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Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul series

KIMBERLY KIRBERGER

心灵鸡汤

爱情问题

*Teen
Love[®]
Series*



**ON
RELATIONSHIPS**

奉献给青少年的“心灵鸡汤”

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With love I dedicate this book:

*To my mother, who is my dearest friend and
who taught me many things about love.*

*To my father, who always made me feel like I was
the most beautiful girl in the world.*

*To my son, Jesse.
May your love life bring you much
happiness and joy.*

*And to my husband, John,
the love of my life.*



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Acknowledgments

Acknowledgments

It is always an honor when we have the chance to thank people who help us. We all have practiced our fantasy acceptance speech for the Academy Awards or dreamed about having an opportunity to adequately acknowledge those who have blessed our lives. With this kind of excitement and gratitude, I acknowledge the following people:

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To my son, Jesse, who inspires me on a daily basis and who taught me a whole new definition of love. Jesse, you are the best!

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To Ashley, Haley, Caitlin, Hanah, Lilly, Sarah, Derek, Morgan,

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Blake and Tommy, it's so great to have you guys in my life.

To my dearest friends: Kim Foley, Inga Mahoney, Barbara De Angelis, Mary Ellen Klee, Lynar Abel, Steve, Claudia, David and Bava Stroud, your friendship means the world to me. Thanks for your love.

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I am truly grateful for the many hands and hearts that made this book possible. I love you all.



Love 1A: Introduction



Till it has loved, no man
or woman can become itself.

Emily Dickinson

XI

Love 1A: Introduction

If you are reading this book you have probably already been stung by the love bug. A boy or girl in your class or youth group suddenly made your heart beat a little faster, and you finally understood this love thing that everyone had been talking about.

First let me give you warm welcome into the world of love and relationships. As with life, it isn't all fun and games, but the more you know, the better you will be at handling what comes your way. Much of what you need to know can only be taught by the great teacher: experience.

In this book, some have shared that experience. Some have shared it through poetry, some through stories and some with commonly asked questions. I have done my best to answer these questions without giving that all-too-annoying thing: adult advice. I do hope I have been able to share some of my wisdom, to show my compassion, and, most of all, to help you see that when it comes to love, it is much simpler than we choose to make it. Nothing is more wonderful than sharing love with another person; it is just that we tend to complicate, confuse and distort it.





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Love is a wonderful thing. When your heart opens up and you see another person through loving eyes, it is truly one of life's best experiences. When another person looks at you in that special way, you will think you have discovered heaven on earth.

The advice and wisdom that I share with you in this book is so you can enjoy love when it's happening and let it go when it is not. It is to help you to keep it simple, keep it honest, and, most of all, keep it fun. My hope for you is that you can enjoy the journey and learn as you go. Every relationship that you have is an opportunity to learn and grow.

The most important thing I can do is help you to not take it all too personally. Love can have its own reasons for things that we know nothing about at the time they are happening. Maybe one relationship wasn't meant to work out so that when another one came along you would be available.

We never know. Unfortunately, we often blame ourselves when love doesn't work. We think if someone doesn't love us or want to be with us, then there must be something wrong with us, and this just isn't true.

Love is a great teacher; I think it is the best. Learning is often painful. Just remember: You will never lose at love if you always ask it what it is teaching you, and you listen very carefully when it answers.

Enjoy the journey....





Guidelines for Reading This Book



We read books to find out who we are. What other people, real or imaginary, do and think and feel is an essential guide to our understanding of what we ourselves are and may become.

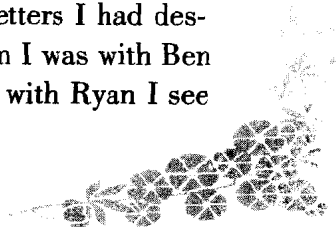
Ursula K. Le Guin

III

Guidelines for Reading This Book

I have divided this book into ten different chapters. This was challenging in itself because so many things in love aren't that simple. In fact, I became aware of what I now believe to be the biggest problem in the area of love. It is very disorganized. If we were able to put our life and our relationships into neat little compartments, we wouldn't have half the problems or heartache that we have now.

