

A photograph of a pond with several pink lotus flowers in various stages of bloom. Large, green lily pads with prominent veins are scattered across the water's surface. The background is a calm, dark green pond.

# TRAINING ON LOVE AND FORGIVENESS VERSION 1.1

BASED ON ANCIENT WISDOM AND THE LATEST SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH





1

# INTRODUCTION





Co-creators of this training in the **Gardim Botanico, Rio de Janeiro**

## PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES

Love and Forgiveness are words that are hardly used in business- or organizational environments. At the same time we encounter loneliness and a lack of connection among many leaders in their workplaces.

We developed this training program for people who are in search for more meaning in their lives and more connection. It is for those who are successful in what they do but who don't feel that they live their life to the fullest.

A more fulfilling life is not created in a one day course but we strive to ignite something in you that you start to long for more than that you're encountering now.

In this training you become aware and get a better understanding of love. You learn to deepen your relationships with people that are important to you, private and at your workplace.

Through dialogue, short lectures and experiential practices with other participants you will increase your insight in the latest scientific findings and the oldest ancient wisdom.

Science tells us that when you make love your prevailing desire, you remake whole domains of your life.





Sítio da Cachoeira near Rio de Janeiro is the place to be. Exploring the bottom of the U in the hammock

## CONDITIONS

For whom?

This training is developed for people who want to understand themselves better and are keen to strengthen their relationships and connections with others. They are successful but want to live a life that is more meaningful to themselves and the people around them.

The Love Catalyst

You must dare to step into the unknown and keen to share more of your own stories about love and forgiveness. You have the courage to speak from your heart and are keen to support others in realizing themselves.

Place

It will be hard for you to find a place like Vista Alegre to give this program. But we recommend to find a place in nature with a home like atmosphere and windows with a view. Organic food for the soul and a circle of chairs and meditation cushions are helpful to set the scene. Some flowers in the middle of the circle can simulate the fire you're talking into.





Find a place in nature where people feel welcome and you can create an intimate atmosphere

## PREPARATION

Preparation assignment for participants. The love catalyst sends an email with the following assignment:

Review the days before the training your entire day and call to mind the three longest social interactions you had. Thinking of these three interactions, consider how true the following two statements are for you:

1. During these social interactions, I felt “in tune” with the other person(s) around me.
2. During these social interactions, I felt close to the person(s).

Rate the truth of these statements on a scale from 1-7, on which 1 = *not at all true* and 7 = *very true*. You can record your findings in a notebook or spreadsheet but you can as well use the online recording tools at [www.positivityresonance.com](http://www.positivityresonance.com).

Send reading material/youtube video beforehand (suggestions next to Love 2.0?)



# THE ROADMAP

This roadmap is a suggestion how you could set up a training about love and forgiveness for people who hardly use these words in their daily vocabulary. It is a one day training in which people increase their understanding of love in an experiential way.



time	activity	process objective	needed
8.30	warm welcome at the door with coffee and tea	create an intimate/friendly atmosphere from the beginning	host, music
9.00	brief overview of the agenda and story telling by the love catalyst why he decided to organize this training	give structure to the meeting and start building the container	agenda on the wall
9.10	check in in groups of 4, debriefing 'Popcorn style'	get people present in the room and connected with each other	circle of chairs
9.30	introduction and dialogue on love 2.0 and the bigger picture	give words and meaning to love and connection	circle of chairs
10.00	show video of Placido Domingo and Zubin Mehta, debrief question: what did you observe & sense?	give an inspiring example of love and connection between 2 musicians, sensing yourself	video and beamer
10.30	break	refreshments and something healthy to eat	coffee, tea, juice, healthy bite
11.00	team up in pairs: when did you experience deep connection with another person?	experience connection and love in real time	
12:30	lunch		organic/local food
13.30	Stem exercise	share your true self, the not so obvious and notice that we can feel energy	
14.00	the inner critic & suffering, quote of Viktor Frankl (stimulus response)	get more understanding of your internal dynamics and how to learn	
	Dialogue walk: share voices of judgment, cynicism and fear while walking	come to the understanding that we all suffer from similar voices and feel the power of walking	
	individual journaling around questions	commit yourself to specific practices	journal and pen/iPad
16.30	loving kindness meditation & pay it forward	connect with ancient wisdom around love	
16.45	check out in one breath	closure of the meeting	
17.00	closure: <i>"Science tells us that when you make love your prevailing desire, you remake whole domains of your life."</i>	inspirational quote by Barbara Frederickson	





## PRACTICES

This is an overview of the practices that are suggested in the road-map.

