

The Field of Love

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Sundari: Dear Luna, so lovely to hear from you again – you are my only real link to the family I was born into. Life is a beautiful and strange thing!

I totally relate to your feeling of hurt and sadness regarding the realisation that your family are not and are never going to be what you had hoped they would be. Even though one knows these things in the unspoken parts of ourselves, the reality is hard to face – especially with people we love so much.

Love is its own reward, that is true – that should be enough for us. But there is a land of light, a field of glory that shines so brightly in the sun of our deepest selves, this knowing within, a longing that is hard to ignore that compels us to call out to our beloveds – meet me there, to fling all obstacles to this love aside, to know and be known. It seems so little to ask, really – the asking is really a giving, not a demand or expectation, although it often becomes that.

Yet most people remain locked in a bubble of their own making, unaware that it has become a prison of limitation. As we age we are increasingly unable to step outside of it or hear the calls of love that try to reach us. As much as the loneliness of this small space seems to swallow our lives, we become deaf and blind to the pulse of life beyond the walls we have put up around ourselves. So it is with the human condition when it does not know how to resolve its own conditioning. It is a tale of the limitation and suffering when self-knowledge has not developed in the mind.

We are quite similar in some ways – and even though your family life has been markedly different from mine, we are forever linked in blood. We are both misfits in the family we were born into and our minds march to different drummers. We have grown in ways they cannot. I have wondered most of my life what I was doing surrounded by this dysfunctional, homogenous group of people, even though all of them are really good people. Growing up, I felt suffocated by them – and also terrified that I did not “belong” or fit in. I did not understand why for a long time, longer than it took you to get to this point. I was forty when I could resolve the hurt I had carried basically all my life for being an outsider in my family. I saw with ruthless clarity that what I had wanted from them was never going to materialise, because they could only be who they were and had become. And I could only be myself and who I needed to become.

It was not personal, just the way things are. My love for them survived this revelation – and it set me forever free of the tyranny of my desire for things to be different. I accepted them as they are and freed myself to live to discover my true path, which has unfolded unfailingly true and fulfilling. The shackles fell off gradually, not in one fell swoop, but they did fall. I live free of the past and “my” story, full and whole. I lack nothing and want nothing other than what I have. There is nothing I do not understand. Every day is a tremendous gift, every moment an epiphany. Love is glorious.

For most people the desire and drive to belong to a group overshadows everything. The family idea is so powerful and taken to be the norm, sold to us at every turn. It is part and parcel of the futile longing for the “other” who will complete us and protect

us from an uncertain world. We seek it like lemmings desperate for safety and belonging. Yet we can only ever belong to ourselves. The truth of who we are is like the purest, rarest diamond, whole and uncontaminated, dormant and unknown within. Nothing can give this to us or take it away, yet we squander our lives on hopes of finding self-worth and security through others. It never works, but most of us die trying.

I love Vedanta so much because not only is it the science of consciousness, it is about common sense and sanity. It is about the unexamined logic of our own experience as it relates to the irrefutable logic of existence. It produces complete self-knowledge, which is the only way to be free of existential suffering. It has a methodology which supercedes any teaching in that it is independent of any ideology or belief system – and if applied, works. One of the most basic and essential practices is called *karma yoga*. Very basically, what *karma yoga* teaches is that we are always free to act but we are never in charge of the results of action. The field of existence (God, if you like – but not the paternal, extra-cosmic deity of religion so much better than us) is in charge of the total. So we can do all the appropriate actions but we are never guaranteed any particular result. If we act knowing this, surrendering the results to the field of existence with an attitude of prayer and devotion, our act becomes a consecration. We then take whatever results that do come as a gift.

We know that this field of existence takes care of us in all the details of our lives – but it also lives within us and is who we are at the deepest level. There is only one principle in reality and that is consciousness, and we are all it. This is the sun that burns so brightly deep within everyone, mostly unseen and unknown as we stumble along in the shadows of our ignorance.

Yet we know we have an existence as a mind and a body in the world – and this world runs on natural laws that as people we need to abide by and honour. So if we make choices that are in harmony with the big picture of how things work and with the smaller picture of our own subjective reality, we are happy and at peace. But the clincher is, to be happy we have to be true to the nature we are born with.

There is a saying in Vedanta that goes like this: it is better to do a third-rate job of your own life than a first-rate job of someone else's.

So you are at a crossroads now. You have knowledge of who you are that you need to trust. Do what is right for you and love those you love without expectation that they will ever change or be different. If they could be they would be – but they cannot be. They are on the course that their *karma* has created. You cannot clean up after them, save them or hold things together for them without paying the price. Although they are your blood, you are cut from a different cloth. See that everyone is your family because we are all related.

Embrace life and fly free, whatever that means for you. If you decide to stay or leave, do so with the *karma yoga* attitude and trust life to take care of you and the ones you love. You are beautiful, kind and wise. You are whole and complete. You do not need anyone to complete you or give you something you don't already have. Your love is pure.

It is not the proximity of those we love that matters. Recognising that love is our nature and sharing that with everyone is all that matters. As wonderful as it is to see and hold those we love, we are always with them in our heart and mind. First and

foremost we must love ourselves enough to live our lives truly and wholly, to know when to arrive and when to leave.

~ With deepest love and an embrace, Isabella