

## Key Takeaways From "All About Love" by Bell Hooks

- It was love's absence that let me know how much love mattered
  - Love returns us to the promise of everlasting life
  - When we love we can let our hearts speak
  - The search for love continues even in the face of great odds
  - We yearn for love-we seek it- even when we lack hope that it really can be found
- "I am afraid that we may be raising a generation of young people who will grow up afraid to love, afraid to give themselves completely to another person, because they will have seen how much it hurts to take the risk of loving and have it not work out. I am afraid that they will grow up looking for intimacy without risk, for pleasure without significant emotional investment. They will be so fearful of the pain of disappointment that they will forgo the possibilities of love and joy"
- Our silence shields us from uncertainty
  - Love is the most important thing in our lives, a passion for which we would fight or die, and yet we're reluctant to linger over its names
  - We use the word love in such a sloppy way that it can mean almost nothing or absolutely everything
  - Love is the will to extend one's self for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth
  - We do not have to love. We choose to love
  - To truly love we must learn to mix various ingredients- care, affection, recognition, respect, commitment, and trust, as well as honest and open communication
  - Spiritual- where mind, body, and spirit are one
  - When we are loving we openly and honestly express care, affection, responsibility, respect, commitment, and trust
  - We cannot be whole human beings without the sustenance of the parent-child attachment
  - Love was always and only about good feeling
  - Care and affirmation are the foundation of love
  - Loving parents work hard to discipline without punishment
    - How to be self-disciplining and how to take responsibility for their actions
  - Where the will to power is paramount love will be lacking
  - While privacy strengthens all our bonds, secrecy weakens and damages connection
  - The parent-child bond which teaches us how to love
  - There can be no love without justice

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Taken directly out of the book

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- Many men in our culture never recover from childhood unkindness
- The heart of justice is truth telling, and seeing ourselves and the world the way it is rather than the way we want it to be
- When we learn to use language as boys, we very quickly learn how to conceal ourselves through language
- You are only as sick as your secrets
- To know love we have to tell the truth to ourselves and to others
- Lies may make people feel better, but they do not help them to know love
- If you do not love yourself, you will be unable to love anyone else
- We are not born knowing how to love anyone. We are born able to respond to care
- The wounded heart learns self-love by first overcoming low self-esteem
- Living consciously means we think critically about ourselves and the world we live in
- I'm breaking with old patterns and moving forward with my life
- When powerful men reach the height of personal achievement in their careers, they often undermine all they have worked for by engaging in self-destructive behavior
- Awakening to love can happen only as we let go of our obsession with power and domination
- Society must be organized in such a way that man's social, loving nature is not separated from his social existence, but becomes one with it
- There is no fear in love
- As a culture we are obsessed with the notion of safety
- When we choose to love we choose to move against fear- against alienation and separation
- The choice to love is a choice to connect-to find ourselves in the other
- Being aware enables us to critically examine our actions to see what is needed so that we can give care, be responsible, show respect, and indicate a willingness to learn
- Domination cannot exist in any social situation where a love ethic prevails
- If the will to power is paramount love will be lacking
- When love is present the desire to dominate and exercise power cannot rule the day
- When small communities organize their lives around a love ethic, every aspect of daily life can be affirming for everyone
- Learning how to face our fears is one way we embrace love

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- In a world without love the passion to connect can be replaced by the passion to possess
- A vision articulates a future that someone deeply wants, and does it so clearly and compellingly that it summons up the energy, agreement, sympathy, political will, creativity, resources, or whatever to make that vision happen
- Fixating on wants and needs, which consumerism encourages us to do, promotes a psychological state of endless craving
- Addiction is both a consequence of widespread lovelessness and a cause
- Many people are willing to lie to gain monetary advantage
- The message we get is that everybody wants to have more money to buy more things so it is not problematic if we lie and cheat a bit to get ahead
- Greed is rightly considered a "deadly sin" because it erodes the moral values that encourage us to care for the common good
- So many Americans believe that the pursuit and attainment of wealth will compensate for all emotional lack
- The worship of money leads to a hardening of the heart
- Individuals with good intentions and kind hearts can be swept away by unprecedented access to power and privilege
- Living simply is the primary way everyone can resist greed every day
- Living simply makes loving simple
- Community cannot take root in a divided life
- Love is what comforted you, freed you up inside, made you laugh
- The strength of our friendship was revealed by our willingness to confront openly the shift in our ties and to make necessary changes
- Trust is the heartbeat of gen
- What we learn through experience is that our capacity to establish deep and profound connections in friendship strengthens all our intimate bonds
- Love allows us to confront these negative realities in a manner that is life-affirming and life-enhancing
- Knowing how to be solitary is central to the art of loving
- The greatest rewards in your whole life will come from opening your heart to those in need
- Love will not prevail in any situation where one party wants to maintain control
- Choosing to be honest is the first step in the process of love
- We cannot learn to communicate deeply until we learn to listen
- Weeping may endure for a night but joy will come in the morning
- The practice of love takes time

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- Selfishness is a central reason romantic relationships fail
- Put your partner's interest on an equal footing with your own
- The practice of generosity frees us from the sense of isolation that arises from clinging and attachment
- Cultivating a generous heart is the primary quality of an awakened mind
- A generous heart is always open, always ready to receive our going and coming
- The most precious gift true love offers is the experience of knowing we always belong
- A definite person determines the one best thing to do and then does it
- Love saves us only if we want to be saved
- The expression to fall in love reflects a peculiar attitude toward love and life itself- a mixture of fear, awe, fascination, and confusion
- If you do not know what you feel, then it is difficult to choose love; its better to fall
- To love somebody is not just a strong feeling- it is a decision, it is a judgement, it is a promise. If love were only a feeling, there would be no basis for the promise to love each other forever. A feeling comes and it may go
- The desire to love is not itself love. Love is as love does.
- We do not have to love. We choose to love
- Most people want a partner who is mature and intelligent, loyal and trustworthy, loving and attentive, sensitive and open, kind and nurturant, competent and responsible
- Ultimately, most of us would choose great love over sustained sexual passion if we had to
- You can't look for true love. If its meant for you, it will just happen
- The essence of true love is mutual recognition
- As long as we are afraid to risk we cannot know love
- Love is letting go of fear
- To live fully we would need to let go of our fear of dying
- Love empowers us to live fully and die well
- We must befriend death and let it be our guide in life, meeting it unafraid
- Life is not promised
- Growing up is the process of learning to take responsibility for whatever happens in your life
- When we practice forgiveness, we let go of shame
- Even small acts of forgiveness always have significant ramifications at a personal level

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- We cannot know love if we remain unable to surrender our attachment to power, if any feeling of vulnerability strikes terror in our hearts
- Love is our true destiny. We do not find the meaning of life by ourselves alone- we find it with another