



A Heart Full Of *Love*

lesson from an angel's journey
to the heart of unconditional love

DIANA OPIYO

Forward by Pastor Milton Jumba

A Heart Full Of *Love*

Lessons from an Angel's Journey to the
Heart of Unconditional Love



***“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and love
your neighbor as yourself”.
Matthew 22:37 (New International Version)***

A Heart Full Of *Love*

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ISBN 978_9914_49_669_7

Edited by Mercy Lenora

Cover Picture and Printing Consultant: Wilhemwear

Contents

<i>Dedication:</i>	iii
<i>Forward</i>	xv
<i>Preface</i>	xxi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xxv
<i>Endorsements</i>	xxxii
<i>About the Author</i>	xl
<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>What Is Love?</i>	6
<i>Love for God and Self:</i>	18
<i>Love For Our Children</i>	47
<i>Love For Our Family</i>	61
<i>Love For Our Parents</i>	75
<i>Love For the Neighbors</i>	95
<i>Love To The Unlovable</i>	109
<i>Love Conquers All.</i>	121

Dedication:

This book is dedicated to my late daughter, Gabrielle Hera, who truly was the love of my life. The name “Hera” which holds a special meaning in the Luo language (spoken by a Kenyan community), means love.

Gabrielle, my love, you taught me invaluable lessons about love. It is ironic that despite you teaching me how to love, I still struggle to love unconditionally. Born with special needs, you faced various physical challenges, which drew attention from others. Yet, in the face of their stares, you often responded with a radiant smile that left people in awe. It takes a deep reservoir of love within oneself to respond with such kindness despite being wronged.

This book is not only dedicated to you, Gabrielle but all parents who have experienced the pain of losing a loved one. It is a journey of strength and self-love; finding the strength to stand tall when our feet feel

wobbly. In times of hardship, I found solace and encouragement in you Gabrielle and in our favorite poem, which has guided me through countless challenges. I pray my readers will be encouraged too in the journey.

Oh, the Places You'll Go! By Dr. Seuss

Congratulations!

Today is your day.

You're off to Great Places!

You're off and away!

You have brains in your head.

You have feet in your shoes.

You can steer yourself

any direction you choose.

You're on your own. And you know what you know.

And YOU are the guy who'll decide where to go.

A HEART FULL OF LOVE

*You'll look up and down streets. Look 'em over
with care.*

*About some you will say, "I don't choose to go
there."*

*With your head full of brains and your shoes full
of feet,*

*you're too smart to go down any not-so-good
street.*

And you may not find any

you'll want to go down.

In that case, of course,

you'll head straight out of town.

It's opener there

in the wide open air.

Out there things can happen

and frequently do

to people as brainy

and footsy as you.

*And then things start to happen,
don't worry. Don't stew.
Just go right along.
You'll start happening too.*

OH!

THE PLACES YOU'LL GO!

*You'll be on your way up!
You'll be seeing great sights!
You'll join the high fliers
who soar to high heights.*

*You won't lag behind, because you'll have the
speed.*

*You'll pass the whole gang and you'll soon take
the lead.*

Wherever you fly, you'll be best of the best.

Wherever you go, you will top all the rest.

*Except when you don't.
Because, sometimes, you won't.*

*I'm sorry to say so
but, sadly, it's true
that Bang-ups
and Hang-ups
can happen to you.*

*You can get all hung up
in a prickly perch.
And your gang will fly on.
You'll be left in a Lurch.*

*You'll come down from the Lurch
with an unpleasant bump.
And the chances are, then,
that you'll be in a Slump.
And when you're in a Slump,*

A HEART FULL OF LOVE

you're not in for much fun.

Un-slumping yourself

is not easily done.

You will come to a place where the streets are not marked.

Some windows are lighted. But mostly they're darked.

A place you could sprain both your elbow and chin!

Do you dare to stay out? Do you dare to go in?

How much can you lose? How much can you win?

And IF you go in, should you turn left or right...

or right-and-three-quarters? Or, maybe, not quite?

Or go around back and sneak in from behind?

Simple it's not, I'm afraid you will find,

for a mind-maker-upper to make up his mind.

You can get so confused

A HEART FULL OF LOVE

*that you'll start in to race
down long wiggled roads at a break-necking pace
and grind on for miles cross weirdish wild space,
headed, I fear, toward a most useless place.
The Waiting Place...*

*...for people just waiting.
Waiting for a train to go
or a bus to come, or a plane to go
or the mail to come, or the rain to go
or the phone to ring, or the snow to snow
or the waiting around for a Yes or No
or waiting for their hair to grow.
Everyone is just waiting.*

*Waiting for the fish to bite
or waiting for the wind to fly a kite
or waiting around for Friday night
or waiting, perhaps, for their Uncle Jake
or a pot to boil, or a Better Break*

A HEART FULL OF LOVE

*or a string of pearls, or a pair of pants
or a wig with curls, or Another Chance.
Everyone is just waiting.*

*NO!
That's not for you!*

*Somehow you'll escape
all that waiting and staying
You'll find the bright places
where Boom Bands are playing.*

*With banner flip-flapping,
Once more you'll ride high!
Ready for anything under the sky.
Ready because you're that kind of a guy!*

Oh, the places you'll go! There is fun to be done!

A HEART FULL OF LOVE

There are points to be scored. There are games to be won.

And the magical things you can do with that ball will make you the winning-est winner of all.

Fame! You'll be as famous as famous can be, with the whole wide world watching you win on TV.

*Except when they don't
Because, sometimes they won't.*

*I'm afraid that sometimes
you'll play lonely games too.
Games you can't win
'cause you'll play against you.*

*All Alone!
Whether you like it or not,
Alone will be something
you'll be quite a lot.*

A HEART FULL OF LOVE

And when you're alone, there's a very good chance

you'll meet things that scare you right out of your pants.

There are some, down the road between hither and yon,

that can scare you so much you won't want to go on.

*But on you will go
though the weather be foul.*

*On you will go
though your enemies prowl.*

*On you will go
though the Hakken-Kraks howl.*

*Onward up many
a frightening creek,
though your arms may get sore
and your sneakers may leak.*

On and on you will hike,

A HEART FULL OF LOVE

*And I know you'll hike far
and face up to your problems
whatever they are.*

*You'll get mixed up, of course,
as you already know.*

*You'll get mixed up
with many strange birds as you go.*

So be sure when you step.

*Step with care and great tact
and remember that Life's
a Great Balancing Act.*

Just never forget to be dexterous and deft.

And never mix up your right foot with your left.

And will you succeed?

Yes! You will, indeed!

(98 and 3/4 percent guaranteed.)

KID, YOU'LL MOVE MOUNTAINS!

So...

be your name Buxbaum or Bixby or Bray

or Mordecai Ali Van Allen O'Shea,

You're off the Great Places!

Today is your day!

Your mountain is waiting.

So...get on your way!

Forward

At the altar of love, the animal of sacrifice is the self,” declared Jeff in the middle of a heated discussion on love and affection as presented by pop culture. The trigger had been words found in the song “unconditional love” by Donna Summer especially where the crooner declares.

*“Don't take too long to find
True love transcends all time
That non-reacting, everlasting love “.*

What was this unconditional love Donna had in mind? Is it even possible? How does one find love that transcends time? Or was this just a romantic line meant to capture imagination and trap another's heart? Everything had a shelf life. Even love. Right? Don't feelings change?

Songs about love have been sung for ages. Growing up in the eighties, I remember LL Cool J chanting I need love. Stevie Wonder declared I just called to say that I love you.

Tina Turner belted out What's love got to do with it? The J Geils Band said love stinks. Joy Division sung Love will tear us apart. The "foreigner" asked I want to know what love is. Third world finds it but ask Now that we found love what are we going to with it?

Third world then declare:

*Let's give love a try
Let Jah control, control your destiny
We owe it to ourselves, yes, we do
To live happy, eternally
Sweet love is what we've been
searchin' for
And love is what we're lookin' for
Yeah, now that I've got it right here in
my hand
I'm gonna spread it all over the land*

I wonder what your take on love is. If your type of love was to be spread all over the land, what would the world look like? Diana Opiyo uses her life experiences to share the kind of love that she would love to spread throughout the world. Her thoughts make a remarkably interesting and sometimes challenging reading. It is a counter cultural love that does not front feelings and

emotions as the point of departure and deeply cuts through many belief systems and social constructs that shape the current world scene.

Plough through the thoughts and let Diana's words be like a life mirror and you will find that love does not stink nor tear apart. If we get to love the way we were created to love, then love has everything to do with how we do life. For our creator, is love.

*Pastor Milton Jumba,
Lead Pastor at Mavuno Mashariki, Kenya*

Dear Readers,

It is with great honor and a heavy heart that I write this foreword for Diana's extraordinary book, "A HEART FULL OF LOVE....Lessons from an Angel's Journey to the Heart of Unconditional Love." In these pages, Diana shares a deeply personal and profoundly moving story of love, loss, and the unbreakable bonds that endure even in the face of unimaginable grief.

Diana's journey is one that many of us fear to tread. The loss of a child is an indescribable sorrow, a pain that can shatter the very foundation of our being. Yet, amid her anguish, Diana found the strength to transform her grief into a powerful force for healing and inspiration. Through her words, she invites us to accompany her on a remarkable voyage—one that takes us to the heart of unconditional love.

This book is not simply a memoir; it is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the extraordinary power of love. Diana's daughter, whose radiant spirit shines through these pages, becomes our guide on a transformative journey—one that challenges

us to examine our own lives, our relationships, and the depths of our capacity to love.

As Diana recounts the lessons she learned from her angel's journey, we are reminded of the fragility of life and the importance of embracing each precious moment. We are compelled to reflect on our own experiences, to reevaluate our priorities, and to nurture the connections that give our lives meaning.

Throughout the book, Diana's voice is a beacon of hope, compassion, and unwavering faith. Her words touch the deepest recesses of our hearts, encouraging us to embrace our vulnerabilities and to find solace in the power of love. In sharing her story, Diana offers a lifeline to those who have experienced loss, reminding us that even in the darkest of times, love has the power to heal and transform.

I urge you, dear readers, to approach this book with an open heart and a willingness to be moved. Prepare to be inspired, challenged, and transformed by the profound wisdom that Diana imparts. Her words will resound within you long after

you turn the final page, reminding you of the boundless capacity of the human spirit to rise above adversity and find solace in the embrace of love.

To Diana, I extend my deepest gratitude for her courage in sharing her journey and for entrusting us with her daughter's memory. May her words touch the lives of countless readers, offering them comfort, inspiration, and the enduring reminder that love transcends all boundaries.

*With heartfelt admiration,
Olayemi Adegoke, Author "Who Care If you have a
good idea?"*

Preface

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself." These words, echoed through the ages, hold within them the essence of what it means to truly live. In a world full of strife, division, and indifference, the need for love has never been greater. Love is the transformative force that can bridge gaps, heal wounds, and bring about lasting change. It is in this context that I present my book, "A Heart Full of Love: Lessons from an Angel's Journey to the Heart of Unconditional Love."

In a society where love seems to be lacking, this book will serve as a beacon of hope and a call to action. I will share a deeply personal and heartfelt story of my late daughter, Gabrielle Hera, who taught me the true meaning of love.

I invite you on a journey to explore the various dimensions of love and its profound

impact on our lives. Through my poignant storytelling and insightful reflections, I will shed light on the importance of love for God, our spouses, children, families, neighbors, and even the unlovable. Drawing inspiration from timeless quotes, biblical verses, and personal anecdotes, I will compel you to examine your capacity to love and to challenge the status quo by delving into the concept of love languages, highlighting how understanding, and expressing love in ways that resonate with our loved ones can deepen our connections and foster a more harmonious relationship. By exploring the love languages, words of affirmation, acts of service, receiving gifts, quality time, and physical touch, I will provide practical guidance on how we can express love in a manner that truly speaks to the hearts of our spouses.

This book will serve as a reminder that love is not a mere sentiment or fleeting emotion but a powerful force that has the potential to transform individuals, relationships, and societies. Through my personal experiences

and profound insights, I encourage you to embrace love in all its forms, to practice forgiveness and compassion, and to extend kindness even to those who may seem unlovable.

In a world hungry for love, this book is a nourishing feast that offers sustenance and inspiration. May you discover the immeasurable depths of love within yourself and find the courage to share that love with others.

Acknowledgements

"I would like to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to the individuals and groups who have played pivotal roles in encouraging and supporting me throughout this incredible journey.

First and foremost, I offer my deepest thanks to God for His unwavering guidance and blessings. Knowing you personally has brought me to where I am today. I have achieved my success and dreams due to your favor and grace. Your divine presence has been my constant source of strength and inspiration.