### **Check in**

Check in, in small circles of 4 people

- Individual sharing, not reacting on each other, it's about your true voice
- See what is emerging out of the words being shared
- Brief sharing in the whole circle

Debriefing why we start like this

### Practices to work in the whole group in small groups, in pairs and alone

- Listening without interfering
- Get everyone in the room
- Create an open non-judgmental atmosphere

### **We're all connected**

Love 2.0 and the bigger picture of connection

- Introduction how intertwined organizations are these days
- How much connection is needed



- Scientific results regarding Love and the definition we're using in this training (see chapter 3 of this booklet)

Introduction and dialogue

### **Stem (?) exercise (Sue)**

*Process:*

Stand up and walk around in the room. Stop when I ring the bell. Turn to the person who is closest to you. Speak your core truth to each other by saying one at a time the answers to the following questions:

1. Share something that the other person doesn't know about you
2. Something I sense about you
3. Something I feel about the energy between us

Ring the bell to change roles (from listener to speaker).

Ring the bell to start walking again to find a new partner to share the answers on the questions. Do this in total with three partners

*Debriefing:*

Sit in the circle and ask how the practice has impacted and what is coming up. How is it to speak your core truth?

### **Sensing**

Show the video of Zubin Mehta and Placido Domingo ([www.](http://www.) and ask the participants to step into the shoes of the conductor. Observe and sense what is happening.

Debriefing questions:

- What happened?
- How were you influenced? What did you feel yourself while watching?
- Did you feel physically something? Goosebumps or...?

Introduce that deep connection influences your body and even health.

Introduce the mirror neurons: you can feel what others feel and brains come aligned: brain coupling. In good communication two individuals come to feel a single, shared emotion, one that is distributed across their two brains.

### **Listening exercise (Scilla Elworthy)**

The Listening Exercise has four benefits:

- A profound deepening of your understanding of what's really going on inside you and another person
- Discovering the authentic self from deep within – what you didn't know you knew
- Checking your ability to give another person your full attention without 'helping'
- It reveals compassion and opens the heart.

I've done this exercise with corporate leaders, top executive teams, and young social entrepreneurs from all over the world. They all



found it quite tough to do at first, but came out of it astonished at what they found – their own truths as well as others’. You can also do it with your lover or partner; if you’ve hit a sticky patch it’s an incredible way of getting past the blame game and learning what’s happening inside yourself and inside your partner.

It’s important to agree absolute confidentiality, because you may be saying or hearing things that are extremely private, tender and vulnerable – things that may never have been said before.

Sit down opposite each other somewhere comfortable where you won’t be disturbed for twenty minutes, with a timer. One partner is A and one is B. Agree on a non-trivial question, for example “tell me who you really are?” or “tell me what you long for most in your life?” Set the timer for 7 minutes.

Partner A asks the question thus: “ Tell me [name of partner] who you really are?” then does nothing else except to give full listening attention. That means keeping eye contact but not reacting – not nodding, smiling, laughing or grimacing. This isn’t exactly easy, but essential because when we ‘encourage’ another person – or react in any way - we subtly affect what they decide to say.

“Wisdom is not a product of thought. The deep knowing that is wisdom arises through the simple act of giving someone or something your full attention. Attention is primordial intelligence, consciousness itself.”

*Eckhart Tolle, Stillness Speaks*

Partner B undertakes the following sequence:

1. Gives their full attention to the question,

2. Puts their full intention on finding out the truth of the answer,
3. Takes the question down from the brain into the belly (the ‘hara’ or centre of gravity of the body)
4. Reports whatever answer is there.

It’s important for Partner B to report only what is there - not give all the back story – and then do the technique again for the 7-minute period. The more honestly you can report what is there, be it embarrassing, shameful, astonishing or funny, the more you will discover.

So Partner B may not say a great deal before going silent again while repeating the 4-part sequence over a period of 7 minutes. Meanwhile Partner A simply continues to give full attention and does not repeat the question.

After 7 minutes the timer will ping, and you change over. Partner B asks partner A the same question and then follows the same instruction to simply give full attention and eye contact. Partner A undertakes the sequence 1-4 above.

