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True Love is Caring about Those Around You

When we think of love the first thing that we think of is two people who are madly in love with each other like in the romantic movie that we last saw in the theater. In reality there are a lot of different types of love such as that of our parents, and friends who express their love by caring for our feelings. "We can only learn to love by loving" (Iris Murdoch). According to Barbara de Angelis, "Love is a force more formidable than any other. It is invisible - it cannot be seen or measured, yet it is powerful enough to transform you in a moment, and offer you more joy than any material possession could." Everybody wants to be loved, and love others like those in movies because we get a nice, pleasant, cozy feeling in our chests. I believe that true love is caring about others.

I used to live with my grandma, my aunt, my mother, and my brother in the countryside in the Dominican Republic when I was small. I love my aunt a lot. She can't talk properly. She calls me "Nea" because she can't pronounce my long name. She doesn't have any friends or anyone to play with her. As Mother Theresa once said, "Love begins by taking care of the closest ones - the ones at home." My way of showing my aunt that I loved her and that I cared about her was by playing with her. Sometimes I would pretend that I was the hair stylist, and she was my client. I would go to my mom's room and grab a nail polish. Then I would paint my aunts hands, do her hair, paint her lips, put her earrings, and all the bracelets I could find. When I was finished I would take her to a mirror and show her how she looked. She would laugh looking at herself. I felt so happy about my work of art that I would grab her by the hand to walk her around to show my mom, and my grandma. Other times I would grab my dolls and all their clothes. Then I

would go to her room, and share my dolls with her. We would both play for hours dressing them up, and pretending they were our babies. Maya Angelou comments that "If you have only one smile in you give it to the people you love." My biggest reward was when she laughed and hugged me as a way of saying thank you.

When I was like 8 years old, I was walking through tall grass in the morning enjoying the touch of the wet grass on my legs. All of a sudden I heard a noise; I followed the noise and found a baby guinea fowl all alone in the nest. I wanted to take it home because it was so cute and was all alone but I didn't because I thought that the mother would come to feed its baby later on. If I took it, the mother wouldn't find it and would be very sad. The next morning, I went to check whether the baby guinea fowl was with its mother or was still alone in the nest. I was surprised that the baby was all alone. I decided to take it home, feed it, and take it back to its nest in the evening with the hope that the guinea's mother would come to get its baby. I was really happy taking care of it because I could touch it and I knew that the baby wouldn't die from hunger. I did this for a couple of days. One morning I went to get it but found the baby dead. I felt really sad that a cute little guinea fowl died. I remember blaming myself for leaving it outside in the cold.

A couple of days later my cousin gave me a baby chick so that I could take care of it. The first thing I did was grab a shoe box, and punch holes on its top so that in the night I could close its lid, and it wouldn't die from suffocation. I grabbed a couple of old raggedy clothes and made a bed for it in the shoe box. I didn't want it to die from coldness like the baby guinea fowl. I would go to the plantain trees and cut small pieces of leaves. I would make clothes from the leaves by punching holes in them to put leaves on the chick. I thought that this would keep the chick warm during the cold days like the clothes kept us humans warm. I fed it every single day. It

kept growing, and growing and so I had to let it go to interact with the other chicken. In order for it to be happy I had to let go of it, and let it wonder freely throughout the field. I was happy for the chick that turned into a chicken because nobody was going to kill it to eat it. The only bad thing was that I didn't see it that often anymore.

One of the worst experiences I faced was when I was around 10 years old. My mother was given a visa to come to the US, and my brother and I didn't get one. On our way home all my mother did was cry, and cry because she didn't want to leave us. I was trying to be strong by telling her that everything was ok, that she could call us every day, and send us pictures. I didn't want to cry but I felt a knock of pain in the back of my throat and as soon as I spoke again I started crying. I had never being separated from my mother for more than a night, and I thought that without her there would be no one to hug me. I didn't want her to leave, and leave us in the care of a babysitter. When she told me that she had hired someone to take care of my brother and me, I told her that it was fine. The truth was that my mind and my heart were screaming to me "no I don't want a babysitter, I want you to stay" but I didn't tell my mother because I didn't want her to keep feeling sad. I thought that if I didn't say anything, she wouldn't be sad.

She then decided that if my brother and I didn't get our visas to come to the United States, she would let hers expire, and not come here. Lydia M. Child once said, "The cure for all the ills and wrongs, the cares, the sorrows, and the crimes of humanity, all lie in the one word 'love'. It is the divine vitality that everywhere produces and restores life." When my mother said that she loved us so much that she couldn't leave us behind was the greatest proof of love that anyone could show me. She preferred to stay with my brother and me instead of going to the US and having a better life. She was giving up on her dream of coming to the US just for us. When she decided to do that I felt both happy and sad. I was happy because I wouldn't be left all alone

but sad because I knew she was giving up an excellent opportunity. Later on, almost when her visa expired my brother and I were granted ours, and we all came to the US immediately because she only had a month left before it expired for her.

True love is when you care about the feelings of others and try to take care of them. Love is not just having a romance with someone but it includes having affection for your family, and animals. Love is what makes life worth living not the material objects that are lifeless.