To my cherished family, especially my husband Charles, thank you for always encouraging me and for your approvals of my ideas and designs. My late daughter Gabrielle, you were my inspiration to write this book long before your passing. To Jedi and Hada, thank you for being my sweet

little children, the source of my strength and inspiration to work hard since I must leave my inheritance to you. To my siblings, Monica, Alice, Lloyd, Edna, Jonas, Emmy, Laura, and Cindy, thank you for always rooting for me and for your unwavering encouragement. To Elizabeth, my dedicated nanny to my kids, thank you for being an integral part of my family and for taking care of us always. To my family by extension, including my in-laws, nephews, nieces, cousins, aunts, and uncles, you have all played crucial roles in my journey, and I am deeply thankful. My dear family, your unwavering love, support, and understanding have been my rock. I am profoundly grateful for the sacrifices you have made and the unwavering encouragement you have provided every step of the way.

A special thank you goes out to my friends, colleagues, and family, Ann Babu, Lilyan Lumbasi, Dorothy Waluvengo, Laura Hull (Sweden), Brenda Mainda (US), Collins Omondi (US), Rachel (Eden DG, Mavuno),

Lydear (Safaricom), Lily K and Mary K (Mavuno) David Listwa (NCBA) and Joan Wangari, my dear neighbor and friend who pre-ordered this book. Your early support and belief in my work mean the world to me. Your faith in this project has been a driving force, and I am deeply thankful for your friendship.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to Pastor Milton of Mavuno Church, who believed in me and encouraged me to join the Fearless Institute. Thank you for the unwavering encouragement and spiritual guidance; your wisdom and support have been instrumental in shaping my understanding of love and its profound impact on our lives.

To our Campus Dean, Pastor Violet, your support, and belief in my abilities have been instrumental. Your mentorship has allowed me to navigate the complexities of this journey with confidence.

A special note of gratitude goes out to my dedicated class action group, Mary K, Pst Dru, Kalisto and Darlington for their collaborative efforts and camaraderie. Your commitment to excellence and support during this endeavor have been remarkable.

I also want to acknowledge my facilitator, Pastor Pauline Njau, for her guidance, expertise, and unwavering belief in my potential. Your mentorship has been invaluable.

I would like to acknowledge my boss, Mr. Tom Muema, Safaricom Kimathi Shop, for believing in me and providing me the opportunity to gain experience by giving me a flexible work schedule to attend classes. He also encouraged my colleagues to support my journey through pre-orders and financial assistance.

To all the people who supported my dream of joining the Fearless Institute financially, Jerim Ouko, Fred Kwame, James Adhiambo

(US), and Tina Ageda, David Litswa (NCBA Bank), Monica Opiyo, Jefferson, Eva Wambui (Safaricom), Lucia Alfred (Safaricom), Elizabeth Wanjiru (Safaricom) and Byron Odhiambo (Safaricom) may God bless you and fill your pockets. To my fellow students at the Fearless Institution, thank you for your kind words of encouragement and support.

My special gratitude also goes to my editor, Mercy Lenora, for ensuring I present great writing to the world. To Pastor Yemi of Mavuno Church, thank you for the initial book cover design, and to Wilhemwears, thank you for the final design and publishing. I extend this gratitude to all the referrals and everyone who shared their ideas on the design and offered positive criticism; your contributions were extremely helpful. To the people who endorsed and reviewed the book—Pst Violet, Pst M. K., Robert, Benjamin, Pst Yemi and Pst Pauline, all from Mavuno Church—as well as my boss, Mr. Tom and Linet your recommendations have profoundly assisted

me in making improvements to the book. God bless you all.

To my colleagues at Safaricom Kimathi Shop, thank you all for helping me in one way or another, reading my blogs, assisting me through endorsements, and supporting my vision. To every person who has assisted me in one way or another, even if I have not mentioned you by name, it does not mean that I do not appreciate you—I truly do. If I were to mention each person by name, it would be a new book on its own. May God bless all of you in a very special way.

Lastly, to the entire Eden DG family and Mavuno Church, your friendship, encouragement, spiritual guidance, and unwavering belief in my vision have enriched my life in countless ways. I am deeply thankful for your presence in my life.

This book is a testament to the love, support, and collective effort of all those mentioned above and even to anyone I may have

forgotten. I am profoundly grateful for each of you, and I look forward to continuing this journey together."

Endorsements

A heart full of love is an educative, transformative, interesting and an easy read. The author uses her personal stories and experiences to bring out the meaning of love and practical ways of showing love to others. She breaks down this in the different chapters on how you can love different categories of people. The use of poems and quotes from other authors reveals the deep search and the much time spend in putting this book together. I believe that this book will put a smile on many and will be a tool that will wipes tears of many and help overcome grief. In addition, the book will inspire many to be selfless. Loving one another is the solution to the cruelty experienced in this world.

I too lost a baby in the past, and reading this book wiped my tears. What a way to write tribute to a loved one. A tribute that is selfless to help many find comfort and move on despite the past or current challenge! The

book brings hope and opens one's mind on how to become selfless amid what is pulling him/her down.

Although most people would deny it outwardly, the truth is that we all seek for love daily as reveled in our desires, actions, seeking of attention, longing for a shoulder to lean on among other ways. Unfortunately, many times we settle for mere feelings and emotions: looking for love in wrong places. Whereas wealth, money, comfort, gifts are tools to show love through showing compassion to humanity, it is prudent to note that true love is found in Jesus Christ, who is the source of love. And He has demonstrated the greatest love ever unconditionally that while we were yet sinners and helpless, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8. Jesus is a great teacher. He first of all shows us what love is by dying on the cross to pay the penalty of our sins. He then calls upon us to now show love to others. John 13:34-35. When we forgive one another, care for one another, value one another and go an extra mile of being a blessing to others,

we fulfil the greatest commandment that is expounded in this book. This book answers the question of what true love is, and how we can love one another.

I recommend this book to everyone because we all need love. What caught my attention more, is the fact that when we love others without expecting anything in return, we find fulfilment, wow! This is so true. Love breaks any heaviness.

Violet Naineki,

*Dean Fearless Institute, Mavuno Mashariki Network.
Associate Pastor, Mavuno Church Far East Campus.
Author, "Kingdom Service."*

Diana's A Heart Full of Love is simply refreshing!

It is a well written letter of love and one can tell that Diana has been loved and has loved!

Today's world makes a mockery of love and yet there is no greater force for transformation in a person's lives. This book

takes the time to explore love in all its colors and shades.

As Diana shares and explores her experiences with her love for God with whom she has an intimate relationship, love for the love of her life Charles with whom they have “done” life, love for her family and community who provide her support and even love for the unlovable, I was deeply moved by her openness. I also particularly enjoyed the poetry and well used quotes that enriched the storylines and left me thinking deeply about this thing called Love!

These loves are all underpinned by her experiences with Hera-whom I feel like I know from reading *A Heart Full of Love*-who loved so delightfully well despite of her challenges this side of the sun.

There is something beautifully tender and joyful about this book; but it also carries with it the poignant pain of loss, and tears that are so frequently associated with loving broken

people in a broken world. Pure love is very expensive from and to the human soul!

Congratulations to both Diana and Charles for honoring Hera with not just a book – A Heart Full of Love- but also with practical solutions like Soul to Soul and The Hera Foundation. That's love in action!

Indeed, yours a Hearts Full of Love!

Pauline Njau

*Founder, The Fresh Start Discipleship Experience.
Assessor, Fearless Institute Mavuno*

A beautiful book it is! Thank you for sharing your personal journey. May the book help many in loving others despite their challenges.

The death of a loved one crushes even most of the strongest soul. However, in this Heart Full of Love book, the author is candid in sharing her personal healing journey after the loss of her child. Through her story, you will be challenged to not only live a

surrendered life but also love better and to forgive more.

Mary Kinyanjui,

Author, "A Believer's Manual."

Associate Pastor, Mavuno Church Mashariki.

An Advocate, High Court of Kenya.

They say love is what keeps the world spinning. Diana's own life experiences as told in here are a spark reminder of this. This book will surely have you introspecting a lot with every chapter. Ad while Gabrielle's life was in our judgement, brief, her life, and love are a reason you are holding this piece today. What can't love accomplish?

June Congo,

Marketing communications consultant, author and curator, The Kenyan Minimalist Website.

Growing up, dad was not so available as I would have wished. It was not intentional. He was just out there fending for us because he wanted the best for us. This resulted into all the children getting attached to mum.

When mum died (a few years back), I experience the highest devastation in my life. I have never recovered from the same. Every time, I veer towards anything about mum, my eyes get teary- even now.

So, it's a blessing to have Diana, spell out a very deep and personal story to us. Departure is not an easy topic to open up to. It even gets more complex when its that of a special one like Gabrielle. I guess a lot of images rush through Diana as she pens down the story.

I met Diana in the house of the Lord, Mavuno Mashariki Campus to be specific. We have been in different experiences together and I understand the zeal she has to stretch her hand out to all, opening her heart to us is a leap of greatness.

May this piece spark greatness to all whose hands it falls.

Benjamin Otieno Jaoko,

Author, "Nyalore"

Servant of Jehovah God.

A HEART FULL OF LOVE

Love is known to be one of the most important human values. Everyone wants to love and be loved. As we delve into the book aptly titled “A heart full of love,” you get to embrace their immeasurable power of love and how it can and does indeed transform our lives and the world around u. the Author gives us a glimpse of love in its different faces. The book helps us to appreciate that love us the greatest gif we can give and receive.

Tom Muema,

Manager, Safaricom shop Kimathi Street.

About the Author

Diana Opiyo, a remarkable writer from Nairobi, Kenya, has captivated readers with her bestselling book "A Heart Full of Love." Her works leave an indelible mark on the lives she touches, showcasing her caring nature, passion for others, and unwavering dedication to making a difference in her community and beyond.

As a devoted mother of two beautiful children and a wife to Charles, Diana's marriage is built on a foundation of love, trust, and mutual respect.

With a deep passion for technology and coding, Diana has amassed over 12 years of experience as a Customer Experiences expert at Safaricom PLC, Kenya, demonstrating her expertise and dedication in the field.

Diana's life is guided by her profound faith, rooted in the Christian ideology from

Mavuno Church in Nairobi, Kenya. She lives her life according to the teachings of love, compassion, and forgiveness.

Academically accomplished, Diana holds a Bachelor's degree in Information Systems and Technology from the United States of Africa - Kenya, as well as certificates in Software Engineering from Moringa School - Kenya, and Leadership from Mavuno Fearless Institution in conjunction with PAC University Kenya.

Diana's legacy extends beyond her writing, as she inspires others through her foundation for Grief Therapy. Her story serves as a reminder to live a life filled with love, compassion, and appreciation for every precious moment.

To learn more about Diana and her inspiring journey, visit her blog website at

<https://wordpress.com/posts/aindoaleksays.wordpress.com>

Introduction

"The best love is the kind that awakens the soul and makes us reach for more, that plants a fire in our hearts and brings peace to our minds. And that's what you've given me. That's what I'd hoped to give you forever." - Nicholas Sparks, The Notebook

Love is a force that transcends time and space, capable of awakening our souls and igniting a fire within us. It brings us peace, contentment, and a connection to both God and our neighbors. This profound power of love transforms our lives and the world around us.

When I contemplate love, my thoughts inevitably turn to my beloved daughter, Gabrielle Hera. She embodied all that was good and beautiful in this world. Her

presence in my life brought boundless joy and meaning, a radiant light that touched everyone fortunate enough to know her. Yet, like all beautiful things, her time with us was far too brief. Her departure left a chasm in our hearts, a void that can never truly be filled.

In the years since her passing, I've grappled with how to honor her memory and preserve her spirit. I have tried to capture every memory, every smile, every hug, but words always seem inadequate. How do you encapsulate the essence of a person when their presence was so much more?

Amidst these challenges, I have found that writing about my daughter is the most profound way to pay tribute to her and convey the essence of unconditional love that she embodied. This book is my love letter to her, a way to keep her close to my heart, and a means of sharing with the world the love she gave me, a love that came both from God and from her. It is a testament to the enduring power of love.

Within these pages, I aspire to impart the lessons I have learned from my daughter about the transformative potential of love. My hope is to inspire you to see the world through a different lens, one that recognizes the inherent worthiness of every person, and to live a life guided by selfless, unconditional love, as she did.

As I embark on this writing journey, my heart is brimming with love and memories of my daughter, who taught me the true meaning of selfless love. Though she is no longer with us in body, her spirit lives on in the lessons she imparted and the impact she had on those who crossed her path.

This book, titled 'A Heart Full of Love: Lessons from an Angel's Journey to the Heart of Unconditional Love,' stands as a tribute to her and the countless ways she exemplified the power of love. Despite facing unique challenges due to her special needs, my daughter radiated warmth and love to all she encountered, leaving an indelible mark on their hearts and souls.

In the pages that follow, I will share stories and reflections on love—how it can transform our lives and the world around us. Through my daughter's example, I came to understand that love is the greatest commandment of all, with the power to heal, unite, embrace the unloved, and inspire us to become our best selves.

It is my sincerest hope that this book will inspire you to embrace the power of love in your own life and encourage you to view the world through the lens of selfless compassion and kindness, just as my beloved daughter exemplified.

CHAPTER ONE

What
is
Love 

What Is Love?

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." - Mark 12:30-31

Love possesses a transformative power that knows no bounds. It has the remarkable ability to mend even the most shattered of hearts and heal wounds that run unfathomably deep. This profound understanding of love, I acquired from the most selfless person I have ever known – my daughter.