Take, for example, the chapter "There Is a First Time for Everything." This seemed simple enough ... first crush, first love, first relationship, etc. I went through the pile of letters I had designated for this chapter and began reading: "When I was with Ben I thought I was in love. However, now that I am with Ryan I see





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what my mom was saying. I had no idea what love was.” Then I had to decide: Does this go into the chapter called “All These New Feelings” or should I keep it in “There Is a First Time for Everything”?

Then I moved on to the chapter on “When Friends Become More ...” If I only had to deal with simple things like “I fell in love with my best friend,” it would have been a piece of cake. The following is an example of the kinds of questions I did find for this chapter: “I hated this guy. He was such a creep, but my friend Sarah liked him and begged me to give him another chance, as a friend. So I did. The next thing I knew he liked me, but I mean he **LIKED** me liked me and Sarah wasn’t too happy about this. Brad and I ended up being together but it didn’t last very long. I fell in love with his friend, Sam. Sarah was happy, so we were friends again and after a while Brad and I were best friends, too. We spent hours on the phone talking about Sarah and Sam. My question is this, I am starting to like Brad again and if I tell anyone I will lose two friends and a boyfriend. Please tell me what to do.”

So, as you can see, my job of dividing these questions into chapters wasn’t easy but I did my best. While reading this book, please remember: There may be friendship issues in the “All These New Feelings” chapter and there will be breakup issues in the “Starting Over” chapter.

I recommend that you read through the whole book once. Then, when you have a specific problem that you need help with, turn to the chapter that best represents your situation. If you want more information than what you find in that chapter, skip around to other relevant chapters.

This book is filled with questions and answers, great poetry and stories that illustrate the experience of love. The questions and the answers are all written by me. I have read over a thousand ques-



tions submitted to our Web-page forums* and interviewed hundreds of teens about their experiences with love. From all this reading and talking with teens, I have been able to get an idea of the important questions and concerns that teens are dealing with today. I have written the questions myself in order to keep personal information private, to make the questions clear and concise, and to make sure that the personal details of somebody's situation don't get in the way of everyone's ability to relate to the issue being discussed. Many of you will recognize bits and pieces of your questions but will be able to avoid what could possibly be an embarrassing situation because I've changed personal details such as names.

I am extremely excited about the quality of the poetry in the book. Good poems, like those written for this book, express the feelings associated with being in love so precisely that many people will feel that the poems were written especially for them. All the different feelings that arise when one is in love are hard to define. They can be even harder to express to another person. I hope you can read the poetry in this book and have the experience of "Yes, that is what I am feeling!" and know without a doubt that you are not alone. You can also use the poems to show your friends or your significant other how you feel.

Last, but not least, we have included some stories. All of them were written by teens (except two that I wrote), and all of them are about love and the lessons love teaches us.

This is a book that was written entirely for you. It is all about love and relationships, and it is packed full of compassion, concern and wisdom. I hope that as you read each page you feel that it was written specifically for you. I hope you feel that your questions are being answered and your feelings are being expressed. Most of

* The *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul* Web page. The Web-page address is: www.teenagechickensoup.com.



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all, I hope that—no matter what you are going through—this book helps you, guides you and shows you that you are not alone. If I have achieved these three things, then I have succeeded.

Please let me know.

I can be reached at:

Kimberly Kirberger
P. O. Box 936
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272



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Falling in Love

Kent Nerburn



Love is life ...

And if you miss love, you miss life.

Leo Buscaglia

III

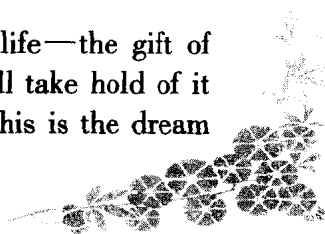
It is a mystery why we fall in love.

