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A phenomenological exploration of what love means to older adults in Scotland

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Abstract

This study explores the meaning of love to older adults in Scotland. The study has been conducted through semi-structured interviews with participants over the age of 45 (n=5) who had been in a long-term romantic relationship. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was then used to analyse the data, according to guidelines set out by Smith and Osborn (2004). Sternberg's (1986) triangular theory has been used a lens through which to explore these subjective experiences and explain the meaning of them. The results were that older adults had a variety of ways they have experienced love, both in healthy and unhealthy relationships. They believed that the key to a successful, loving relationship is based on open communication and making an effort for each other. This supports Sternberg's (1986) theory in that he highlights the important of communication as one of the main predictors of a happy relationship and additionally that the components of love need to be expressed through action.

A phenomenological exploration of what love means to older adults in Scotland

What is love? Theorists have a myriad of different ways of defining and measuring. People have various way of explaining and expressing it. This is why it is so interesting, as there are many avenues to explore. The current study will examine how older adults in particular explain and experience love in romantic relationships.

Literature review

Love has been studied for some millennia and a few of the theories which are still considered relevant in today's societies, date back to ancient Greece, where the three main types of love described were *eros*, *philia* and *agape* (Flaceliere, 1962). The term *eros* relates to needs and desires, while *philia* is associated with platonic, brotherly love and *agape* is self-sacrifice. This early notion of sacrificing yourself for another is a central tenet of Christianity and the link between the love of each other and the love of God (Flaceliere, 1962). It can also be seen in later descriptions of *courtly love* (Hopkins, 1994). For Aristototele, to love someone is to have a deep understanding of them, based in reality rather than an idealised vision (Flaceliere, 1962).

Psychoanalytic theory of love

In the field of psychoanalysis, Freud's works can be seen as some of the first attempts at considering love and sexuality (Fine, 1990). In one theory, an importance was placed on how mental health has been affected by interruptions in the stages of erotic development from childhood into adulthood. If the child or young adult had abnormal experiences during any of these stages, it would lead to related problems or fixations in the future and would affect their capacity to love (Fine, 1990). Another of Freud's significant theories on love is linked to the idea that people desire those who appear to be similar to their own ideal self, that of which has been modeled to resemble a parental figure (Bergmann, 1988). This is described as *narcissistic love*, as it relates to someone wishing to supplement their deficiencies through being with someone who seems to fulfill them (Bergmann, 1988).

As a student of Freud, Jung was heavily influenced by psychoanalysis but saw it as too preoccupied with sex. He diverged from Freud's theories and believed that humanity had an inherent drive to search for meaning and completeness and that romantic love is the chosen avenue for this in the Western world (Young-Eisendrath & Dawson, 2008). His

explanation of *narcissistic love* is different to Freud's in that the lover does not represent a parent but is the feminine or masculine ideal version of themselves (Young-Eisendrath & Dawson, 2008). Jung made a clear distinction between *infatuation* and *mature* love, dedicating a lot of time to studying this evolution in romantic relationships (Barusch, 2008). He noted that Western cultures have adopted a *symbolic* idea of what love is, relating to courtly and divine love, which is not based in the reality of who the person actually is and is mere fantasy (Barusch, 2008; Young-Eisendrath & Dawson, 2008).

Both Freud and Jung have added a wealth of interesting insights to the study of love and relationships. However, Freud theories were heavily influenced by his personal experiences and he made the mistake of attempting to universalise these very subjective viewpoints. The idea of narcissist love is an interesting one, although labeling it 'love' does not seem to fit well with its description as it seems to be more a lack of. Jung's expansion of this theory is much more robust but still lacks empirical evidence to support it.

Attachment theory of love

Modern psychoanalytic theories on love are related to *attachment theory*, in that an importance is placed on how early childhood development affects future relationships. This work was based on observational techniques, looking at how babies interacted with their primary caregivers while together (Bowlby, 2008) and later also looking at how they reacted during separation (Ainsworth, et al., 2015). Bowlby theorised that love is a learning process which occurs through these early experiences with caregivers (Barusch, 2008). For Bowlby, (2008) an infant who has been brought up in a loving environment will display a *secure* attachment to the primary caregiver, demonstrated by being content to explore the surroundings but returning to their safety when nervous.

Adding to this work on *attachment theory*, Ainsworth, et al., (2015) developed the concept of different attachment styles. Healthy attachment, between infant and caregiver, is described as *secure*, while the unhealthy attachment styles are *insecure-avoidant* and *insecure-ambivalent*. *Securely* attached infants are explained similarly to Bowlby, with an emphasis on the caregiver being sensitive to the needs of the infant. (Ainsworth, et al., 2015). *Insecure-avoidant* infants are those with caregivers who are not sensitive to their needs. *Insecure-ambivalent* infants receive mixed signals from their caregiver, in that, they attend to some needs but not others and this is unpredictable (Ainsworth, et al., 2015). Secure attachment seems to relate to commonly held beliefs about healthy relationships, but Ainsworth, et al., (2015) did not hypothesise on this aspect.