My daughter came to this world with special needs, facing a lifetime of challenges that would have disheartened most. However, she possessed an unbreakable spirit, her infectious smile radiating warmth and her heart brimming with an unparalleled love that she shared with everyone she encountered. It was as if her love had the power to illuminate every corner of any room she entered, leaving no heart untouched.

As this book stands as a tribute to my beloved Hera, allow me to share a glimpse of her remarkable journey. Born on July 31st, 2011, as a preterm baby, Hera faced an extreme case of hydrocephalus, necessitating surgery just six hours after her birth to fix a VP shunt. We embarked on a series of occupational therapy sessions daily to help her reach her developmental milestones. Finding the right nanny to care for her was a challenge, as many struggled to cope with the demands of caring for a special needs child, some even did unimaginable things when I left her in their care. However, God

eventually blessed us with Elizabeth, who not only provided exceptional care for Hera but continues to care for our family even after her passing.

The early days with Hera were fraught with challenges, marked by frequent hospital admissions due to her delicate health and susceptibility to infections. Yet, amid these trials, Hera graced us with her infectious smiles and laughter—treasures we hold dear even in her absence. I am eternally grateful to God for the eight precious years we shared with her. While we faced the difficulties of illness, seizures, and societal stigma, we also experienced some of the most heartwarming moments of our lives—stories of love that I will share in this book.

One memory that remains vivid is a day when we were out shopping. My daughter spotted a homeless man seated on a street corner. Without hesitation, she walked up to him and offered a warm embrace. She did not concern herself with his dirt-covered

appearance; all she saw was a fellow human being in need of love and compassion. In that moment, I came to a profound realization: Hera possessed a gift that I could only dream of having—the ability to love without reservation or expectation.

Through my daughter's extraordinary example, I discovered that love is not merely an emotion; it is a powerful action. Love compels us to step beyond our own perspectives and see the world through the eyes of others. It calls us to set aside our individual needs and desires, focusing instead on the well-being of those around us.

So, what is this love I speak of? According to three different dictionaries,

“Love is a strong feeling of affection and attachment towards someone or something.” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).

“Love is a selfless concern for the well-being and happiness of another person.” (Oxford English Dictionary).

"Love is a deep and intimate emotional connection between two people, characterized by care, trust, respect, and commitment." (Cambridge English Dictionary).

Whichever way you define it, love is a fundamental human need that provides a sense of belonging, security, and comfort. But let's say that the above conditions are not favorable, can you still express positive emotions? People in romantic relationships may start complaining after a while and express negative emotions towards their partners, yet we are meant to always show or express love towards our loved ones despite the unfavorable conditions.

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." - Mark 12:30-31.

These verses highlight the significance of love, both for God and for others, as fundamental commandments. Here, Jesus

encapsulates the entire law, emphasizing the pivotal role of love as the bedrock of righteous living. These commandments were given to us as a fulfillment of the ten commandments that were earlier issued to Moses on Mount Sinai. The commandments were not easy to fulfill, breaking one meant breaking all ten of them. Atoning for those sins meant one had to wait a year for Yom Kippur (The Day of Atonement) according to the Jewish traditions.

Crucially, Jesus' teachings extended far beyond mere compliance with the Ten Commandments. While the Commandments provided the moral and ethical groundwork, Jesus' teachings expanded upon them, placing immense importance on the motives driving our actions. His commandments call for an authentic love for God and others, a love not contingent upon external obedience alone but emanating from a heart transformed by compassion. Through genuine love, we fulfill the essence of the entire law.

The teachings and ultimate sacrifice of Jesus on the cross ushered in a new covenant, one wherein forgiveness and reconciliation with God are attainable through faith in Him. The book of Mark underscores love as the paramount commandment, one that encompasses and surpasses the previous commandments given to Moses. For when one truly loves another, it becomes inconceivable to intentionally harm them. Genuine love, in the Christian perspective, signifies a profound shift in the relationship between humanity and God. The new covenant, closely associated with Jesus' sacrifice, heralds a new era characterized by forgiveness, reconciliation, and boundless grace. Under this new covenant, believers receive the offer of forgiveness for their sins and the promise of eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ, replacing the old covenant governed by adherence to the Mosaic Law and the requirement for sacrificial atonement. This reinforces the notion that love stands as the foremost guiding principle for righteous living and spiritual fulfillment.

An understanding of Jesus' teachings encourages contemplation of the intricate connection between love and our conduct towards others. True, authentic love seeks the well-being and happiness of the beloved. Consequently, acts of kindness, respect, and care naturally flow from genuine love, as opposed to any intention to harm. Love fosters empathy, compassion, and comprehension, typically leading to positive actions that nurture and fortify relationships.

In our relationship with God, love serves as the impetus for following His commandments and living in accordance with His teachings. Genuine love for God propels us to align our actions with His divine will, refraining from behaviors incongruent with His nature or guidance. Likewise, in our interactions with fellow human beings, a sincere love for someone precludes any deliberate act of harm.

Nonetheless, it is vital to acknowledge the imperfections inherent in our human

condition. Even individuals who genuinely love others may unintentionally cause harm. Thus, cultivating forgiveness, reconciliation, and open communication within our relationships is paramount to resolving conflicts and seeking restoration when such instances arise. This practice serves as a reminder of the ideal standards we aspire to in our relationships, both with God and with one another.

“Love is a powerful force that has the ability to transform our lives and the world around us.”

Our exploration of love takes us on a multifaceted journey, guiding us to express love to various segments of our lives. We begin by delving into the art of loving God and self and later to our spouses, nurturing and cherishing the unique bond we share with them. This love extends further, enveloping our children, creating a secure and nurturing environment for their growth.

We find ourselves reaching out to embrace love for our other family members and parents, thereby cultivating a sense of unity and unwavering support within our family circles.

But love knows no bounds. It compels us to extend our embrace even further, to our neighbors, igniting the flames of compassion and kindness that foster tight-knit and empathetic communities. Yet, herein lies a unique challenge—to love those who may, at times, make it difficult for us to do so.

Allow me to extend a challenge to you, dear reader. As we journey through the intricate layers of love and its many facets, consider reaching out to someone in your life who may be in need of love and support. Whether it is a friend facing tough times, a family member with whom you have lost touch, or even a stranger who could benefit from a simple act of kindness, take a step toward them. Extend an act of love, regardless of its scale, and witness the profound ripple effect

it can set in motion. Share your experiences with others and inspire them to embark on the same path. Let us become catalysts for love, sharing its transformative power with those in our orbit.

As we continue this exploration of love, remember that comprehending love isn't just an intellectual endeavor—it's a compelling call to action. The teachings of Jesus serve as a poignant reminder that love transcends boundaries and possesses the remarkable ability to conquer even the most formidable obstacles. By following in His footsteps and embodying genuine, selfless, and unconditional love, we have the potential to contribute to the creation of a world where love reigns supreme. Can we emulate the love of Jesus and extend it to all we encounter?

CHAPTER TWO

Love for God and Self



Love for God and Self:

Embracing the Divine Connection

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." - Matthew 22:37

"I have found the one whom my soul loves." - Song of Solomon 3:4

"Let yourself be silently drawn by the strange pull of what you really love. It will not lead you astray." By Jalaluddin Rumi.

In the depths of my journey, I experienced a profound transformation of love —a love that defied all expectations and surpassed the boundaries of human understanding. It began when I made the decision to surrender

my life to God when I was only 13 years old, seeking a deeper connection and purpose.

Growing up in separate locations from my parents posed unique challenges in my life. With my father living in Nairobi and my mother upcountry in Gwassi, Suba constituency in Kenya, I often felt a void and yearned for love and guidance. As my siblings and I faced financial difficulties at some point in our lives, I witnessed resilience in my older siblings who made tough decisions to scale down our expenses. These experiences shaped my early years and left me searching for love, often seeking it in ways that were not healthy or fulfilling.

In my quest for love, I eventually found God. Although I did not immediately realize it, this encounter was a significant turning point. However, even after finding God, I still struggled to find solace and a sense of belonging. Instead, I sought love through romantic relationships, and it was during this time that I was blessed with the arrival

of my daughter, Gabrielle. Her presence introduced a love into my life that I had never known before.

At first, I was overwhelmed, hurt, and confused. I was a young, unmarried lady facing the responsibility of caring for a child. Bereft of parents to guide me (I was already an orphan by now) and learning to care for a special needs child on my own, I had no one to turn to for wisdom and love except for God's embrace. Caring for Gabrielle opened my heart to the boundless capacity of love – a love that embraces imperfections and cherishes every step of the journey.

During this time, I experienced God's love, even though I didn't fully recognize it. I had never felt love in the way that many people describe it. Before Gabrielle's birth, I miraculously secured a permanent job at Safaricom, not realizing how crucial it would become in the years to come. When Gabrielle was born, I had to leave her at the hospital for two weeks due to her delicate health, as

she was also a preterm baby. I visited the hospital daily to see my baby and ensured I brought breast milk to be fed through a tube inserted through her nose. Through God's grace and provision, all our hospital expenses were covered by my job's medical insurance. After the two weeks, I was able to bring her home for the first time, with a clean bill of health. However, the doctors warned me that Gabrielle might not develop as expected, possibly remaining as a "vegetable." A term doctors use to describe people who cannot do anything at all. I refused to accept this, placing my unwavering faith in God. I unknowingly told the doctor, "That will never happen, my daughter will do everything that all children do. " Talk about faith. Sigh!!

I carried my baby home, excited but unaware of the challenges ahead. About 20 days later, I was abruptly awakened by a male voice. 'Wake up and check the baby,' it said, repeating the urgent command. I glanced at my baby, and she wasn't responding. This was God speaking to me, a profound

experience many long for, and one I yearn to hear again.

In my moment of desperation, my younger sister, Cindy, with whom I lived at the time, heard my cries, and rushed to our room. She took the baby from my trembling hands. Cindy called our elder sister, Alice, who lived nearby, and together they helped us rush the baby back to the hospital. What astonished me was my daughter's unyielding determination to live. She miraculously left the ICU the next day after being placed on life support. Through her, I witnessed a strength and resilience that transcended physical and emotional limitations. She had undergone her first surgery just six hours after birth, and during her eight years on Earth, she endured over ten surgeries. Despite her pain, her face consistently lit up with a radiant smile when she was unwell, a testament to her extraordinary spirit.

Gabrielle taught me the true essence of unconditional love—a love that does not

seek perfection but embraces every aspect of our being. She became my teacher, showing me the simplicity of finding joy in everyday moments and embracing the inherent beauty within ourselves and others. Her presence guided me to let go of unrealistic expectations and love unconditionally much like God loves each of us.

In the face of adversity—whether it was discouraging medical reports, rejections from schools unwilling to admit her, nannies who left because they couldn't handle her needs, or the exhaustion of working without leave days due to frequent hospitalizations and daily visits to the hospital for occupational therapy after leaving work, leading to major burnouts—Gabrielle continued to respond with an enduring smile.

Through my daughter, I witnessed a strength and resilience that transcended physical and emotional limitations. She miraculously survived every challenge, repeatedly defying the odds. Gabrielle's journey was a testament to the power of love, both given and received. It was during these trying times

that I discovered love within myself through my daughter—a love that sustained me. Many people at work would wonder how I could smile in the face of my challenges. I would consistently show up dressed in a smile, despite the difficulties I was confronting.

On this challenging journey, I clung to the words of Matthew 22:37, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' My daughter and I embarked on an extraordinary journey, our lives intertwined in a dance of love and resilience. I sang kids' songs to her, kissed her multiple times, and made sure I gathered all the materials that would 'develop' her brain cells. Through this bond, I came to understand that God's love had been with me all along, even during the darkest moments when Gabrielle's life hung in the balance.

In the ongoing chapters of my life, I faced the heart-wrenching pain of losing my precious daughter, Gabrielle. The depth of my grief led me to cling to the love that had flourished within me—a love nurtured through my spiritual journey and the extraordinary bond I shared with her. I missed her hugs and laughs; Gabrielle always had an uncanny way of knowing when I needed them. This period pushed me into depression, and I firmly believe that without the love of God, I might have been pushed to the brink of despair. Even though she no longer walks beside me in the physical realm, her spirit persists in guiding me, serving as a constant reminder of the enduring power of love.

Gabrielle's passing threw me into a profound struggle with prayer and led me to question my faith in God. I descended into a deep depression, where life seemed utterly devoid of meaning. I spent my days confined to my bed, fulfilling my work and responsibilities to the outside world while feeling utterly helpless in my internal world. It is possible

that without the enduring love of God in my life, I might not be here today.

God's love emerged as my unwavering source of strength when I faced numerous trials. My relationship with God provided me with the resilience and determination required to overcome the adversities that came my way. It was during my spiritual journey that I found solace amid uncertainty and learned to place my trust in a love that transcends all comprehension.

Through the teachings of Jesus and the wisdom of Rumi, I found solace and strength. I came to understand that love is not limited by time or space—it transcends life and death, etching its mark on our souls forever. The love I experienced in being born again and through my profound connection with my daughter has taught me that love is an eternal force that can never truly be lost.

