

Shifting within our relationship

An Interview With Marianne Williamson

By Anthony Mrocka



As we continue to evolve and shift into a higher state of consciousness, we all know relationships can be a breaking point on our journey. Who better to interview than someone with over 20 yrs experience lecturing and writing in the field of spirituality and relationships.

In our recent interview with **Marianne Williamson**, we focus on this subject specifically. Searching for the silver lining, within this myriad of spiritual and relationship trivia, we went to this world renowned author to take a look at love from a different angle.

Marianne Williamson is an internationally acclaimed author and lecturer. Six of her ten published books have been New York Times best sellers. Four of these have been #1 New York Times Best Sellers. A Return to Love is considered a must-read of The New Spirituality. A paragraph from that book, beginning "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure..." often misattributed to Nelson Mandela's Inaugural address- is considered an anthem for a contemporary generation of seekers.

As an avid follower and practitioner of A Course In Miracles, **Marianne Williamson** shares with Evolving Soul

Magazine her considerations to our questions pertaining to relationships and spirituality.

ESM - It's beginning to seem that now more than ever, people in relationships are experiencing conflict, because only one of the two partners is taking heed to the spiritual calling. What guidance would you offer to those experiencing this?

Marianne Williamson-Whenever we think a problem in a relationship stems from another person not heeding a spiritual call, we'd best look for the call that we ourselves aren't heeding. According to A Course in Miracles, it's only what we're not giving that can be lacking in any situation. It's our own path that we're asked to vigilantly monitor, not someone else's. I think humanity is going through a kind of growth spurt; at certain points, you grow in life or else, so die. So all unhealed places are coming up for everyone. They're coming up for review, and for healing. Our relationships are like spiritual laboratories, and as we begin to see them as that; as a kind of sacred container for growth, for acceptance, release, forgiveness and healing, then we see that what might have began as a conflict transforms into the healing of the wound or wounds that caused it.

ESM - Can you offer us a way/process, to discover whether or not it is only the Ego truly holding onto a relationship that is no longer healthy?

Marianne Williamson- There's no guidebook that says, "Well if this happens, the lesson is to hold on; but if that happens, then the lesson is to let go with love." It doesn't work that way, because spiritual guidance is etched on the heart. We receive it through prayer and meditation. It helps to remember, though, that relationships do last forever. Even if the point is to let a relationship go, then the letting go is just another chapter in the relationship. Only bodies separate; minds are eternally connected.

ESM - You speak about surrendering a relationship to the Holy Spirit. How do you surrender and become allowing, without becoming a door mat?

Marianne Williamson- Only the ego would posit that surrendering to love, which is the most powerful force in the universe, would somehow mean we are surrendering to weakness. What is the suggestion here? That anger, defensiveness, attack, judgment, blame, criticism, control and emotional imprisonment somehow make us strong? Love doesn't make you a doormat, because it actually makes you who you really are. And in the space of who you really are, of the love within you, you're not weak; you're strong! You're kinder, yes, but that doesn't mean you lose the capacity to say a healthy "No." Love doesn't mean you can't set healthy boundaries, exercise self-care or hold another person accountable. Quite the opposite; you're far more effective at doing those things when you can do them kindly, compassionately and elegantly.

ESM - For someone who is a genuine person; full of love and light, who is always giving back to the world, but attracting darkness in a relationship, what would be your advice on how to break what they are attracting?

Marianne Williamson- Look how the ego always posits that the "spiritual" person is doing the right thing, see they're "full of love and light" and it's just those other people who are bringing all the darkness! Love does bring up everything unlike itself, but always as a lesson. The right question is always the one we ask about ourselves: "Why did I walk into this situation, given that an honest look at the other person's behavior at the beginning would have indicated that this is how things would probably unfold?" "What was my part in this disaster? How did my own behavior contribute to this mess?" What we don't want to do is project all the "darkness" onto the other person! The question that's filled with light is always a question we ask about ourselves and our own need to choose differently, to stop playing games and to stop projecting onto others.