You can do just one question, which will take about 15 minutes, or you can go on and do 4 questions of your choice, which will take about 60 minutes.

Other questions people sometimes use are:

- Tell me [name of partner] what’s disturbing you in your life?
- Tell me [name of partner] what are you yearning for?
- Tell me [name of partner] what unlocks your heart?
- Tell me [name of partner] what gives you energy?



When you finish you can decide if you want to simply write in your journal, or share feedback. You'll be amazed what you find out about yourself, your listening skills, and about what really matters to your friend.

## **Listening exercise 2 (inspired by Walter)**

### *Process*

- Sit opposite of each other and sense yourself. Close your eyes and feel yourself.
- Open your eyes and look at the other person in silence. Look into each other's eyes. When it becomes too difficult or challenging you can close your eyes and feel your unrest. Open your eyes again when you feel at ease.
- Close your eyes (after 3-4 minutes) and sense yourself
- Now you open your eyes again and the one with the longest hair shares what is going on within him/herself. The other person stays silent (2-3 minutes).
- Close your eyes again and sense yourself, switch roles and the other person shares what is going on
- Debrief in pairs for a few minutes
- You can suggest to do another round with another person if you have enough time.

### *Debriefing*

Come back in the circle and share popcorn style how it was, often heard comments:

- Very intimate, have the feeling that you really connect with somebody
- Unease: 'never looked for such a long time in someone's eyes'
- From tension at first to more relaxation after a few minutes

## **Dialogue walk in nature (inspired by Mark)**

### *Process*

Walk in pairs in nature. When you don't have to look at each other since you are walking you share the same view. This helps to connect at a deeper level with each other and your brains get easier connected.

It works especially well if you are asked to share difficult topics like where you are afraid of and what is inhibiting you. The process is that one speaks while leaving and going somewhere and the other person listens. On the way back you reverse the roles.

## **Journaling**

Everybody needs something to write on. We recommend a pen and paper above an iPad.

### *Process*



I will ask a few questions and you start writing without thinking. Your hand is wiser than your head. Just write.

The questions are for example:

1. What did you learn about yourself today
2. What have you seen as your highest potential?
3. What do you need to let go off? What do you need to unlearn?
4. What inner practice are you going to do?
5. With whom are you going to have a dialogue about what you have learned today?

After journaling we usually don't do a debriefing so that people can be very honest to themselves.

## Loving kindness meditation

This meditation helps you to recondition your habitual ways of responding to others.

- Sit comfortably
- Bring your awareness to the sensations of your heart
- Visualize someone that is dear to you
- Let the feelings of tenderness and warmth come to you
- Wish the person well
- Continue bringing people into your awareness and wish them well

- End with wishing well for yourself

Gently remind yourself that you can generate these feelings of kindness and warmth anytime you wish.

**The wheel of awareness meditation** by Daniel Siegel is 25 minutes long and very well thought through. It's easy for non-meditators to follow the steps he is describing and powerful for many. You can find it at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ODIFhOKahmk> It ends with loving kindness after connecting to all the senses.

## Debriefing

People find it in general hard to say something about their meditation experiences. It's rather vulnerable. Still it's good to tease something out. People will realize that they are not alone in what they experienced and usually become more aware of what they actually experienced.

## Check out

One breath check out (meaning approximately one sentence) and share the importance of beginning and endings

- What is the learning you are taking from the workshop
- When you are triggered by an emotion, what is the action you take
- What are you not voicing

*"If you treat an individual as he is, he will remain how he is. But if you treat him as if he were what he ought to be and could be, he will become what he ought to be and could be."*

Goethe





3

## CONNECTION & LOVE 2.0

Here is some background information about Love and the current scientific research





Looking for love from the top of the mountain. Exercising and actively supporting each other spread feelings of love

## BACKGROUND READING

And here is something hard to admit: If I take my bodies perspective on love seriously, it means that right now-at this very moment in which I'm crafting this sentence- I do not love my husband.

Barbara Fredrickson, *Love 2.0*

There are many ideas, feelings and definitions of love. In this training we stick with the one that Barbara Frederickson proposes in *Love 2.0*.