Now, I find comfort in knowing that my daughter's journey on Earth was a divine

gift—an instrument that led me to the true meaning of love. I can sincerely say that I have come to appreciate who I am and strive to embrace and cherish the life I have. Her life continues to inspire me to live with an open heart, treasuring every moment and embracing the love that flows through me, connecting me to God.

During my formative years and early school life, I endured bullying. People would mimic how I spoke, and laughter often followed my words. Growing up with these experiences, I grappled with insecurity and low self-esteem. To counter this, I developed the art of public speaking to bolster my courage. In search of love, I sometimes confused it with mere infatuation in what I wrongly perceived as expressions of love from men. Self-love remained an ongoing struggle.

Throughout my journey, I discovered the incredible power of community—the profound significance of having a support system. My sisters, brothers, friends, and

acquaintances extended their love and kindness, leaving an indelible mark on my life. Their unwavering presence was a testament to the vital role of connection and support during life's most challenging moments. All of this was made possible through the boundless love of God.

When we share God's love, it equips us to support one another during both the easy and challenging moments in life. I can personally attest to the incredible support I received from my family and friends, a testament to the selfless love that unites us. My family played a crucial role in ensuring that Gabrielle received a fitting and extraordinary farewell. One of my sisters, Laura, went to great lengths, even traveling to Kenya, although she could not make it to our ancestral home for the burial due to restrictions. Instead, she was able to view Gabrielle's body at the funeral home, demonstrating her unwavering support. Some of my siblings, Edna, and Jonas, hindered by travel restrictions, couldn't join us in Kenya, but their presence was felt

throughout the journey. I could not be more grateful for the love and unity that bind our family.

One remarkable memory that remains etched in my heart is the visit of my dear friend, Rebecca (may her soul rest in peace). She visited me during my darkest hour, a time when I could hardly fathom the depth of my grief. Rebecca had just been discharged from the hospital after a harrowing accident that left her with broken legs. Her background was humble, and the journey to visit me was a true challenge. Yet, in her vulnerable state, she traveled using public transportation to be by my side carrying several gifts with her. She died just a month after. I remain profoundly indebted to her love—a heartfelt experience that continues to reside in my heart.

Caring for a special needs child deepened my capacity for empathy and compassion. Through my daughter's unique challenges, I gained a greater understanding of the

struggles faced by others. Her presence taught me to embrace vulnerability and let go of societal expectations, allowing me to cultivate a love that accepts and cherishes every aspect of our being.

I also learned the importance of self-love. Nurturing a profound love for my daughter taught me to extend the same love and kindness to myself. I realized that by embracing my own imperfections and acknowledging my worth, I could become a vessel for love to flow through me and touch the lives of others. When people throw stones at you, you pick them up and smile. My sister, Laura, usually says to me, "Don't let birds build nests on your head, stand upright, and walk majestically as queen." People will always hurt you, how you respond should be a reflection of God's love. Her unwavering positivity is a source of encouragement for all of us, reinforcing the idea that our responses should reflect God's love, regardless of the challenges we face.

As I reflect on my journey, I am reminded of the profound words of Rumi: "Let yourself be silently drawn by the strange pull of what you really love. It will not lead you astray." My daughter, in her own unique way, drew me towards a love that transformed my life. Though her physical presence may be gone, the love we shared remains, guiding me onward in my quest to love God and myself unconditionally.

I carry my daughter's legacy with me every day. Her memory fuels my passion for advocacy work, raising awareness about special needs and fighting for inclusivity and equal opportunities for all. I share my story with others, offering support and comfort to those who may be going through similar experiences. In honoring her memory, I strive to make a positive impact in the lives of others, carrying her light in my heart and spreading love and acceptance wherever I go. I may not be perfected, but little by little, I will eventually get there. Through this together with my husband Charles, we have founded Soul to Soul, a grief therapy

program to support people, especially parents who have lost their children, in accessing affordable grief therapy. Additionally, we established the Gabrielle Hera Foundation to support individuals with special needs, particularly in raising awareness about stigma and addressing basic needs.

My journey has been one of immense love, growth, and transformation. The power of community, faith, vulnerability, empathy, and self-love has shaped my path and allowed me to discover the true meaning of love. Through the love I shared with my daughter, I found strength and resilience in the face of adversity. Her presence continues to inspire me, reminding me of the enduring power of love for God and guiding me in my purpose to spread love, acceptance, and compassion to the world the way God would want me to.

As we conclude this chapter on 'Love for God and Self,' I challenge you to take a

moment for self-reflection and self-love. Find a quiet space, meditate, and connect with your inner self. Reflect on the love that God has for you and the love you have for yourself. Embrace self-compassion and affirm your self-worth. Additionally, set aside some time for prayer or meditation and reading the word of God to strengthen your connection with God. This simple act of self-love and spiritual connection can have a profound impact on your life and your ability to love others, especially for our spouses.

In the next chapter, we will explore 'Love for our Spouse' and the transformative power it holds. But for now, take this challenge to nurture your love for God and yourself, and watch how it ripples out to enrich your relationships with others.

CHAPTER THREE

Love For Our Spouse



Love For Our Spouse

*"A successful marriage requires falling in love many times, always with the same person."
- Mignon McLaughlin*

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 - "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."

Love is a beautiful and mysterious thing. It has the power to bring immense joy and can also inflict deep pain. It is a paradox of sweetness and bitterness that we experience in our lives. I believe in falling in love and

marrying my prince charming. I am a fairy story kind of girl. Despite love being beautiful, it is also a mystery; it can hurt to the core. You fall in love and the world stops for the two of you. It is the sweetest feeling that one can experience in their lifetime. However, this same love can turn bitter. Is it wrong to say that love is bittersweet? I don't know! Love between a couple is so sweet, yet the complication of life makes it bitter. The person that stopped your world becomes the worst person you ever met. Could it be that we have a flawed meaning of love or flawed ways of expressing our love to one another?

Hera's presence in our lives *illuminated the path towards the true essence of love, both human and divine.* As I navigate the chapters of my own story, I realize that one of the most critical aspects of love is how it manifests in the relationship with our spouses.

I met my husband in the most interesting place one could ever meet a spouse, at a

night club. What was even more fascinating in my journey towards our love was how he was drawn to my daughter and the passion he had for caring for someone who was rejected by many. In response, I was drawn to this man who made us feel special. Here I was, a girl yearning for love, and I got swept off my feet... how special. I quickly became entangled in married life. I was delighted to have someone help me care for my daughter, and we could all feel the love, but since we were not prepared for married life, what awaited us was a rude awakening. We have experienced our share of love as well as heartbreak in our marriage.

Marriage, like any deep commitment, requires a continuous journey of falling in love; repeatedly choosing to embrace our partner with open arms and an open heart. Both partners must be molded and prepared for married life. Mignon McLaughlin's words ring true, reminding me that love is not a one-time event, but a series of moments where we rediscover the love we hold for our spouse. In the face of life's challenges, it

is this unwavering devotion that carries us through.

The apostle Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 encapsulate the essence of love in all its beauty and grace. Love is patient, extending gentle understanding even in moments of frustration or misunderstanding. It is kind, seeking to uplift and support our spouses in their joys and sorrows. Love is not self-seeking, for it puts the needs of our partners before our own desires, fostering a selfless and compassionate bond. Someone once mentioned to us in a sermon, "If you choose to replace the word 'love' with your name, every time it appears in the verse, for example, Diana is patient, Diana is kind, what would be your score?" Looking at that verse from a personal evaluation point of view could be an eye-opening exercise on how we treat our spouses. I am not a counselor, but I bet that in many marriage counseling sessions, both partners tend to point out the flaws and complaints they have about each other. It is a common scenario where each person may struggle to see their

own part in the relationship challenges. Charles and I sought therapy on several occasions, and we too found ourselves initially focusing on each other's perceived shortcomings. Looking at what God said in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 about love, it may not be an easy task to execute. But as we daily self-evaluate, we can emulate God's love towards our spouses.

Even in the depths of our commitment there may be times when the feeling of love wanes; when the challenges of life cast a shadow on the flame that once burned brightly. It is during these moments that the true test of love emerges. It is in these times that we must dig deep within our hearts, to reconnect with the love that brought us together in the first place.

In the face of hardship, we can draw strength from the love of God, the ultimate example of unconditional love. Just as He extends grace and forgiveness to us, we must strive to extend the same grace and forgiveness to

our spouse. Love, at its core, is a choice—an active decision to show up, invest, and nurture the sacred bond we share.

Through the lens of my daughter's special needs, I came to understand that love transcends circumstances. It is not contingent upon perfection or the absence of struggles. Instead, it flourishes when we choose to embrace the imperfections, to walk alongside each other on the journey, and to continually renew our commitment through mirroring God's unconditional love. Unconditional love from God is a divine language that speaks directly to the depths of our souls, transcending earthly boundaries. Just as God's love knows no limits or conditions, we are called to extend that same love to our spouses. It is an extraordinary journey of discovering their unique love language, learning to express love in a way that reflects God's unconditional grace and compassion.

As we become fluent in this language of love, we wield a power that draws us closer,

enriching our connection and fostering a sense of belonging. Through the lens of God's unwavering love, we decode the intricacies of our spouse's heart, weaving a tapestry of understanding and acceptance. It is a harmonious symphony of love, where the notes of forgiveness, kindness, patience, and selflessness resonate deeply, creating a bond that withstands any trial or tribulation. In imitating God's love, we mirror His divine example, nurturing a love that is transformative, unshakable, and forever enduring. Each person has a unique way of feeling loved. By understanding and expressing love in their preferred language can profoundly impact our connection.

For those, whose primary love language is words of affirmation, expressing love becomes a matter of speaking words filled with love, encouragement, and appreciation. This entails offering genuine compliments, expressing gratitude for their efforts, and consistently using kind and affirming words that have the power to uplift their spirits. In the case of Charles, his primary love

language is affirmation, and he finds great joy and fulfillment when I communicate with him using words of kindness and encouragement.

For individuals, whose primary love language is acts of service, expressing love takes the form of actively serving and assisting them. This can encompass a variety of actions, such as preparing their favorite meal, taking care of household chores, or offering a helping hand whenever needed. Acts of service serve as tangible demonstrations of our love and thoughtfulness. While it may not be my primary love language, I must admit that I find great joy when my husband lends a hand with chores or offers his assistance when needed.

For those who resonate with the love language of receiving gifts, demonstrating love involves the act of giving meaningful and thoughtful presents. It's essential to emphasize that it's not about the material

value of the gift but the sentiment and thoughtfulness behind it. Even a small token or gesture can convey our deep love and appreciation, serving as a reminder that the recipient holds a special place in our hearts. While it may not be my primary love language, I must admit that receiving a heartfelt gift has the power to warm my heart.

For those who cherish quality time as their primary love language, demonstrating love involves dedicating our undivided attention and presence to one another. This entails spending meaningful, uninterrupted time together, engaging in heartfelt conversations, going on romantic dates, or simply relishing each other's company. Personally, I hold quality time close to my heart and find joy in spending time with my husband, whether it's going on dates or simply enjoying a movie night together.

For individuals, whose primary love language is physical touch, expressing love

often involves affectionate gestures. These can range from holding hands and warm hugs to tender kisses, cuddling, or even a gentle touch on the arm. Such physical expressions convey feelings of love and warmth. I have come to understand that my husband particularly appreciates it when I express my love through kissing and other forms of physical touch.

By understanding and embracing each other's love languages, we unlock the power to express love in ways that resonate deeply with our spouses. It requires attentiveness, intentionality, and a willingness to adapt and learn. As we speak their love language, we create a space where love can flourish and where our spouses feel truly seen, valued, and cherished. In imitating God's love, we mirror His divine example, nurturing a love that is transformative, unshakable, and forever enduring."

Let us cherish the lessons we have learned, my dear readers, and embrace the truth that

love is not a mere feeling but a transformative force that can weather any storm. May Mignon McLaughlin's wisdom guide us, falling in love with our spouse again and again, and may the words of 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 serve as a compass, reminding us of the selfless and enduring love we are called to embody. We should seek true love from our Father above who gives us a framework on how we ought to be loved and to love. Through that we can work on self-awareness and share love that is sincere.

