

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE



“Our care is based on unconditional love. This is easier said than done. Our task is to find ways to express human warmth where there is fear, meaninglessness, abuse, confusion, anger, frustration and despair. Our option is to serve those who are the most forgotten. We bring a peaceful feeling of companionship and community to the poor, the neglected and the abandoned. We serve those who are weak and scared, violently fearful, isolated and sorrowful. And, we lend a helping hand to those who are disabled, mentally ill, elderly and physically ill. We can only give what we have. Our gift is the expression of unconditional love. We wrap it in the warmth of our presence, the nurturing of our words, the kindness of our touch and the gaze of our eyes. We offer it freely and unconditionally. We ask for nothing in return. We hope for a smile, a kind word, a giggle, a warm gaze or arms reached out for our embrace. Our task is to mend hearts that are broken by confusion, despair, poverty, neglect, abuse, racism, segregation, old age, chronic illness, mental illness and developmental disabilities. We give our presence by staying peaceful when faced with violence, by reaching out to those who hit, by speaking words of affection and encouragement to those who curse, and by protecting those who cannot help themselves. This sounds so easy. Yet, we know from our own lives that this is quite hard.” “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you; bless those who curse you...When a man hits you on the cheek, offer him the other cheek too...Do to others as you would have them do to you...What credit is it to you to love only those who love you...” (Luke)”

-John McGee, *Mending Broken Hearts*

- 1 Take a moment and write down your definition of what unconditional love is. Provide some concrete examples:

“To give and not expect return is what lies at the heart of love. Unconditional love does not thrive on returned favours. Intense love does not measure, it just gives.”

-Oscar Wilde

2 The definition of Unconditional Love is: the greatest affection without any limitations. It can also be love without conditions. To what degree do you feel like you are able to love others (those served/not served) unconditionally?

3 In the above quote, John McGee says, “We serve those who are weak and scared, violently fearful, isolated, and physically ill. We can only give what we have. Our gift is the expression of unconditional love...We give our presence by staying peaceful when faced with violence, by reaching out to those who hit, by speaking words of affection and encouragement to those who curse, and by protecting those who cannot help themselves. This sounds so easy. Yet, we know from our own lives that this is quite hard.”

Write down some of your greatest challenges in loving someone unconditionally in the midst of an escalation. How do you typically respond? (This is not to be confused with how you should respond.)

4 What do you think needs to change in order to truly grow into loving someone unconditionally? Do you see this as a personal necessity or not?

