Brentwood Unity

Unconditional Love

We Keep What We Have By Giving It Away!

Volume 3, Issue 3 **March 2018**

Never Too Late For Love

Some of us grew up in nurturing, loving environments and some of us did not. Some of us know what it is to carry joy in our heart and some of us feel burdened with emotional pain from trauma. Our mothers not only downloaded language and facial expressions to us but internal energies as well. If the mother is calm and self-assured, this is shifted to the child; the opposite is equally true. No matter your experience, this moment is right for you to choose again and live to your fullest.

When we are young, we do not know how it will all turn out. It is this great mystery of unlimited possibilities that keeps us intrigued just enough to venture forward, balanced by the safety of our environment to do so. If this safety is missing in our childhood, the lack of safety follows us like a shadow into our adulthood and permeates into all of our relationships.

It is this lack of safety that prods us to seek approval, security and self-worth. The initial path used for this search is on the outside—how could it not be? After all, we perceive a world entering our five senses with little to no valid instruction on how to navigate emotions on the inside. Parents are only as good as their current understanding of life and its inner workings. Without certain life skills, we are emotionally tossed about like a drunk upon a stormy sea. The world outside can become scary and ominous.

After years of trying to negotiate relationships in attempts to do away with emotional pain and failing, we may come to a place of surrender and become willing to be open-minded and honest about our situation. It is in this place that one may begin to shift into a more accurate understanding of what the real problem is. Without dealing with any early trauma, there is little hope for change. We live in adulthood much longer than childhood; however, it is the building blocks of our upbringing that construct the framework of how we operate as adults in relationship to the world.

It may seem a cliché to hear "you cannot love another until you love yourself", but it is closer to science than the renderings stamped on a Hallmark card. If we do not look within and accept ourselves for who we truly are, then we are committed to suffering at the hands of our emotional disturbances. This suffering is felt by all on some level.

When we realize our shortcomings, it can be a great relief to know we need not be perfect and that we have our own struggles just like everyone else—we are not alone. This is true compassion—understanding the suffering of others by understanding our own. We do this by loving ourselves regardless of not being as perfect as we'd like to be. It is refreshing to take a deep breath and love ourselves without limitation.

Our bodies are perfect examples of unconditional love. Every bodily system we have functions without our help. We are equally supported no matter whether we're doing something "positive" or "negative." Do we do the same to others we encounter with whom we disagree?

With Love,

Gregory

Love Without Conditions

"Whenever we manage to love without expectations, calculations, negotiations, we are indeed in heaven." -Rumi

Conditional Love says: this condition has to change for me to feel better, to feel love. Unconditional Love says: I am God source, I am Love, no matter what the condition. When we experience joy and peace we are aligning with who we really are. Conversely, experiences of pain and suffering are about diverging from the truth of who and what we really are.

I believe that when we make the choice to come into our bodies, into this life, we agreed to understand, know, teach, embody, and live unconditional love. Unconditional love is aligning with the truth of who we are, regardless of life circumstances and situations. Regardless of conditions.

If we continue to align with our source through our thoughts and choices we will achieve vibrational alignment with spirit. When we adjust our focus and the projection of our thoughts, we move into a state of willingness which results in allowing. When we allow, our inner guidance can be felt and we can more easily remain in our natural state of unconditional love, rather than resist it with judgments and other thoughts that diminish our connection to God.

Unconditional love is the absence of resistance, it is coming into alignment with source, it says I am Love, even if there is something happening that I don't necessarily like or want. I will not allow any circumstance, event, situation, or person to remove me from my natural state of unconditional love.

Take a look at the sun. The sun shines, radiates and is always present. Even if it's cloudy, the sun is there and will always rise again. Go outside on a sunny day and feel the warmth. Open your heart and let the warmth and the light fully penetrate you, take it all in, feel it inside you. The sun closely approximates the divine. The sun gives and keeps on giving, no matter who and what and where you are. It shines and keeps on shining, whether we receive it or not, whether we enjoy it or not. And we see this as normal, we don't even think about it, the sun is just there. We don't think about giving something back to the sun for all its warmth and life, and still, the sun doesn't think about quitting to shine, because it doesn't require anything back from us. It spoils us with rays of unconditional love and we have this source within us.

I am unconditional love.

I love myself.

I open my heart to give and receive love.

I now completely love myself.

I love myself, I'm worth it.

FROM THE LOVE OF GOD WITHIN ME, I SEND LOVE INTO THE WORLD.