As we continue to explore how we can express love towards our spouses, I challenge you today to take a moment and find a special way to express your love and appreciation to your spouse. You can write a heartfelt letter, plan a surprise date night, or simply spend quality time together, cherishing each other's presence. Take the time to understand and practice their love language. Reflect on the love you share and consider how you can nurture it further. Share your experiences with others and

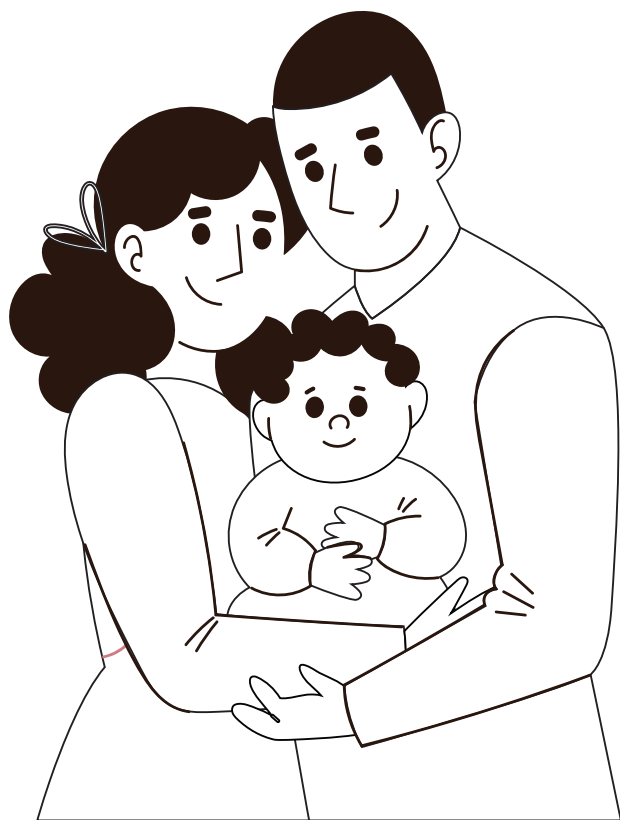
encourage them to do the same. Together, let's fortify the bonds of love within our marriages and inspire others to do likewise.

In the chapters to come, we will explore further insights and stories that illuminate the tapestry of love, woven through the threads of our lives.

"Through the love that helps us produce offspring that bring joy and happiness in our lives. We can learn to love them even though they may not turn out as expected."

CHAPTER FOUR

Love For Our Children



Love For Our Children

"A mother's love for her child is like nothing else in the world. It knows no law, no pity, it dares all things and crushes down remorselessly all that stands in its path." - Agatha Christie

Proverbs 22:6 - "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old, he will not depart from it."

Mark 10:13-14 - "And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the children come to me; do

*not hinder them, for to such
belongs the kingdom of God."*

*Psalm 127:3 - "Behold, children
are a heritage from the Lord,
the fruit of the womb a
reward."*

Whoever says that love is only reserved for romantic relationships has clearly never experienced the overwhelming love that fills your heart when you hold your child for the first time. This indescribable feeling is something I had the privilege of experiencing not once, but three times, when I gave birth to my children. Each time was a unique and awe-inspiring moment that etched itself into the core of my being. In the depths of a mother's heart lies a love that knows no boundaries, no limits, and no conditions. It is a love that defies reason, surpasses understanding, and dares to conquer all obstacles.

The journey of love and motherhood has served/given me profound lessons that I continually learn through the lives of my children, especially my daughter who had special needs. Many parents with special needs children abandon or hide them. This can vary greatly depending on the country, cultural context, and individual circumstances. Child abandonment and concealment are complex issues influenced by various factors such as social norms, support systems, access to resources, and awareness about disabilities.

It is crucial that awareness, understanding, and support for families with children who have special needs be prioritized to prevent such situations and ensure the well-being of all children. Children are a gift from God. Every child is a unique gift entrusted to us, a treasure from above. Psalm 127:3 reminds us that children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. They come into our lives with their own individuality, strengths, and weaknesses. As parents, it is our sacred duty to embrace their uniqueness,

nurture their potential, and love them unconditionally, flaws and all.

Unconditional love means loving our children without limitations or expectations. It means accepting them for who they are, celebrating their victories, and supporting them through their struggles. Just as Jesus welcomed the children with open arms in Mark 10:13-14, we are called to create an environment of love and acceptance where our children can thrive.

I mentioned earlier that when Gabrielle was born, I was told that she would not reach her potential as a "normal" human being. My love and acceptance for her started when I became pregnant. As a young lady, this was an exciting time for me. However, trouble started when I experienced some pain in my tummy, and the doctor requested a scan to confirm if everything was well. It was then that I was told to terminate my baby due to severe hydrocephalus because the doctor believed that I would struggle accepting her,

(she would not be a child I could embrace.) While I understand the doctor's sentiments, who gives us the right to choose the kind of child we receive? We are all human, regardless of our deformities or differences. We all have a right to life, as it is only God who gives us life. Although this may be a controversial topic with no easy answers, I was in love. That was my baby about which they were talking. How could I even consider an abortion? She deserved to live and choose her own path in life.

I firmly believe that the love I shared with Gabrielle helped her thrive. Despite the threats of miscarriage and false labors, she made it to eight months in her gestation period. She achieved milestones such as sitting on her own at three months, crawling at seven months, and walking at two years. She even began talking at nine months, defying our expectations. She embraced coloring, singing, and dancing. She blossomed from the "vegetable" that the doctor said she would be. She made it! But it was no easy journey. We faced struggles,

spent countless nights in hospitals, experienced rejection from schools, and endured the piercing stares of strangers. Training her in basic skills like using the toilet was challenging, and the occupational therapy was intense. However, amidst it all, I learned the true meaning of love. I became a mother who gave her all, a mother who never gave up.

Despite the hardships, the love I poured into Gabrielle's life made a significant difference. It taught me that love is not limited by circumstances or expectations. *Love is a powerful force that can overcome obstacles and transform lives.* Through my daughter's journey, I realized that love knows no bounds. It defies societal norms, breaks down barriers, and challenges us to embrace the beauty and uniqueness of every individual.

In a world that often focuses on superficial appearances and labels, Gabrielle taught me that love is the key to acceptance, growth,

and fulfillment. It is through love that we can help our children, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, reach their full potential and lead meaningful lives. *Love is what enables us to see beyond the surface and appreciate the true essence of a person.*

In the journey of parenthood, we have the privilege and responsibility to train up our children in the way they should go, as mentioned in Proverbs 22:6. This training goes beyond providing for their physical needs; it extends to shaping their character, instilling values, and guiding them towards a fulfilling and purposeful life. It is through our words, actions, and example that we can teach them compassion, kindness, integrity, and resilience.

However, unconditional love does not mean turning a blind eye to their mistakes or indulging their every desire. It means setting boundaries, teaching them responsibility, and helping them understand the consequences of their choices. It is a delicate

balance between firmness and grace, discipline and understanding.

In the face of their flaws and imperfections, we must remember that our love has the power to transform their lives. It is in those moments when they stumble and fall, when they face disappointments or make mistakes, that they need our unwavering support and belief in their ability to rise again.

We must create a safe and nurturing space where our children can freely express themselves, knowing they will be loved and accepted. It is through open communication, active listening, and genuine interest in their thoughts and feelings that we can build trust and deepen our bond.

Unconditional love also means being present in their lives. In a busy world filled with distractions, we must make a conscious effort to prioritize quality time with our children. It is in those precious moments of shared experiences, laughter, and conversations that

we create lasting memories and strengthen the ties that bind us.

As parents, we are not perfect, and we will make mistakes along the way. However, it is through humility and vulnerability that we can model the beauty of forgiveness and grace. When we acknowledge our own shortcomings, apologize when necessary, and demonstrate a willingness to grow, we teach our children the value of humility, empathy, and resilience.

In the chapters of our own stories as parents, we are given the incredible opportunity to write a narrative of love, acceptance, and growth. Our journey is not without challenges, but it is through these challenges that we discover the depths of our love and the resilience of our spirits.

Unconditional love weaves a thread that binds us to our children. It is a love that surpasses all boundaries, a love that embraces their flaws and imperfections, and

a love that nurtures their spirits to reach their fullest potential.

Let us remember the words of Agatha Christie: "A mother's love for her child is like nothing else in the world." It knows no law, no pity, it dares all things and crushes down remorselessly all that stands in its path. May we embody this love, guided by the wisdom of Proverbs 22:6, Mark 10:13-14, and Psalm 127:3.

Through parenthood, let us strive to express unconditional love to our children, creating a sanctuary of love, acceptance, and growth. Let our love be a beacon that illuminates their path, a shelter that provides comfort and security, and a guiding force that empowers them to embrace their unique selves and fulfill their God-given potential. In this lies a legacy that will endure for generations to come. With open hearts and arms, let us cherish the gift of parenthood and embrace the transformative power of unconditional love.

In a world that often focuses on superficial appearances and labels, Gabrielle taught me that love is the key to acceptance, growth, and fulfillment. By doing so we can help our children, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, reach their full potential and lead meaningful lives.

“Love is a profound force that allows us to see beyond the surface and truly appreciate the essence of each individual.”

In my journey as a mother, this love has allowed me to embrace and cherish each of my children in their unique and special ways. While this book primarily focuses on Gabrielle's story, I have also come to understand the importance of loving my son, Jedi, as an individual who carries the weight of grief and loss at such a young age. He has learned to protect his sister, only to lose her and face the fear of detachment. My love for Jedi is a constant reminder to nurture his

tender heart and provide reassurance that he is loved and valued.

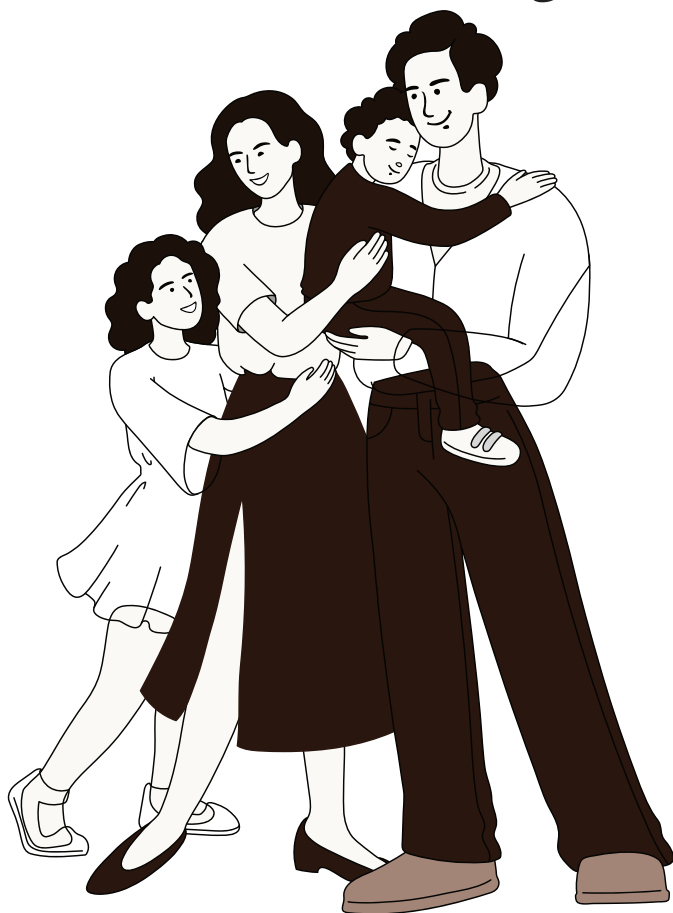
Furthermore, my love extends to my youngest child, Hada, who holds a special place in my heart. While I cannot replace the loss I have experienced, Hada brings a sense of joy and restoration into my life. She is a blessing, a precious gift bestowed upon me by God, and my love for her is rooted in gratitude and the miracle of motherhood. Through the challenges and joys of raising my children, love remains the driving force that sustains me and propels me forward. It is a love that knows no bounds and is ever-present in every aspect of my journey as a mother.

As we journey through the joys and challenges of parenthood, I challenge you to express unconditional love to your children in a special way. Take a moment to create lasting memories by going on trips to other countries or even other towns, visiting the mall together, exploring funfairs or carnivals

with your children. I thrive in taking my children to places and share memorable experiences that will last for ages. Share an open conversation to get to know what your children love or understand them on a deeper level. Simply hold them close, savor cuddles with your children, or watch a family movie together. Embrace the transformative power of unconditional love and cherish the gift of parenthood.

CHAPTER FIVE

Love For Our Family



Love For Our Family

Embracing Unbreakable Bonds

"In family life, love is the oil that eases friction, the cement that binds closer together, and the music that brings harmony." - Friedrich Nietzsche

"And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." - Colossians 3:14

"Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor." - Romans 12:10

Family ties are woven with threads of love,

*Connecting hearts, like stars
shining above.*

*Through every season, we
stand strong and true,*

*Embracing the bond that
forever holds me and you.*

Family is a precious gift that blesses our lives. Within the realm of family, love flourishes, creating a haven of support, understanding, and unwavering affection. Friedrich Nietzsche once said, "In family life, love is the oil that eases friction, the cement that binds closer together, and the music that brings harmony." These words beautifully capture the essence of love within the family unit. In this chapter, we delve into the significance of love for our family, intertwining it with the continued journey of my personal story.

Family ties are like intricate threads that weave the tapestry of our lives. They illuminate our journey, providing guidance and warmth, transcending bloodlines to

reach the core of our beings. This love endures through every season, standing strong and true. Embracing these unbreakable bonds, we discover the power of familial love and its profound impact on our lives.

My family has played a significant role in shaping who I am today. After the passing of our parents in 2002, we have striven to live together in harmony and unity. Even before their passing, it was our family tradition to gather during holiday periods without fail. This tradition continues to this day, a testament to the blessing we share as a family. Conflicts related to wealth division, which often plague other families after the loss of parents, have never strained our bonds. As Colossians 3:14 reminds us, it is love that binds everything together in perfect harmony.

