to the spirit beyond the body by first recognizing the identification and understanding it and how it came about and also understanding the body. The body is a portal too. We use the body as a portal, just like everything else in our experience, to the inner depth and the dimensions of spirit.

STUDENT: Okay, thank you.

Hameed:

You brought in the body, which is very important, and its identification with it. It is the case with the body, we will deal with history, identification with past experience, identification with how we were raised, identification with gender. All these are issues in the way of spirit.

STUDENT: And that leads to the real identification?

Hameed: To freedom from identification

STUDENT: So, it is not like having identification. It is having no identification.

Hameed: Yes, spirit does not need to identify. It just is. Identification is a mental process.

STUDENT: Thank you.

Q&C 3

STUDENT:

My question is about what Zarina mentioned about emotional love. What do you mean by that? Also, a similar thing, I guess I am not quite sure about the emotion and love, the relation between these two.

Zarina:

Yes, that will be one of the things we will spend quite some time within the course. By emotional love, I just mean everyday feelings of romantic love and loving your kids and loving where you live and loving your friends. The kind of love we could say at the most surface level of the heart whereas the kind of essences that I was talking about are more distillations. You could say deeper. It is the presence of love in immediate experience. You can have emotional love without much of a kind of experiential component to it, or it can kind of go slightly deeper. You can actually feel what the root of emotional love is which is more the substance of love or the presence of love. You can follow that even deeper to say the ground of love the way we have been talking about it today.

Hameed:

Many people actually do not even have emotional love. Many people do not feel their emotions, their feelings. So, that part of the teaching is to be in touch with emotions and feelings. One of the most important emotions is that of love, the feeling of love. I love you and I feel loved by you, or I do not feel love. That is what we call emotional love. It is what most people call love. What we want to teach here is that the emotion of love has deeper roots than the outer expression, the ripples of what real love is. We want to teach the essence, the source, the actual substance of love itself which is not an emotion. That is what we are going to find out. Good question. It will become more clear in the course.

CLOSING

Zarina:

We have said quite a lot about the course coming up the first weekend of October called the [Way of Love](#). A lot of what we have been talking about we will, of course, go into more detail in the class. Some of your questions like the barriers to love, various identifications, what is in the way, what are these different levels and experiences of love are related to each other. We will do them through a kind of experiential exercises as Hameed and I were discussing. In other words, we will get together. We will have a meditation practice that really grounds us in our bodies, in our felt sense. We will have some sort of talk. I will point to some areas and mention some things and try to give you a sense of a particular territory of the heart. Then you will do experiential exercises with each other in groups of two, three and five where you explore the matter in a personal way, in a direct and immediate and personal and relevant to your way. Then we will get back together and see what you found out, learn from each other. The circle gathers again. You will tell me what you found out and see if you have any questions.



The class will have six segments. Hameed will launch us in the first weekend, give us his blessings on this [Way of Love](#). Then we will continue together. The final weekend will be in December. The details of the dates and the program are on our website and there is a link to reach out to someone if you have any specific questions about it.

Hameed:

One thing I want to say is that the meetings, each meeting is not just redoing the first meeting. Many people who go to different kinds of groups like a meditation group, they just get together and do the same meditation and the same chanting over and over again. Here, each meeting is actually different. We will bring in new teaching, new practices and new exercises. So, this is the quality of this teaching that each meeting is not just practicing what we taught the first meeting. It is expanding the field, opening up more and bringing up different states, different conditions, different barriers and working with them. We never repeat.

Zarina:

My wish as you say that for the course is that we can create the kind of conditions needed for you to meet and know your own heart, really find out the story of love as it operates in your particular human heart. So, all of what we will be doing will be cooking the atmosphere, creating the condition where that might happen. With any grace, with any luck, with any blessing that each of you will come to know something about love, something real about your hearts.

Hameed:

That would be nice, I think. I am sure an individual will get to experience the real love. It would be quite a big revelation and be transformative. As you mentioned, there will be practices, meditation, experiential exercises. There will be talks that you will be giving and questions and answers. You will be working with people to help them get into their experience. It is an experiential course really not like podcasts where you just hear information.

Zarina:

I think that is the hallmark of how our teaching goes. It is experiential. Hopefully this gives you a sense of what we are up to. If it strikes any bells for you, if you feel any resonance, you know where to find us. In the meantime, we wish you a good rest of your Sunday. Thanks for taking the time to sit with me and Hameed. We have enjoyed it. I have enjoyed it. I have enjoyed Hameed. I have enjoyed all of you.

Hameed: I talk about love, we got full of love. My experience.