Always Love,

Amy

Sunday Experience and Children's Power Hour at 10am

50 Sand Creek Road #60, Brentwood, CA 94513 ph: 925.420.5847

web: brentwoodunity.org email: brentwoodunity@brentwoodunity.org

Mindful Musings

A Little Man

There is a little man
Staring at me,
Cradled in my arms
With eyes so wide,
It is as if
They could hold
All my stars.

And yet,
To him,
I am the universe;
All the darkness
Folding gently
Around his innocence.

And in this galaxy, I will hold
His hands forever,
Cloaking these tiny fingers
In the astral winds
Of memory.

Always my tiny man,
Clutched to the shores of
My skin.
An ocean to my moon,
Forever sheltered
By the gentle pull of
A mother's lunar light.

My little man.
My tiny shooting star,
Your blue eyes pierce my night,
Two meteors,
Ripping through all of my defenses
With their unadulterated light.
Born from my core,
Breathing with me there,
Forever bound
By an indestructible force
That once formed cannot be undone;
A gravity of love
Between a mother and her son.

For my little man. I love you forever, son. E.E. Cummings once wrote, "You are my sun, my moon, and all my stars." Inspiration for this poem and how I feel about all of my children, though there is a special sweetness between a mother and a son.

Ginny Webb

Brentwood Unity Fun'draising Committee Presents

Stuffed With Love

Easter is coming and Brentwood Unity is taking our joy into the lives of the children at UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital. We are not allowed to visit, so we are doing the next best thing—stuffing animals with love.

During the Sundays of March 11, 18 & 25, there will be a table set up in the hall to display four different plush, stuffed animals. You will have the opportunity to purchase one for $10, sign a prepared, inspirational card with a blessing offered to the child receiving it.

We Are Grateful To Be Able To Give!

Love As Motivation

It's one thing to get involved with an existing non profit and participate in bettering your community. But when someone steps up to a need in the community and doesn't ask where the money will come from to complete the mission, well, that would describe Nichole Gardner in the love she shows others.

Nichole, along with her mother, aunt and their children feed about 40 people a hot meal and hand out hygiene supplies and clothing to our brothers and sisters living on the streets. What started out as boxed lunches soon evolved into hot, home-cooked meals. Nichole has taken the time to get to know the stories of the people she feeds. Those she helps have been greatly moved by her outpouring of love, initiated and implemented solely on the urging of her heart. With some money left over from our fire victim outreach, we have given $200 to Nichole to further her endevour. She was grateful that someone noticed her and wants to support her mission.

Would You Like To Help Support Nichole?
Ask Gregory & Amy How You Can Help!

Brentwood Unity Weekly Groups

Mondays: ***Imagine the Possibilities***

1:00 – 2:30 pm in the Sanctuary

"Imagine the Possibilities" affords the group the opportunity to access and catalyze creative imagination in our lives. Einstein asserted that imagination is ultimately greater than knowledge. Why is that so? Imagination is in the moment. It is creative and it is playful. It is in the Now!

Contact: **Ron Vieira**: 925.354.5003

Tuesdays: ***Book Study and Meditation***

1st, 3rd and 5th Tuesdays at 10 am

Join us for reading and meditation. Afterward, we will enjoy lunch together.
Feel free to bring something to eat. Coffee & tea are provided.

Contact **Gail Caruso:** 925.778.2702

Holistic Energy Group

Every Tuesday from 7:00 - 8:30 pm in the Fellowship Room

Come explore ways to support a healthy mind, body and spirit!!!

Contact **Ray Wilson**: 925.759.8676

Wednesdays: ***Women In Harmony***

Meets on the 3rd Wednesday of the month.

Join us Wednesday, March 21 at 7:00 pm for "Coffee (or tea) and Conversation."

Contact: **Kathy Cullar:** 925.586.1025

A Course In Miracles Made Easy

Wednesdays at 11:00am

Alan Cohen, ACIM student and teacher for over 30 years, takes the Big Picture ideas of the Course and brings them down to earth in practical, easy-to-understand lessons with plenty of real-life examples and applications.

Contact **Karen Mingus 925.684.4528**

Thursdays: ***Come Experience Reiki Energy***

			Contact
Thursdays (1st, 3rd & 5th)	**6:00 – 7:30pm**	Reiki Distant Global Healing Work	**Bonnie Daniel:** 925.989.5960
Thursdays (2nd & 4th)	**6:00 – 7:30pm**	Reiki Hands-On Healing Working	**Ray Wilson**: 925.759.8676

Interested In Starting A Small Group?

Starting a small group is a great way to connect with other members of our community and to bring in new people to introduce them to what we do here. You can use just about anything for a group to find cohesion: spiritual book, games, community project. Explore your options and start!

See Amy or Gregory on how to get started.

Brentwood Unity Is 100% Volunteer

Ask Today How You Can Be More Involved!