The loss of parents can be a transformative event that brings emotional, psychological, and logistical challenges to family members.

Sibling conflicts may arise due to disagreements over inheritance, decision-making responsibilities, and differing expectations. Estate planning disputes, financial matters, and sentimental belongings can further intensify tensions.

Communication breakdown is common after the loss of parents, hindering effective expression of needs and concerns. Misunderstandings and unresolved issues can strain relationships, while shifts in roles and responsibilities within the family can lead to power struggles and disagreements. Each family member may grieve in their own way, creating potential divides. Differences in coping mechanisms and feeling misunderstood can further strain relationships. The absence of parents also leaves a void in emotional support and guidance, causing family members to feel lost, isolated, or disconnected.

Not all families face these challenges, and some are able to navigate the grieving

process while maintaining strong bonds. Seeking professional counseling or mediation services, fostering open and honest communication, practicing empathy, and accommodating different perspectives can significantly help families overcome these difficulties. Through our own experiences, we discovered that love binds us. Though we may not always see eye to eye, our active WhatsApp group, joint projects, prayer meetings, meetups, and the agreement to share gifts like Secret Santa, speak volumes about the love we share as a family.

Love acts as the foundation of unity and harmony within the family. It eases friction, enables us to navigate challenges and conflicts, and fosters an environment of understanding and acceptance. As Romans 12:10 teaches, we learn to outdo one another in showing honor, uplifting, and cherishing each family member. Through the transformative power of love, we cultivate unity, harmony, and a deep sense of

belonging, drawing inspiration from our united family.

During difficult times, such as when my daughter Gabrielle was hospitalized as an infant and even during her loss, we experienced the warmth of family. My siblings never failed to visit us in the hospital, providing support amid sickness. Even after Gabrielle's passing, our unity allowed us to raise enough resources for her funeral within a week. Though we are not perfect and have had moments of not speaking to one another, we always find a way to reconcile. This is the essence of love. God calls us to share His love with one another, even with the complexities that can arise among family members.

Cherishing every moment spent with our family, we come to understand that love is not merely a feeling but an action. Small gestures, laughter, and shared memories express the depth of our love. These moments become treasured memories that

transcend generations, building a heritage of love within our families.

Through our family gatherings, we have created lasting memories together. Traveling as a united entourage to our ancestral home during festive seasons and exchanging gifts are traditions that continue to bind us. These gifts and memories are passed down to our children, fostering a culture of love not only among siblings but also with extended family members.

As we delve into the significance of love for our family, let us also explore practical ways to express this love even to family members with whom we may not always see eye to eye. Here are some challenges for you to consider:

Open and Honest Communication: Challenge yourself to initiate open and honest conversations with family members, especially those with whom you've had disagreements. Give them a call, send a

WhatsApp message, and listen actively to their perspectives, express your feelings calmly, and seek common ground by going on coffee dates or in open environments. Aim to understand rather than convince.

Acts of Kindness: Make it a practice to perform random acts of kindness within your family. Help with chores, prepare a meal, or help without expecting anything in return. Small gestures of kindness can bridge gaps and demonstrate your love.

Quality Time: Dedicate quality time to spend with family members individually. Plan activities that align with their interests or simply enjoy one-on-one conversations. This focused attention can strengthen your bonds and foster deeper connections.

Family Gatherings: Arrange family gatherings or reunions, ranging from intimate dinners and picnics to larger celebrations. These occasions offer chances for reconnection and the creation of shared

experiences. This has been a cherished tradition in our family, particularly during festive seasons.

Letters of Appreciation: Write heartfelt letters expressing your love and appreciation for family members. Highlight their positive qualities and the unique role they play in your life. Personalized letters can have a lasting impact.

Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Challenge yourself to forgive past grievances and seek reconciliation with family members you may have distanced yourself from. Forgiveness can be a powerful tool in healing wounds and rebuilding relationships.

Support and Encouragement: Offer support and encouragement to family members pursuing their goals and dreams. Celebrate their achievements and provide a listening ear during challenging times.

Celebrate Milestones: Acknowledge and celebrate significant milestones in each other's lives, whether it's birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, or career achievements. These moments are opportunities to show your love and pride. In our family, we especially organize a lasting gift for a person who has reached major milestones like 40 years or 50 years of age and during graduations and other ceremonies. Some of the ways we can celebrate milestone include: -

- ❖ **Personalized Gifts:** Choose personalized gifts that hold sentimental value. These could include custom-made items, engraved jewelry, or photo albums filled with cherished memories.
- ❖ **Surprise Parties:** Organize surprise parties or gatherings to celebrate these milestones. Invite close friends and family members to join in the festivities and create lasting memories together.
- ❖ **Memory Book:** Create a memory book or scrapbook that highlights the person's journey and achievements leading up to this milestone. Include photographs,

anecdotes, and well-wishes from loved ones.

- ❖ **Special Tributes:** Prepare heartfelt speeches or tributes that express your love, admiration, and pride during these celebrations. Share stories and anecdotes that reflect the person's character and accomplishments.
- ❖ **Weekend Getaways:** Consider planning a weekend getaway or a family vacation to mark these significant milestones. It provides an opportunity for quality time and bonding while celebrating together.
- ❖ **Keepsake Gifts:** Select keepsake gifts that family members can treasure for years to come. These could include heirlooms, collectibles, or items with sentimental value.
- ❖ **Themed Celebrations:** Plan themed parties or events based on the person's interests, hobbies, or passions. It adds a personalized touch to the celebration.
- ❖ **Words of Affirmation:** Alongside any physical gifts or celebrations, don't forget the power of words. Express your love, pride, and best wishes through heartfelt letters or speeches.

- ❖ **Charitable Acts:** In addition to celebrating within your family, consider incorporating an element of giving back. Make a charitable donation or engage in volunteer work as a family to celebrate these occasions.
- ❖ **Traditional Rituals:** If your family has specific cultural or traditional rituals associated with milestone celebrations, ensure they are honored and passed down to the next generation.

Respect Differences: Recognize that family members may have different beliefs, values, and lifestyles. Challenge yourself to respect these differences, even if you don't fully understand or agree with them.

Seek Professional Help: If family conflicts persist and seem insurmountable, consider seeking professional help through family counseling or mediation. A trained therapist can provide guidance and facilitate productive discussions.

Remember that expressing love within your family is an ongoing journey. It requires patience, understanding, and a willingness to grow together. By embracing these challenges and practical ways to express love, you can nurture and strengthen the bonds that unite your family, even in the face of differences and disagreements. Love truly has the power to heal and transform, both individually and collectively.

Love for our family reflects the profound impact of familial love on our lives. As we embrace the threads of love that connect us, we experience unity, harmony, and a deep sense of belonging. Guided by the wisdom of Friedrich Nietzsche and the biblical verses from Colossians 3:14 and Romans 12:10, we recognize the transformative power of love within our families. *Let us continue to nurture and cherish the unbreakable bonds of love, knowing that family is a precious gift deserving of our utmost care and devotion.*

CHAPTER SIX

Love For Our Parents



Love For Our Parents

*Ephesians 6:1-3 (NIV):
"Children, obey your parents in
the Lord, for this is right.
'Honor your father and
mother'—which is the first
commandment with a
promise—'so that it may go
well with you and that you
may enjoy long life on the
earth.'"*

*Proverbs 23:22 (NIV): "Listen
to your father, who gave you
life, and do not despise your
mother when she is old."*

*Colossians 3:20 (NIV):
"Children, obey your parents in
everything, for this pleases the
Lord."*

Exodus 20:12 (NIV): "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you."

A parent's love is whole no matter how many times divided." - Robert Brault

In the hustle and bustle of our daily lives, it's all too easy to take our parents for granted. However, the love and honor we show them can be a transformative force, not just within our families but also in our personal lives. It all begins with a heart full of love and respect.

Personally, I never knew the significance of honor when I was growing up, and I believe I may not have actively instilled it in my children. As we embark on this journey to explore what it truly means to love our parents, I, too, anticipate transformation.

The verses from the Bible mentioned above resonate deeply when it comes to the love we hold for our parents. They not only teach us to honor and obey our parents but also promise blessings and a long, fulfilling life when we do so.

The quote from Robert Brault also beautifully encapsulates the enduring and unwavering nature of a parent's love. Regardless of the challenges or changes life may bring, a parent's love remains steadfast and complete. It's a love deserving of our deepest respect and honor. We can fully embrace this love through honor and respect for our parents. This instruction comes to us from God and is one of His commands, accompanied by a promise of a long and blessed life.

In this chapter, we will delve into the profound connection between love and honor for our parents. Some of you might wonder if this chapter resonates with those who may not have birth parents. I lost my

parents at a young age; I therefore resonate with you. A parent may not necessarily be a biological one but rather the person who cared for you during your formative years. We will draw inspiration from the timeless wisdom of the Scriptures and the insights from "The Principle and Practice of Honor" by Moses Mukisa, a book that guides us to honor as an act of love, respect, and recognition of worth.

"The Principle and Practice of Honor" is a transformative book, revealing honor as more than a mere social nicety—it is a fundamental principle that influences every aspect of our lives. Moses Mukisa reminds us that honor is deeply rooted in God's nature, and we are called to emulate Him in our daily lives. By honoring our parents, we not only obey God's commandments but also express our love for them through our actions and attitudes.

When we honor our parents, we unlock a plethora of benefits, including stronger

relationships, increased productivity, and a contribution to a more harmonious society. As we honor our parents, we create a nurturing environment that fosters growth and success.

By incorporating the principles of honor into our daily lives, we begin by acknowledging and affirming the worth of our parents. We create a positive environment that nurtures growth and success by expressing gratitude, giving credit where it is due, and demonstrating acts of love and kindness.

Throughout this chapter, I will intertwine the teachings of the Bible with insights from Moses Mukisa's book to provide concrete, real-life examples, and practical applications. I will challenge all of us to reconsider our approach to our parents and encourage readers to embrace a life marked by honor, respect, and boundless love.

Ultimately, our goal is to imitate God's nature by acting with integrity and treating

our parents with the utmost respect, humility, and unwavering love. In doing so, we not only fulfill a sacred duty but also nurture stronger relationships, enhance our own well-being, and contribute to a more harmonious society. Our hearts brim with love, and that love extends to those who gave us life—the parents we honor with all our hearts.

As suggested by Moses Mukisa in his book, there are various ways to honor our parents. One significant way is through material support, including sending them money or gifts as often as we can. In the pages that follow, I will explore the multitude of ways in which we can honor and love our parents. I have come to appreciate the importance of this practice, extending it not only to my biological parents but also to those I consider my spiritual parents, guardians, and even my in-laws. This shift has significantly enriched our relationships with one another even flawed ones.

Valuing Their Sacrifices: Our parents have made countless sacrifices to provide us with the best possible life. They have toiled, worried, and set aside their own desires for our sake. To honor them is to acknowledge these sacrifices and express our heartfelt gratitude. As we examine the story of Abraham and Isaac in Genesis 22, we witness Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son, highlighting the profound depth of a parent's love and sacrifice.

Active Listening: At times, what parents desire most is a listening ear. Proverbs 23:22 reminds us to "listen to your father, who gave you life." Listening attentively to their stories, advice, and concerns is a beautiful way to demonstrate love. In the story of the young prophet Samuel found in 1 Samuel 3, we observe Samuel's attentive listening to God's call, which was initially mistaken for the voice of his mentor, Eli. Samuel's obedience to Eli's guidance underscores the importance of listening attentively, even when we may initially misinterpret the speaker's intent.

Acts of Service: Small acts of kindness can go a long way in expressing our love. Whether it involves helping with chores, running errands, or simply spending quality time together, these actions reflect our love and appreciation. We find a poignant example of service and humility in Jesus washing His disciples' feet, as recounted in John 13:1-17.

Embracing Forgiveness and Understanding: In any parent-child relationship, conflicts and misunderstandings are bound to arise. Yet, it is vital that we embrace forgiveness and understanding in our hearts. The Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) poignantly illustrates this principle. The parable tells the story of a wayward son who, upon returning home, openly confessed his mistakes to his father, expecting anger and rejection. Instead, his father welcomed him with open arms and celebrated his return, exemplifying boundless forgiveness and understanding. This story reminds us of God's willingness to

forgive and embrace us when we repent. I believe we have often embraced forgiveness in our family.

Recognizing Imperfections: No parent is perfect, and acknowledging their imperfections with a compassionate heart is a sign of maturity. We must remember that they, too, are human and may have made mistakes along the way. The story of Noah in Genesis 9:20-23 highlights a moment of imperfection in a righteous figure's life. After the great flood, Noah planted a vineyard and became intoxicated from the wine he had made. In his inebriated state he lay naked on the floor, and his son Ham saw him. Rather than respecting Noah's dignity, Ham mocked him. In contrast, Noah's other sons, Shem, and Japheth, responded differently. They covered their father's nakedness without looking at him, therefore preserving his dignity. When Noah realized what had happened, he did not curse Ham but instead prophesied blessings for Shem and Japheth. This story shows the importance of

responding to a parent's flaws with respect and understanding, rather than scorn.

