

Biology of love: what to do?

Humberto Maturana Romesin

*I am unable to find the proper citation for this article, or it may be a selection from a longer article. What I do have was likely sent to me directly by the author in 1999. This file omits a discussion on Intelligence and Emotions, which is available on request.
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What to do in relation to love?

Question: What makes possible that somebody else should live his or her relations with me in love?

Answer: That this other should be seen, listened, ... in his or her existence as a legitimate being by the me.

Question: How?

Answer: Seeing and listening somebody else or oneself in his or her legitimacy without need of justification to be seen or listened, are relational behaviors in love.

Question: But, how?

Answer: Let us consider first seeing. If when we look our attention is oriented by our expectations, we do not see that which lies outside the field of what we expect. That is, we reduce the dimensionality of the domain of relations in which we are. It is only as we release our expectations that other relational dimensions beyond our expectations can become visible because we stop denying them a priori. This can be easily shown in the domain of listening.

There are two manners of attending to what is being said by somebody else. One occurs when one listens to find where what the other says agrees or disagree with what one thinks. If one does that, one in fact listens to oneself. If when listening to an other person one finds oneself remarking coincidences, or that an other person has said the same, one does not listens to what the other person says. The other form of listening occurs when one listens attending to the domain in which what the other says is valid. If one does the latter, one listens to the other and hears him or her from the fundamentals from which he or she speaks. If one does this, one listens to the other, regardless of whether one accepts or not what the other says. If while listening one becomes aware of other parallel things that he or she might say, one is in fact listening to the other. Love is the emotion that permits this to happen.

Question: But, how is that?

Answer: Human beings are usually impeccable in our logic arguments. We rarely commit deductive mistakes. Most of the time when we say that somebody commits a logic mistake, what happens is that such person develops his or her argument as a logic construct founded in different fundamental primary notions than those that we use in our listening. In these cases the discrepancy between the speaker and the listener is not in the domain of logic, but in the emotional domain as both argue from different primary notions accepted a priori. Discrepancies due to deductive mistakes are have no fundamental transcendence and are corrected without the correction being a life threat to one or the other. The discrepancies that arise because the parties involved in them act or think in different domains of operational coherences, while accusing each other of being illogical, have no solution and usually result in anger. Therefore, the anger that arises in a disagreement that claims to be rational shows that it is not so, and that the parties involved indeed argue from different basic premises.

Question: What do you mean by basic premises?

Answer: Every rational argument stand on primary notions accepted a priori, that is, out of the preferences of the person that accepts them. In other words, all rational constructs arise deductively from basic non-rational premises that have been adopted unconsciously in the simple flow of living, or explicitly in an act of choice that arises in the flow of emotions.

Question: What is to reason, then?

Answer: To reason is to operate according to the coherences of an experiential domain of the observer as these appear abstracted in their description in language. Language as a flow in living together in coordinations of coordinations of behaviors embodies the operational coherences of the experiential domain in which the recursive coordinations of behavior take place. It is as a result of this that our living together in language occurs as a flow of languaging that is spontaneously logical in the operational domain in which it takes place.

Question: How is it then that we frequently accuse each other of not being rational?

Answer: One always listens from some particular domain of operational coherences listening to the argument as if this were taking place according to the operational coherences of that domain. If the other argues according to the operational coherences of a different operational domain than the one in which we listen, and we are not aware that that is the case, then he or she will appear illogical to us. In order to hear what some body else says, we must listen in the same domain of operational coherences in which he or she speaks.

Question: How one does that?

Answer: Attending to the domain in which what the other says is valid.

Question: How one does that?

Answer: In order to hear what some body else says the other must arise in our listening as a legitimate other. What distorts our listening and hides what the other says are our fears, expectations and desires in relation to what the other must do or should be.

Question: How does one listens without expectations, prejudices or desires?

Answer: All listening occurs from the present that the listener lives. Due to this there are always implicit prejudices, desires and expectations that define the course of a conversation.

But that does not constitute a problem. The problem arises when we allows those prejudices, desires or expectations, to determine our listening in a way that attribute to the other notions or ideas that belong to us. It is because of this that the only thing that permits us to hear what the other say, is the inner disposition that allows the other to arise in his or her legitimacy in our listening. The respect for the other is the only condition that gives freedom to accept or reject him or her as an act of self respect. Self respect and respect for the other are the only conditions that permit to attend to the domain where what the other says is valid.

Question: How do reason and emotions and feelings braid with each other in the listening?

Answer: As any rational argument stands on basic premises accepted a priori, when one attends to the emotion on which a rational argument stands, one sees its fundamentals. That act of reflection, however, is not trivial because to do so in relation to a rational argument that one is developing entails abandoning the implicit blind acceptance of its validity, and constitutes an emotional change that expands our vision and opens our possibility for change or responsible insistence. Accordingly, our emotioning may both expand or restrict our rational understanding and vision depending on whether we feel sure or not in our self respect. If we feel sure we can reflect, if not, we cannot do so.

Question: Which are the interactions that express love?.