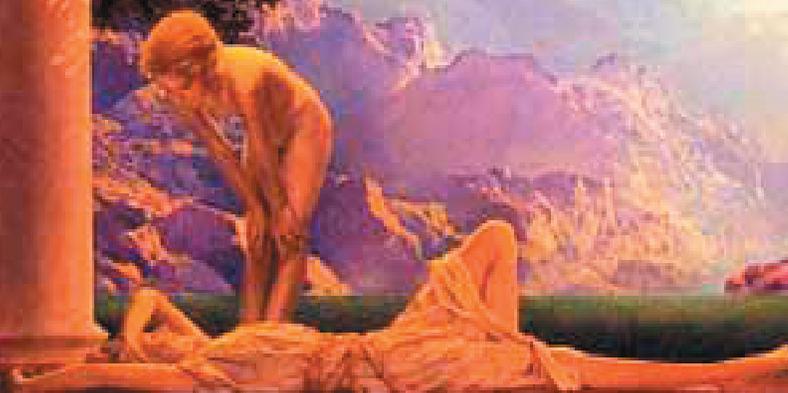
ESM - In your book, "A Return to Love", you speak about helping a couple in counseling. What type of counseling do you do? Are you a relationship therapist?

Marianne Williamson- I have often worked with couples, but not on a continuing basis.



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MARIANNE WILLIAMSON

ESM - For the people that are in abusive relationships, is there a way to help them or guide them to the light? What would ACIM offer them?

Marianne Williamson- The light is wherever the front door is; I'm a zero tolerance person when it comes to abuse. In ACIM, it says that whenever you allow a person to hurt you, you're allowing them to hurt themselves as well because there is only of us here. Once again, pray for a miracle, pray for guidance, and it will be there.

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ESM - Recently I have personally seen a plethora of broken relationships/marriages. For someone that doesn't believe in coincidences, what would you attest this too?

Marianne Williamson-Sometimes what we see from the outside and deem to be failure, is on a spiritual level some kind of success. Two parties separating doesn't inherently mean something went wrong between them; sometimes it means something went right, and physical proximity is no longer the highest container for their mutual soul growth. ACIM describes is a "holy-isolation" process in which things seem to get worse before they get better, so sometimes the break is what's needed to bring them back together. So only the two people themselves can know, and sometimes they don't know for a long, long time whether a "conflict" or "break" might have actually been a healing of some sort, however painful.

ESM - In "A Return to Love" the chapter on forgiveness is powerful; would you elaborate on forgiving one's self?

Marianne Williamson-Inside all of us, you, me, the other as well as ourselves, is the Truth, essence, Light, Christ, innocence, whatever word we wish to use to describe it. And that essential self remains a perfect Thought of God no matter what we do. Do we make mistakes as mortal beings? Yes, of course we do. But the spiritual Truth of who we are remains perfectly innocent, and can be reclaimed, should be reclaimed, in any moment. As I live from my Truth in the present, then whatever falsehoods, fears or illusions I fell into in the past are ultimately healed and made right. That's the process of redemption. We got it wrong before, but we can get it right now.

ESM - How does one stop filling the void within us with outside relationships, and start on the path of self-love?

Marianne Williamson- The path of real self-love isn't separate from our relationships with others, because on a spiritual place there's only one of us here. Spiritually, there's no place where one of us stops and the other begins. So an act of kindness towards another, even a gentle smile, is an act of self-love. Anything we do, we are doing to ourselves.

ESM - Can you give us one of your famous prayer's for a healthy relationship?

Dear God, I surrender this relationship to you. May it be lifted above the chaos of the world, of illusions and guilt and separation and fear. May forgiveness purify our hearts, dear God, That we might see the beauty in ourselves and others, Let go the past and begin again each day. May we be a blessing on each other's lives. Thank you, God. Amen



Marianne's latest New York Times Best Seller is *A Course in Weight Loss: 21 Spiritual Lessons for Surrendering Your Weight Forever*. *A Course in Weight Loss* was selected by Oprah to be one of her Favorite Things in 2010.

Marianne's other books include *The Age of Miracles*, *Everyday Grace*, *A Woman's Worth*, *Illuminata*, *Healing the Soul of America* and *The Gift of Change*. She has been a popular guest on television programs such as Oprah, Larry King Live, Good Morning America and Charlie Rose.

Marianne is a native of Houston, Texas. "In 1989", she founded Project Angel Food, a meals-on-wheels program that serves homebound people with AIDS in the Los Angeles area. Today, Project Angel Food serves over 1,000 people daily.

In December 2006, a NEWSWEEK magazine poll named Marianne Williamson one of the fifty most influential baby boomers. According to Time magazine, "Yoga, the Cabala and Marianne Williamson have been taken up by those seeking a relationship with God that is not strictly tethered to Christianity."

Marianne Williamson will be giving a Workshop in Los Angeles on November 4-6 called *THE ENCHANTED LOVE WORKSHOP: The Inner Temple of the Sacred and the Erotic*. Check www.marianne.com for details.