Embracing Open Communication: Effective communication is key to resolving conflicts and misunderstandings. Engaging in honest conversations with your parents, expressing your feelings, and listening to their perspective fosters understanding and healing. In Exodus 18, Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, observed that Moses was overwhelmed by judging the people's disputes. Jethro offered wise advice, and Moses, recognizing the value of open communication and being receptive to counsel, implemented it. This led to improved communication and problem-solving among the Israelites. The story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-32 also underscores the significance of open communication and reconciliation, as the wayward son openly confessed his mistakes to his father.

Letting Go of Resentment: Clinging to grudges and resentment only stifles the growth of love in our hearts. Forgiveness is a powerful act of love, benefiting both ourselves and our parents. The story of Joseph in Genesis 45 serves as a compelling example of letting go of resentment. Joseph's brothers had sold him into slavery out of jealousy, subjecting him to numerous hardships. However, when Joseph revealed his identity to his brothers, he chose forgiveness over revenge. He told them, "Do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you" (Genesis 45:5). Joseph's forgiveness led to reconciliation and a restored relationship with his family. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus stressed the importance of forgiveness in Matthew 6:14-15. He said, "For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." This teaching underscores the significance of releasing resentment and forgiving others,

including our parents, as an act of love and obedience to God.

As a Legacy of Love to our parents, we recognize that our parents are not just a part of our past but also an integral part of our future. As we honor and love them, we establish a legacy of love that can transcend generations.

Teaching Through Example: When we exemplify love and honor in our relationship with our parents, we set a powerful example for our children. Our children learn from our actions, and when they witness us loving and honoring our parents, they absorb these values. They, too, will cherish and pass on this legacy to their children, creating a cycle of love and respect that enriches our families and the world.

In the New Testament, the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, praising his sincere faith. He also mentioned that this faith first lived in Timothy's grandmother, Lois and in his mother, Eunice (2 Timothy 1:5). Timothy had

the privilege of learning about faith and devotion to God from his mother and grandmother. Their examples served as a strong foundation for his own faith and ministry. In the book of Genesis, Jacob blessed his grandsons, Ephraim, and Manasseh, by laying his hands on them (Genesis 48:14). By intentionally crossing his hands, he passed on the greater blessing to the younger Ephraim and explained that Ephraim would become greater than Manasseh (Genesis 48:17-19). This act of blessing and favoritism was intended to teach future generations about the importance of honoring family and recognizing the value of each generation.

Staying Connected: As our parents age, staying connected becomes increasingly vital. Making the effort to visit them, calling, and spending quality time together is crucial. These moments are precious. Again, the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32), illustrates the importance of staying connected with family. Despite the younger son's waywardness and poor choices, the

father continued to hope for his return. When the son finally came to his senses and returned home, the father welcomed him with open arms, demonstrating the power of forgiveness and the enduring connection between family members.

In Ruth 1:16-17, after Naomi's husband and sons died, she encouraged Ruth to return to her own family. However, Ruth remained devoted to Naomi, saying, "Where you go, I will go, and where you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God." Ruth's commitment to staying connected with Naomi was a powerful testament to the bonds and loyalty within family.

Prayer and Blessings: Just as the biblical verses suggest, honoring our parents brings blessings. Lifting our parents up in prayer, seeking God's guidance, protection, and blessings upon their lives, is significant. Drawing inspiration from the biblical story of Jacob and Isaac in Genesis 27, we witness the power of blessings resulting from honoring parents. Jacob honored his father,

Isaac, by preparing a meal as his father had requested. In return, Isaac blessed Jacob, saying, "May God give you heavens' dew and earth's richness – an abundance of grain and new wine" (Genesis 27:28, NIV). The blessings that flowed from this act of honor enriched Jacob's life and those of his future generations.

Expressing love to our parents is not merely a sentiment but an ongoing commitment. It is about demonstrating our love through thoughtful actions that honor, support, and appreciate them. Here is your challenge: Over the next month, engage in at least three of the following practical ways to show your love for your parents:

Write a Heartfelt Letter: Take some time to write a sincere letter to your parents expressing your gratitude for their love and sacrifices. Share specific memories and reasons why you love and appreciate them. Present it as a surprise or read it aloud to them during a family gathering.

Quality Time: Dedicate uninterrupted quality time to spend with your parents. Whether it is a day trip, a weekend together, or just regular dinner dates, make an effort to be fully present and engaged in their company.

Acts of Service: Offer to help with tasks or chores that they find challenging. It could be household chores, yard work, or even helping them with technology-related issues. Your assistance shows you care about making their lives easier.

Active Listening: Initiate conversations with your parents where you actively listen to their stories, concerns, and advice. Show empathy and understanding and make them feel heard and valued.

Cook a Meal: Prepare a special meal or treat for your parents. Whether it is their favorite dish or a new recipe you've mastered,

cooking for them is a loving gesture that speaks volumes.

Plan a Surprise: Organize a surprise celebration for them, whether it's a small family gathering or a special event. Marking important milestones or just celebrating them for being who they are can be a wonderful expression of love.

Gifts and Tokens of Appreciation: Select thoughtful gifts that resonate with your parents' interests and preferences. It could be something they have mentioned wanting or a sentimental gift that holds meaning. Honor them with monthly shopping and money for other expenditure.

Attend to Their Needs: If your parents have specific needs, such as medical appointments or errands to run, offer to assist them in managing these tasks. Showing that you care about their well-being is a profound act of love.

Share Your Life: Keep them involved in your life by sharing your experiences, achievements, and challenges. Share photos, updates, and stories, whether through phone calls, messages, or regular visits.

Prayer and Blessings: Dedicate time for prayer and blessings for your parents. Ask for God's guidance, protection, and blessings upon their lives.

The love you express doesn't have to be extravagant; it's the thought, care, and consistency that matter most. As you engage in these actions, reflect on the positive impact they have on your relationship with your parents and how they reciprocate the love and appreciation. By practicing these acts of love, you're not only strengthening your bond with your parents but also nurturing a legacy of love that can inspire future generations.

In closing, the love we hold for our parents mirrors the love God has for us. It is a love that carries both privilege and weight, marked by profound responsibilities. As we honor our parents with hearts overflowing with love, we fulfill a divine commandment while nurturing deeper, more meaningful relationships within our families. Our journey of love is ongoing, and our hearts forever resonate with the love we share with those who have bestowed upon us the gift of life—our parents. Just as God's love endures for us, so too does our love and honor endure for our parents, creating an eternal bond of love, respect, and blessings.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Love For The Neighbors



Love For the Neighbors

Mark 12:31 - "The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

1 John 4:7-8 - "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."

In the depths of our hearts, we find a divine commandment that echoes through the ages, a call to love our neighbors as ourselves. These words, spoken by Jesus in Mark 12:31, resonate with profound wisdom and guidance. They remind us that love is the cornerstone of our relationships, the

foundation upon which true community is built. As we delve into the significance of this commandment, let us explore how love for our neighbors can transform lives and bring us closer to the essence of God's love.

The apostle John, in 1 John 4:7-8, urges us to lean into this commandment with open hearts and arms. He reminds us that love is not merely an abstract concept but a tangible expression of our connection with God. For it is from God that love emanates, and it is through love that we are born anew and experience a deep knowing of the divine. Love, therefore, becomes the essence of our being, a testament to our relationship with God.

When we truly love our neighbors, we extend a helping hand without hesitation or judgment. We recognize that our acts of kindness have the power to uplift, heal, and transform lives. Love compels us to step beyond our comfort zones and build bridges instead of walls. It encourages us to embrace

differences, understanding that diversity enriches our communities and brings us closer together.

In a world marred by division and strife, love calls us to answer the compassionate yearnings of our souls. It inspires us to seek unity and understanding, to embrace our shared humanity. Love teaches us that no matter the geographical or cultural boundaries that separate us, kindness and compassion know no borders. It is through acts of love that we foster genuine connections, creating a global family, rooted in mutual respect and care.

I can confidently say that I have experienced this love from my neighbors, especially during my time of loss. People from both near and far showed us their kindness through financial support, emotional comfort, and their presence. Gabrielle's memorial service and funeral were attended by individuals from all walks of life, making it a truly remarkable and prestigious event. It

is important to note that a neighbor does not necessarily have to be someone who lives in proximity, but rather someone who extends care and support, regardless of distance.

Luke 10:25-37:

On one occasion, an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

He answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

"You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

In reply, Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his

clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

The parable of the Good Samaritan teaches us about the importance of showing compassion and love to those in need, regardless of their background or circumstances. It highlights the contrast between religious leaders who neglected the wounded man and a Samaritan, who went above and beyond to help him.

In the parable, a man is attacked and left half dead by robbers. As he lay there, a priest and a Levite—both religious figures—happened to pass by. Despite their knowledge of the law and their supposed devotion to God, they choose to ignore the man's suffering. However, a Samaritan, from a tribe that was despised by the Jews at that time, saw the man and was moved with compassion. He stopped, tended to the man's wounds, and took him to an inn to receive further care. The Samaritan even promised to cover any additional expenses upon his return. When Jesus asked the expert in the law “who acted as a true neighbor?” the answer became evident—the Samaritan. It was the one who showed mercy, kindness, and selflessness.

A HEART FULL OF LOVE

Jesus then instructed the expert to go and do likewise—to embody the love and compassion demonstrated by the Samaritan.

This parable reminds us that being a neighbor goes beyond geographical proximity or shared beliefs. It calls us to see the needs of others and respond with empathy and action. It challenges us to break down barriers of prejudice and extend a helping hand to those who are hurting, marginalized, or in need.

The Good Samaritan parable teaches us that love knows no boundaries and that we are called to love and care for all people, irrespective of their backgrounds, social status, or differences. It is a timeless reminder to prioritize compassion and selflessness in our interactions with others, embodying the transformative power of love in our daily lives.

When we love our neighbors, near or far, kindness becomes our guiding star. We

approach each interaction with empathy and grace, seeking to understand and support one another. Love dissolves prejudice and biases, allowing us to see the inherent worth and dignity in every person we encounter. It leads us to extend grace and forgiveness, recognizing that we are all imperfect beings in need of compassion and understanding.

In the unity of hearts bound by love, true harmony, and peace manifest. Love for our neighbors has the power to transform communities, heal wounds, and build a world that reflects the divine attributes of mercy, justice, and compassion. It is through love that we overcome barriers and find common ground, fostering an environment where everyone's voice is heard, valued, and respected.

As we embark on the journey of loving our neighbors as ourselves, let us remember that love is not a passive sentiment but an active force that requires our intentional engagement. It calls us to embody love in

our thoughts, words, and actions, creating a ripple effect that reaches far beyond our immediate sphere. It challenges us to examine our biases, confront our prejudices, and cultivate a spirit of inclusivity and acceptance.

Dear friends, let us heed the call to love one another, for in doing so, we honor the greatest commandment. Let us extend the hand of friendship, embrace the diversity that surrounds us, and strive to build a world where love reigns supreme. For in loving our neighbors, we find the true essence of our humanity, and we become instruments of God's boundless love, grace, and peace.

Loving our neighbors as ourselves is a noble endeavor that requires genuine effort and dedication. It's about turning love into a verb, an action that uplifts, heals, and builds connections. Here is my challenge to you.

Cultivate Awareness: Begin by opening your heart and mind to the needs of those around you. Take time to observe the people in your community, workplace, or social circles. Recognize that your neighbors can be anyone in your sphere of influence, not just those living next door.

Reach Out with Kindness: Identify at least three individuals or groups whom you can show kindness and support. This could include a colleague facing a tough time, a neighbor in need, or a community organization seeking volunteers.

Act with Love: Select from the following practical actions to express love for your neighbors:

- ❖ **Offer a Helping Hand:** Assist with tasks or chores for someone in need.
- ❖ **Listen Actively:** Engage in conversations where you actively listen and show empathy.
- ❖ **Small Acts of Kindness:** Perform random acts of kindness, such as

leaving encouraging notes or small gifts.

- ❖ **Volunteer:** Dedicate your time to a local charity, shelter, or community project.
- ❖ **Cook or Share a Meal:** Prepare a meal for someone who could use a helping hand.
- ❖ **Donate:** Contribute items or resources to a cause or individual in need.

Reflect and Share: After taking these actions, reflect on your experiences. How did these acts of love impact your neighbors and yourself? Consider sharing your experiences with friends or family to inspire them to join the neighborly challenge.

Extend the Ripple Effect: Challenge someone you know—a friend, family member, or colleague—to take on the neighborly challenge as well. Encourage them to embrace love in action and share their journey.

As you embark on this neighborly challenge, remember that every act of love, no matter how small, has the potential to transform lives and build a stronger, more compassionate community. Through these actions, you'll discover the profound joy of loving your neighbors as yourself and, in turn, contributing to a world where love knows no boundaries.