Unconditional love really exists in each of us. It is part of our deep inner being. It is not so much an active emotion as a state of being. It's not 'I love you' for this or that reason, not 'I love you if you love me.' It's love for no reason, love without an object. ~ Ram Dass

There is no greater power in Heaven or on Earth than pure, unconditional love. The nature of the God force, the unseen intelligence in all things, which causes the material world and is the center of both the spiritual and physical plane, is best described as pure, unconditional love. ~ Wayne Dyer

Actual love, as in unconditional love, doesn't mean you love everything about the person. It means you don't need them to be different than they are for you to be happy. ~ *Unknown*

March Guest Speakers

Brentwood Unity values our gifted speakers and workshop facilitators.
We equally value our members and guests, welcoming all, regardless of financial contribution.
Our *suggested* love offering for workshops is $10-$25.

March 4 — **Verona Garland** — **veronagarland.com**

The Art of Communication

How adept do you want to be in Unconditional Love? Remember learning a new skill? What's the first step? Join Verona Garland, Assistant Minister, Agape Bay Area is sure to provoke some great questions on living life.

March 11 — **Christopher Brown** — **oaklandcsl.org**

The Thousand Faces of Love

Ask 50 people what love is, and you will get 50 different answers. Perhaps we don't know what love actually is, but we certainly can recognize it and feel it when it is present. Join us this Sunday as we explore the many faces of love as it becomes real through Kindness, Listening, and Compassion.

March 18 — **Gregory Barnes** — **brentwoodunity.org**

Finding Love

So often, we catch ourselves trying to receive unconditional love from other humans. While the attempt is understandable, the results are generally futile. How can we find our own source of unconditional love?

March 25 — **Willa Barber Johnson** — **ebcrs.org**

The Evolutionary Process of Love

Oftentimes we experience situations and circumstances in our personal lives and in the world, that don't look or feel like love. Together we will explore the growing edges of love, and identify ways to awaken and become even more of the experience and expression of love actualized.

Tiny Love Stories

- Today, when I asked my grandfather for some relationship advice, he said, "Honestly, the moment I stopped trying to find the right woman, and started trying to become the right man, your grandmother walked up to me and said, "Hello.'"
- Today, on our 50th wedding anniversary, my husband took out an old envelope and handed me back the love note I wrote him in the 7th grade.
- Today, it's been 10 years since I told my best friend Diego that I wouldn't be able to attend the prom with him because my family was struggling to make ends meet and couldn't afford to buy me a ticket or a dress. Diego ended up buying me a dress and a ticket, and helping my folks out with money by helping my dad (who had been unemployed for six months) find a good job. Ten years, a marriage, and one kid later…
- Today, it's been 28 years since a firefighter saved my life when he rescued me from a burning condo building. In the process he suffered a leg injury that doctors said would leave him unable to walk normally for life. This evening, he put down his cane and slowly walked our daughter down the aisle. My husband of 27 years.
- Today, I am a poor student, struggling to afford groceries and all the luxuries I was accustomed to. But every time I get a letter in the mail from my Poppa telling me how much he loves me or a phone call from my best friend just because she was thinking about me, I feel like the richest person in the world – in those moments I feel like I have everything I need.
- Today, I got a phone call from my daughter's kindergarten teacher. She asked me why I wasn't providing lunch for my daughter over the past few days. Confused, I hung up the phone and asked my daughter what she was doing with her lunches. She said, "Katie's mom is in the hospital and hasn't been able to make any meals for the last week, so I gave a few of my lunches to her."
- Today, as she laid in her hospital bed, just before my grandmother took her last breath, she smiled and said, "Hello Charles." Charles was my grandfather's name. He died in 1998.

March Workshops

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March 4 — **Verona Garland** — **veronagarland.com**

Shapes, Styles, and Modes of Loving

Where do I start in my loving prowess? Come learn the spiritual rudimentary skills of Unconditional Love.

March 11 — **Christopher Brown** — **oaklandcsl.org**

The Thousand Faces of Love

Join us for this lively experiential workshop where we will go beyond the concept of love into the actual feeling. We will explore love as safety, connection, and a sense of being at ease with yourself. We look forward to your participation.

March 18 — **Amy & Gregory** — **bentwoodunity.org**

Finding Love

Join in on a discussion and sharing how we find our own source of love. Let's see if our shared experiences are similar and possibly get some pointers on where to look or not to look.