### *Definition of Love*

*Love is that micro-moment of warmth and connection that you share with another human being. It's our supreme emotion.*

This means:

- No emotion is built to last. Wondrous feelings of love sweep through you only for *seconds*.
- A micro-moment of love changes your mind. It expands your awareness of your surroundings, even your sense of self.
- Positive emotions open you up and change you for the better.



- Love draws you out of your cocoon of self-absorption to attune to others.

### *Love's biology*

1. Your brain: in the very moment that you experience positivity resonance (love), your brain syncs up with the other person's brain. This is proven scientifically, mirror neurons are part of this. Your respective brain waves mirror one another, each of you -moment by moment- changes the other's mind
2. The hormone oxytocin plays a key role in social bonding and attachment. It calms fears that might steer you away from interacting with strangers and also sharpens your (micro) skills for connection.
3. Your vagus nerve: It's the tenth cranial nerve that runs from your brainstem to your heart and other internal organs. Scientists can measure your vagal tone by tracking your heart rate in conjunction with your breathing rate: Like muscle tone, the higher the better. Through practices you can increase the tone. People with a higher vagal tone are more flexible across a whole set of domains-physical, mental and social. They simply adapt better to their ever-shifting circumstances, albeit completely at non-conscious levels.

We advise you to read the book Love 2.0. Here we have given an ultra brief summary of the essence of the book. Scientific research supports to convince the hard nosed CEO's and Politicians this training is designed for.

### ***Humberto Maturana: Love expands Intelligence***

Definition of love: love is the domain of those relational behaviors through which another (a person, being, or thing) arises as a legitimate other in coexistence with oneself.

The only emotion that broadens vision and expands intelligent behavior is love.

If a manager acts on the premise that "people are competent," he or she immediately initiates a change. If you want to achieve something that involves other people, you have to accept that we are all equally intelligent or you will not trust that the others will act competently. If you want autonomous and coherent behavior, you need only open a space of love, and intelligence appears there.

The coordination of excitation and inhibition is involved in all neuronal activities, including what we call thinking. It is in our neurobiology that attention on what we do inhibits what we do. This is why learning a task involves relaxation—not in terms of becoming limp or falling asleep but in terms of relaxing your attention, your intent of controlling what you are doing. As you relax your attention on the doing but proceed in an understanding of what you do, you allow the actual doing to take place in a manner that uses the circumstances as a reference that guides what you are doing.

## **Daniel Siegel in Mindsight**

Through the vital connection of 'Feeling Felt' by another person, we sense that our internal world is shared, that our mind is inside the other.

The triangle of well-being: mind, brain, relationships are not separate elements of life-they are irreducible aspects of one interconnected triangle of well-being.

We will explain: 'The handy model of the brain' to have people understand rationally what is happening while meditating.

Share how our nervous system is able to grow and develop based on his research.

Dive into examples of why and how inner power, based on deep self-knowledge, is essential to provide context for what we undertake in the outer world. Reflection, mindfulness and inner work are now seen as an essential tool in many leading companies, extensively featured in the Financial Times and on the cover of Time Magazine.

This training is designed in the Mata Atlantica (jungle) of Brazil. An ecosystem that is totally dependent on each other. More and more it becomes clear how we are all connected. So it is important to become more aware of this and capable of intensifying the relationships.





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



# WHO WE ARE

The Fetzer Institute made it possible for us to meet in the Sitio de Cachoeira near Rio de Janeiro to dialogue about Love and Forgiveness and to build together a curriculum. The one day training presented in this booklet is one of the four ‘prototypes/initiatives’ that came out of these wonderful days that were hosted by Thais Corral. Thais embodies love and forgiveness and is the best host you can have for such a meeting.

The participants of the learning lab who have contributed in some form to this booklet are: Alexander Schieffer, Andrea Bartoli, Aurelio Padovezi, Ceridwen Oliver-Evans, Dumisani Nyoni, Eduardo Fernando Pedote, Gachi Tapia, Hein Dijksterhuis, Katie Weintraub, Kristiane Schaefer, Kurian Thomas, Luciana Rossi, Marcelo Bastos, Mark Gerzon, Mike O’ Sullivan, Patricia Kranz, Rachel Biderman, Rama Mani, Rebecca Raposo, Sandra Guimaraes, Sandra Ortiz Diaz, Scilla Elworthy, Sue Cheshire, Thais Corral, Vicki Robin, Walter Link and Zahira Kamal.

With love,

Hein Dijksterhuis