In conclusion, love for our neighbors weaves a vibrant thread, connecting us all in a shared journey of compassion and unity. This may serve as a reminder of the transformative power of love and inspire us to embark on a lifelong pursuit of loving our neighbors as ourselves.

*Love thy neighbor as thyself,
Extend a helping hand,
For in the heart of kindness,
True community will stand.*

In loving our neighbors,

*We build bridges, not walls,
Embracing differences,
And answering compassion's
calls.*

*Love your neighbor, near or far,
Let kindness be your guiding
star,
For in the unity of hearts,
True harmony and peace
impart.*

CHAPTER EIGHT

Love To The Unlovable



Love To The Unlovable

Luke 6:27-28 - "But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you."

Romans 12:20-21 - "On the contrary: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

"Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend." - Martin Luther King Jr.

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that." - Martin Luther King Jr.

In a world filled with divisions and conflicts, the concept of loving the unlovable may seem daunting and even counterintuitive. Yet, as we delve into the depths of compassion and explore the teachings of Luke 6:27-28 and Romans 12:20-21, we begin to understand the transformative power of love that transcends boundaries and touches the lives of those deemed unlovable.

Jesus, in His profound wisdom, instructed His followers to love their enemies, do good to those who hate them, bless those who curse them, and pray for those who mistreat them. These words challenge us to rise above the instincts of retaliation and animosity, and instead respond with

kindness, empathy, and a desire for the well-being of others.

Martin Luther King Jr. beautifully articulated the essence of this love, stating that it is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend. In a world that often operates on a cycle of hatred and vengeance, love has the power to break those chains and foster reconciliation. It is through love that we can overcome the darkness of hate, shining a light that drives out animosity and division.

The path to loving the unlovable is not without challenges. It requires us to confront our own biases, prejudices, and preconceived notions. It demands that we step outside our comfort zones and extend a hand of compassion to those who may have hurt us or hold differing beliefs. It calls us to let go of anger and bitterness, replacing them with acts of goodwill and genuine concern.

Romans 12:20-21 reminds us of the importance of responding to hostility with kindness. It tells us to feed the hungry and give drinks to the thirsty. In doing so we heap burning coals on the heads of our enemies. This is not a call for revenge or punishment, but rather a call to overcome evil with good. By responding to hatred with love, we create opportunities for transformation and redemption, both for ourselves and for those we seek to love.

To love the unlovable requires a change of heart and a commitment to seeing the inherent worth and dignity in every individual. It means embracing the truth that no one is beyond the reach of love and that everyone has the potential for growth and change. It means choosing forgiveness over resentment, compassion over judgment, and understanding over condemnation.

In the realm of love's embrace, we discover a sacred space where grace and mercy

intertwine. It is here that we find the strength to bridge the divide between ourselves and those we consider unlovable. It is here that we realize that love knows no boundaries or limits, and that its power can transcend even the deepest wounds and animosities.

As followers of love and agents of transformation, we need to embark on a journey to love the unlovable. We must extend a hand of reconciliation and understanding, even in the face of hostility. Let us embody the teachings of Jesus and the wisdom of Martin Luther King Jr., knowing that love has the power to heal, unite, and restore.

In moments when love feels difficult to give, let us draw upon the source from which it flows – God's love. It is His love that enables us to live and empowers us to extend love to others, including the unlovable. With divine affection as our guide, we can bridge the divide, offering love with no expectation

and helping the unlovable rediscover their inherent worth and dignity.

For love's capacity knows no end. It has the power to heal, mend, and transform souls. As we embrace the call to love the unlovable, we become conduits of God's love in a world that so desperately needs it. So, let us embark on this journey together, watching as love reclaims the unlovable whole and unites us in compassion and grace. Through this, we find healing and can process grief better by embracing love for those who have hurt us. We, as a family, believe that Gabrielle's loss was caused by neglect from the teacher and the hospital where she was admitted last. When asked to do a postmortem, we declined, choosing to let go and forgive rather than seek legal action.

Loving people whom we may consider as unlovable can indeed be quite challenging. Personally, I often find it difficult to love my enemies. To emulate the teachings of Jesus, I

would like to propose a challenge, which I will call 'The Unconditional Love Challenge.' This challenge is designed to assist us in cultivating such love.

Self-Reflection: Begin by taking time for self-reflection. Consider the individuals or groups in your life whom you may find challenging to love, whether due to past conflicts, differences in beliefs, or personal biases. Identify the reasons behind these challenges and acknowledge any biases or prejudices you may hold.

Identify Acts of Love: Determine specific acts of love and kindness that you can extend to those you perceive as unlovable. These acts should be genuine expressions of care and concern, seeking their well-being without expecting anything in return.

Extend Unconditional Love: Choose at least three individuals or groups from your reflection and commit to extending acts of

unconditional love and kindness towards them. These acts could include:

- ❖ Offering a sincere apology or forgiveness, if applicable.
- ❖ Engaging in empathetic conversations to understand their perspective.
- ❖ Performing acts of service or assistance to alleviate their burdens.
- ❖ Demonstrating patience and grace in your interactions.

Record Your Experiences: Document your experiences as you engage in acts of love and kindness. Reflect on how these actions impact both the recipients and yourself. Consider any changes in your perceptions or feelings towards those you find challenging to love.

Share Your Journey: Share your experiences and insights with friends, family, or a support group. Encourage them to embark on their own journeys of unconditional love, fostering a culture of compassion and understanding.

Continuous Growth: Recognize that the journey of loving the unlovable is ongoing. Continue to challenge your biases, confront your prejudices, and cultivate a spirit of love and empathy. Embrace this transformative journey with an open heart, knowing that love has the power to heal, mend, and unite even the most divided of souls.

As we conclude 'The Unconditional Love Challenge,' let us carry forward the lessons learned, living as beacons of love and agents of transformation in a world in desperate need of compassion and understanding. Together, we can extend the boundaries of love, making the seemingly unlovable, lovable once more.

*In the realm of love's embrace,
Where grace and mercy intertwine,
There lies a sacred space,
For the unlovable to find.*

*For love is not selective,
It knows no boundaries or bounds,
It seeks the lost and neglected,
And mends what once was torn.*

*When faced with hearts that seem estranged,
And souls that bear resentment's weight,
Love's power is never changed,
It opens doors, it mends the gate.
For in the unlovable's weary eyes,
There lies a spark, a glimmer of hope,
Love's healing touch can revitalize,
And help them find a way to cope.*

*So let us rise above disdain,
And nurture love's relentless flame,
For in loving the unlovable, we gain,
A testament to love's transformative aim.*

*In moments when love feels hard to give,
Remember the source from which it flows,
For God's love enables us to live,
A love that reaches the unlovable, it knows.*

*In the depth of divine affection,
We find the strength to bridge the divide,
To offer love with no expectation,
And help the unlovable feel alive.*

*For love's capacity knows no end,
It heals, it mends, it mends the soul,
So let us be agents of love, my friend,
And watch as love reclaims the unlovable
whole.*

CHAPTER NINE



**LOVE
CONQUERS
♥ ALL ♥**

Love Conquers All..

1 Corinthians 13:4-8a - "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails."

"Love conquers all things; let us too surrender to love." - Virgil

In human existence, where emotions collide and hearts intertwine, there exists a force so powerful, so profound, that it has the ability to conquer all that stands in its way. This

force is love. Love, as described in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a, is patient and kind. It does not envy, boast, or dishonor others. It is not self-seeking or easily angered. Love keeps no record of wrongs and does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. Love always protects, trusts, hopes, and perseveres. Love never fails.

From the beginning of time, love has been a driving force that transcends boundaries and defies limitations. It is a force that knows no prejudice, no discrimination, and no bias. Love does not discriminate based on race, gender, or social status. It does not withhold its grace from those deemed unworthy. Love does not differentiate between the deserving and the undeserving. Instead, it encompasses all, embracing every soul with open arms.

When the world is shrouded in darkness, when hatred and division threaten to tear us apart, it is love that rises above the turmoil and offers a glimmer of hope. Love breaks down walls and unites fractured hearts. It

holds the power to heal wounds, mend broken spirits, and transform lives. Love is the light that pierces through the darkest nights, illuminating the path towards compassion, understanding, and reconciliation.

In a world plagued by strife and discord, love stands as an unwavering beacon of unity and peace. It is through love that we find the strength to forgive, to let go of grudges, and to extend a hand of friendship to our fellow human beings. Love conquers the bitterness that festers within, replacing it with empathy and forgiveness. It teaches us to look beyond the flaws and imperfections, recognizing the inherent worth and dignity of every individual.

When we choose to surrender to love, we embark on a transformative journey. Love challenges us to rise above our own self-interests and to consider the well-being of others. It calls us to act with kindness, compassion, and generosity. Love compels

us to use our words and actions to uplift, encourage, and inspire. Love reminds us that the greatest fulfillment lies not in acquiring wealth or power but in selflessly serving others.

Love conquers the divisions that plague our world. It brings people together, bridging the gaps between cultures, religions, and beliefs. Love fosters understanding, promoting dialogue and empathy. It invites us to celebrate diversity, recognizing that our differences are not barriers but opportunities for growth and connection. Love empowers us to build inclusive communities, where every voice is heard, valued, and respected.

Love's triumph is not measured by worldly achievements or temporal victories. It is found in the small, everyday acts of kindness and compassion that ripple through society, leaving an indelible mark on the hearts and souls of those touched by its grace. Love conquers all when it permeates our thoughts, words, and deeds, guiding us towards a

world filled with harmony, justice, and unconditional acceptance.

As we navigate the complexities of life, let us surrender to love's transformative power. Let us be vessels of love, spreading its warmth and radiance wherever we go. In a world that often seems divided and broken, let us be the bearers of love, healing wounds and mending hearts. For it is in love's embrace that we find our true purpose and experience the profound joy of making a difference in the lives of others.

In conclusion, love conquers it all. It has the power to transform hearts, bridge divides, and bring forth a world filled with compassion and unity. Let us embrace love's calling, living each day as a testament to its boundless grace. For in the realm where love resides, barriers crumble, wounds are healed, and humanity discovers its truest potential. Love conquers all.

Let us recognize that love is the greatest gift we can give and receive, and by embracing it fully, we can make a lasting difference in the lives of those around us. Join me on this heartfelt exploration of love's transformative power and let us remember that the ultimate source of this love is found in Jesus Christ.

In Jesus, we see the perfect embodiment of love. He demonstrated His love for mankind by paying for our sins on the cross, offering us forgiveness and reconciliation. It is only fair to us to respond to this love by accepting Jesus into our hearts. Let us not merely settle for feelings and emotions but seek the true love that comes from our Savior.

I invite you, dear reader, to respond to this love by joining a Christian community near you. In the fellowship of believers, you will experience the depth of love and the power of community in practicing love. As we embrace the conqueror of hearts, the unifier of souls—love—we become agents of transformation in a world that desperately

needs love. Together, let us paint a world where compassion reigns, differences are celebrated, and love conquers all.

In the realm where love resides,

All boundaries are defied.

With tender hearts and gentle grace,

Love conquers all, in every place.

Through trials and storms, it stands tall,

Breaking down walls, embracing all.

It bears the weight of pain and strife,

And transforms darkness into life.

Love soothes the wounds, heals the soul,

Filling empty hearts, making them whole.

It bridges gaps, unites the divided,

In its embrace, no one is excluded.

No obstacle can withstand its power,

*Love triumphs, hour by hour.
It seeks no glory, knows no pride,
Love conquers all, side by side.*

*So let us yield to love's decree,
Embrace its call, set our spirits free.
For in its boundless, eternal grace,
Love conquers all, in every place.*

“Diana Opiyo”

A Heart Full Of Love



About The Author

Diana Opiyo, a fearless influencer in society, makes her literary debut with 'A Heart Full of Love: Lessons from an Angel's Journey to the Heart of Unconditional.' As a Customer Experience Expert at Safaricom PLC, Diana's expertise in fostering connections and understanding human relationships shines through in her writing. She is the visionary founder of the 'Soul to Soul: Healing through Listening' grief therapy program and the 'Gabrielle Hera Foundation' for special needs. Diana holds a degree in Information Systems and Technology from USIU-Africa and is a qualified Software Engineer from Moringa School. She resides in Nairobi, Kenya, with her two children and husband, Charles. Explore more of Diana's journey on her blog:

<https://wordpress.com/posts/aindoaleksays.wordpress.com>

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself".

Matthew 22:37 (New International Version)

In today's world filled with strife, division, and indifferences, can we say that we truly love one another unconditionally?

The book 'A Heart Full of Love: Lessons from an Angel's Journey to the Heart of Unconditional Love' is a truly must-read. In a world filled with strife, this book illuminates the extraordinary power of love to bridge divides and transform lives. Through poignant storytelling, drawing inspiration from her late daughter, Hera, the author reveals the profound impact of love on our relationship with God, family, and even those deemed 'unlovable.' Explore the concept of love for all walks of life and gain practical guidance to nurture deeper, harmonious connections. Embrace the truth that love, a force that can reshape individuals and heal societies, is the beacon of hope our world desperately needs."



Designed and Published by
@wilhemwears

ISBN 978-9914-49-669-7



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