

Everyone deserves love, and I think it is our responsibility to express our love to the people around us. I think love is simpler than our culture often makes it seem: sometimes the most profound gestures of love are small and unspoken. Love is about showing other people that they are seen that they are heard, that there is space for them.

Love is a habit we exercise. It becomes easier with practice. Love is remembering to ask someone how the project they were working on turned out, or to ask what they've been reading lately and what they think about it. Love is listening when someone talks, cooking a meal together, giving a gift that made you think of that person. But it's also about telling someone, in no uncertain terms, what they mean to you.

When I was a senior in college, I started getting overwhelmed by both pride for, and worry about, my friends and family. They were achieving wonderful things, but at the same time many of them were experiencing uncertainty about their futures, unrequited love, sudden or drawn-out deaths in the family. At that time, I thought that love was defined by that combination of pride and concern I was feeling so often. Now, though, that definition seems much too narrow. It doesn't leave room for wonderment at the people around us, and I think that is the thing that makes love so beautiful and so fulfilling.