Answer: Emotions are not expressed, they are lived through the relational behaviors that constitute them. To ask for an expression of love, is to say that the relational behaviors that realize love are not present. At the same time when someone says that the behavior of some other person is tender or loving, the

first person says that he or she sees in the other the relational behaviors that constitute tenderness or love.

Question: Maturana says that we become ill out of lack of love. How is that?

Answer: Love as the domain of relational behaviors through which another or oneself arises as a legitimate other in coexistence with oneself, is a domain of living in which there are distortion of the systemic coherence that constitute well being in fluid dynamic congruence with circumstance of living. Health occurs in the flow of living in dynamic systemic coherences with the circumstances in which there is well being in the implicit trust that those systemic coherences are being conserved and will be conserved. In the absence of love an organism live the continuous breakdown of those systemic coherences, and is us this occurs as a result of mistrust, expectations, fears, uncertainty, envy, ambition or competition. Such a manner of living leads to a continuous shift of the anatomical and physiological processes towards a dynamic configuration of internal relations that would compensate the lost systemic coherences.

Question: Is there a difference between love as a biological phenomenon and love a an aspect of daily life?

Answer: In strict sense there is no difference because love as an emotion occurs as a domain of relational behaviors arising from a body dynamic disposition that specifies the kind of relational behaviors in which a person may participate. What one can say, though, is that from the perspective of the biology one looks at love as an aspect of the relational living of all living beings without any value connotation. Thus, from the biological perspective love is not good or bad, is just an aspect of living that consist in a particular kind of relational behaviors that, of course, has different relational consequences that other emotions such as aggression or fear.

Emotions just happen as domains of relational behaviors in the living organism, it is only us human beings who reflect about them and transform them in sources of recursive emotioning by giving value to them as aspects of our daily life. Moreover, in our daily life we live intercrossing of emotions that modulate the flow of our relations in ways that we speak there were different kinds of the same emotion. Thus, we speak of different kinds of love. I think that that is acceptable when we connote the dimensionality of the emotion with expressions such as respect, friendship and being in love. Respect refers to the basic relation of letting bee that permits seeing the other, friendship entails more dimensions and the desire of doing things together in mutual respect, while being in love entails an orientation to all possible dimensions of coexistence together with the other in mutual respect.

The situation is different when other emotions intercross with love denying it. Thus, fear, possessiveness, expectations, mistrust and demands negate love. There is no possessive love, there is no controlling love or generous love, all these adjective expressions show that love is not there. Love as the domain of the relational behaviors through which another or oneself arises as a legitimate other in coexistence with oneself, is visionary, without demands expectations or desire for control precisely because it lets the other be, even if afterwards one chooses responsibly to separate from the other.

Question: What happens with manipulation?

Answer: Manipulation denies love because entails the use of the other abusing his or her unawareness. This is why when a manipulation is discover anger arises. Expectations, demands and control deny love in all circumstances, whether in a couple, a family, or in the relation teacher/student. Collaboration takes place only in love.

Question: Is it difficult to love?

Answer: No, is the most easy and natural thing to do because it appears spontaneously when expectations, demands and fear are abandoned as aspects of the relation. It is because love appears spontaneously when expectations and demands are abandoned, that love reduces distances, dissolves differences and makes collaboration possible. Love is the emotion at the basis of social life and, hence, of democracy as a manner of community living.

Question: Can one love too much?

Answer: The expression "too much" makes reference to an excess, and we excess in relational behavior when there are demands, expectations or attempts to control. If the expression too much appears to refer to love, then there is no love when that expression is being used, and one speaks of love to justify those demands, expectations, or the fear or mistrust that leads to the attempt of control.

Question: Can love be measured?

Answer: Love as a domain of relational behaviors cannot be measured because as a kind of relational behavior has no magnitude. What one may consider is the many dimensions of relations under which one wants to be in relational behavior with the other in the domain of love. And for that we have different words in daily life, such as collaborator, friend, or loved one.

Question: Does love entail the intention of giving legitimacy to the other?

Answer: No! Love is the domain of those relational behaviors through which an other arises in its as a legitimate other in coexistence with oneself as a result of that very behavior without the demand, expectation, or desire that it should be so. It is precisely this what constitutes its spontaneity and what allows the other to live the relation in total implicit trust also without any expectation. The attempt to legitimize the other is lived by the other as a manipulation because it lack sincerity.

Question: How is that?

Answer: Emotions occur to us, they arise in flow of our living with others in the spontaneity of that coexistence as possible manners of relational behaviors that arise as features of our biological existence generated or modulated in the course of living with others. Our biology makes them possible as some basic manners of relating that have arisen in the evolutionary history to which we belong as mammals and primates, or as modulations and transformation of those basic manners of relating in the course of our individual life histories. We as human beings can become aware of our emotioning and try to control or manipulate them in the attempt that the other does not see what happens to us. But emotions cannot be controlled even though the awareness of them changes our emotional flow. It is because our emotioning appears in all the dimensions of our living and cannot be controlled, that the other sees our emotioning and discovers easily any lack of sincerity.