It is a mystery how it happens. It is a mystery when it comes. It is a mystery why some loves grow and it is a mystery why some loves fail.

You can analyze this mystery and look for reasons and causes, but you will never do any more than take the life out of the experience. Just as life itself is something more than the sum of the bones and muscles and electrical impulses in the body, love is something more than the sum of the interests and attractions and commonalities that two people share. And just as life itself is a gift that comes and goes in its own time, so, too, the coming of love must be taken as an unfathomable gift that cannot be questioned in its ways.

Sometimes—hopefully at least once in your life—the gift of love will come to you in full flower, and you will take hold of it and celebrate it in all its inexpressible beauty. This is the dream

Falling in Love





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we all share. More often, it will come and take hold of you, celebrate you for a brief moment, then move on.

When this happens to young people, they too often try to grasp the love and hold it to them, refusing to see that it is a gift freely given and a gift that just as freely moves away. When they fall out of love or the person they love feels the spirit of love leaving, they try desperately to reclaim the love that is lost rather than accepting the gift for what it was, then moving on.

They want answers where there are no answers. They want to know what is wrong with them that makes the other person no longer love them, or they try to get their lover to change, thinking that if some small thing were different love would bloom again. They blame their circumstances and say that if they go far away and start a new life together their love will grow.

They try anything to give meaning to what has happened. But there is no meaning beyond the love itself, and until they accept its own mysterious ways they live in a sea of misery.

You need to know this about love, and to accept it. You need to treat what it brings you with kindness. If you find yourself in love with a person who does not love you, be gentle with yourself. There is nothing wrong with you. Love just didn't choose to rest in the other person's heart.

If you find someone else in love with you and you don't love him or her, feel honored that love came and called at your door, but gently refuse the gift you cannot return. Do not take advantage, do not cause pain. How you deal with love is how love will deal with you, and all our hearts feel the same pains and joys, even if our lives and ways are very different.

If you fall in love with another and she falls in love with you, and then love chooses to leave, do not try to reclaim it or assess blame. Let it go. There is a reason and there is a meaning. You will know in time, but time itself will choose the moment.





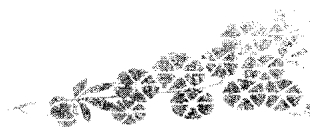
Remember that you don't choose love. Love chooses you.

All you can really do is accept it for all its mystery when it comes into your life. Feel the way it fills you to overflowing, then reach out and give it away. Give it back to the person who brought it alive in you. Give it to others who seem poor in spirit. Give it to the world around you in any way you can.

This is where so many lovers go wrong. Having been so long without love, they understand love only as a need. They see their hearts as empty places that will be filled by love, and they begin to look at love as something that flows to them rather than from them.

In the first blush of new love they are filled to overflowing, but as their love cools they revert to seeing their love as a need. They cease to be someone who generates love and instead become someone who seeks love. They forget that the secret of love is that it is a gift, and that it can be made to grow only by giving it away.

Remember this and keep it in your heart. Love has its own time, its own season, and its own reasons for coming and going. You cannot bribe it or coerce it or reason it into staying. You can only embrace it when it arrives and give it away when it comes to you. But if it chooses to leave, from your heart or from the heart of your lover, there is nothing you can do and nothing you should do. Love has always been and will always be a mystery. Be glad that it came to live for a moment in your life. If you keep your heart open, it will come again.





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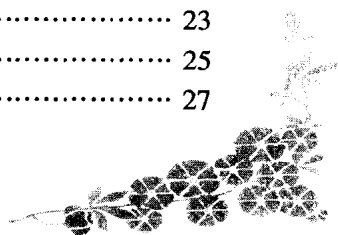
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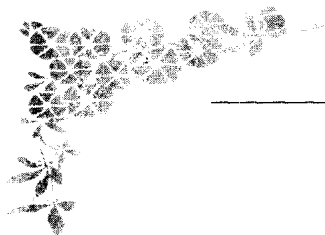
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