March 25 — **No Workshop / Board Meeting**

Brittany Gilmore

BinX

7 pm

Doors Open at 6 pm

APRIL 28

Brittany Gilmore began the project, BinX, in Los Angeles as a creativity outlet of writing and performing. She is now located in the SF Bay Area, where she is originally from. Before she even learned how to speak, Brittany knew she wanted to sing. Upon discovering sonic meditation and sound healing, her interests broadened to instrumentation, arrangement, their affects on our bodies and emotions. She strives to create music that evokes feeling and provokes thought. "I am extremely passionate, it is a gift and a curse. I want to express, through music, the full spectrum of human emotion... as I feel them all pretty intensely."

Spring into Action

April 8, 15 & 22

It's time for the volunteer table to be out!

There will be sign up sheets out for some ongoing tasks at our center, fun'draising possibilities and any new projects seeking participants that match the opportunity.

Volunteering is a great way to meet other people and be a vital part of our thriving community.

Be A Part of Our Community!

Love Languages of Brentwood Unity

Our book of the month for March is ***The 5 Love Languages***.

Dr. Chapman looks at the way we get our needs meet. He describes how we all operate from different places. He gives five ways we receive love: **Words of Affirmation**; **Quality Time**; **Receiving Gifts**; **Acts of Service** and **Physical Touch**.

If we do not know our love language or that of those around us, then we meet each other on different planes unable to relate.

In the book is a quiz you may take to discover your love languages. There is also a quiz available online.

We're asking our community to take the quiz and sign up March 11-25 to let us know your #1 Love Language! We will then list you under your category on the wall in the Fellowship Room. You will soon discover how easy it is to try and have a relationship within the parameters of both people feeling heard and appreciated.

Take the Quiz and Find Out!

Quiz Available At: **www.5lovelanguages.com/profile/**

Community Connection

Board Corner

The Fundraising Committee has been working on our 2018 events. March is the "Stuffed with Love" for the children of Oakland Children's Hospital. May has our explosive yard sale. Some more summer events are being developed. Our Spirit Faire will be held on Saturday, October 5.

We experienced John Shinn and the science behound sound healing and Amitabhan in a smooth, relaxing concert of his original music. On April 28, we are excited to host our musician, Brittany Gilmore in her concert performing as BinX.

On February 11, our community departed from using collection baskets and now utilizizes boxes on the wall for people to freely contribute at any time. There is a freedom in realizing the personal value one feels for a community and coming to the place of financially supporting its continuation. Whether you are contributing your time, treasure or talents, our community benefits from your participation and the intention set for greater expansion.

Many Blessings,
Brentwood Unity Board of Trustees

LOAVES AND FISHES

Brentwood Unity is happy to partner with the local Loaves & Fishes program. The bin in the Fellowship Room is always available to drop off non perisharble items. You are appreciated**!**

Affirmative Prayer

You may add your first name or the first name
of someone else to our prayer list to receive
affirmatitive prayer or receive a home or hospital visit.
Please call for more information:
Bettie Danley 925.757.8431
Email: bdanley3@juno.com

Potluck-March 25-*After Service*

Bring your favorite dish, but mostly bring yourself!

March Book of the Month

5 Love Languages

Gary Chapman

Falling in love is easy. Staying in love—that's the challenge. How can you keep your relationship fresh and growing amid the demands, conflicts, and just plain boredom of everyday life?

In the #1 *New York Times* bestseller *The 5 Love Languages*, you'll discover the secret that has transformed millions of relationships worldwide. Whether your relationship is flourishing or failing, Dr. Chapman's proven approach to showing and receiving love will help you experience deeper and richer experiences with your partner—starting today.

Also available are the Singles and Childrens editions.

Available Now for $11

Use one of the envelopes next to the books for sale, write the name of the book purchased on the envelope and place the money in the Abundance Box in the Inspiration Nook.

Movie Night

Friday, March 16 at 7pm

Show Up at 6 pm to Socialize

Tom Shadyac is one of Hollywood's all-time leading comedy directors with his films, Ace Ventura: Pet Detective, The Nutty Professor, Liar, Liar, Patch Adams, and Bruce Almighty grossing nearly 2 billion dollars at the box office.

He has appeared on numerous national television shows, including the Ellen Degeneres Show, The Oprah Winfrey Show, Real Time with Bill Maher, The View, Nightline and Rosie O'Donnell's nationally syndicated radio show. His recent call-in radio show, One Big Couch with Tom Shadyac, on SiriusXM was an immediate hit with listeners.

Tom's diverse background makes him uniquely qualified to handle the intricacies of this conversation; he's been an actor, screenwriter, and standup comic, while studying in depth the monastic traditions, ancient philosophy, mystic poetry, myth and storytelling. What sets Tom apart is his rare ability to blend humor and heart, with a likeability and levity that makes even the driest subjects accessible, from Quantum Physics to Cellular Biology.