Unlike previous theories, attachment theory has empirical validity as it was based on observational methods. The use of childhood attachment styles to explain attachment and love in adulthood is interesting and does seem to have some support. However, it is based on the premise that love is simply attachment, which is too simplistic.

Triangular theory of love

Sternberg's (1986) *triangular theory* was an important addition to the modern psychological study of love. Similar to attachment theory, it was developed through observational methods, but focused on the issues experienced by married couples (Barusch, 2008). Sternberg (1986) uses the metaphor of a triangle to demonstrate the combining of three different, but connected, aspects of love. These components are: *intimacy*, *passion* and *decision/commitment*, signifying each corner of the triangle. Sternberg, (1986) describes the *intimacy* aspect as how close partners feel to each other and the *warmth* of their relationship; *passion* is related to *attraction* and romantic and sexual drive; while *decision/commitment*, is defined as both the initial *decision* to begin a loving relationship and then later, the *commitment* to continue this long-term (Sternberg, 1986). Intimacy is linked to *emotional investment*; passion is mainly related to *motivational involvement* and decision/commitment is connected to the *cognitive decision* to commit (Sternberg, 1986).

There are eight possible outcomes of Sternberg's (1986) triangle, depending on which of the components are active in a relationship. 1) When none of these three components is present, this would constitute *nonlove*, for example, acquaintances. 2) Intimacy alone is considered *liking*, which can refer to friends and other close, platonic relationships. 3) Passion alone is *infatuation*, or 'love at first sight'. 4) Decision/commitment alone is named *empty love*, occurring in the absence of both passion and intimacy, perhaps at the beginning of an arranged marriage, or towards the end of an unhappy relationship. 5) Intimacy and passion combined without commitment is termed *romantic love*. 6) Intimacy with commitment is *companionate love*. 7) Passion and commitment makes *fatuous love*. 8) *Consummate love* is an amalgamation of the three main components: intimacy, passion and decision/commitment. It is considered to be the ultimate ideal of a healthy and successful romantic relationship (Sternberg, 1986).

The size of the hypothetical triangle is directly related to the amount of love being experienced, where larger triangles indicate more love in a relationship. The shape is also important in Sternberg's (1986) theory, as an equilateral triangle relates to *balanced* love, where each of the three aspects hold similar weight. The three unbalanced triangle options

depict a focus on one of the components over the other two. For example, a triangle that is unevenly pointing towards the passion component, would indicate a relationship where physical attraction, sex and excitement are the most important parts, while perhaps not knowing one another very well and not planning as much for the future.

The notion of an *ideal* self was briefly touched upon earlier when examining Freud's concept of narcissistic love and Jung's theory of projection. Sternberg, (1986) discusses the idea of an *ideal* triangle, which can be described as a person's archetype relationship which they strive to recreate. Difficulties can arise in relationships when the *ideal* and *real* triangles are mismatched. For example, someone has the belief that the passion component is crucial to a healthy relationship and over time, this wanes as other aspects grow, it might lead to them being disappointed and feeling as though their expectations for the relationship have not been met.

Studies carried out by Sternberg and Barnes (1985) found that the main signifier of relationship satisfaction was related to how each partner perceived the other's involvement levels in the relationship, as compared to their own. If both partners believe that the other's triangle, reflecting their experience of the relationship, was similar to their own, this indicates high levels of satisfaction (Sternberg & Barnes, 1985). Also, the triangles do not necessarily need to be equilateral, in order to satisfying, as long as they are matched (Sternberg, 1986). For example, if both partners believe each other to be highly committed to one another, this similarity in perceptions can predict relationship satisfaction. Contrary to this, if one partner thinks of themselves as more committed than the other, this might cause problems.

It is clear that the perceptions of the other partner's experience of the relationship may not always be accurate. This can occur if one partner has a different way of expressing their love to the other and it is not fully understood (Sternberg, 1986). This communication of love is seen as crucial for Sternberg (1986) and detailed that each component has related actions that may indicate how it is expressed in the relationship. Moreover, communication in general was found to be one of the most important parts of a love relationship, in a study by Sternberg and Grajek, (1984).

Sternberg's (1986) triangular theory has support, however, it has not been well-evidenced in later empirical tests. Most of the testing (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1989; Acker & Davis, 1992) used Sternberg Triangular Love Scale (Sternberg, 1988) and fell short of a robust factor analysis. A study by Lemieux and Hale (1999) however, adapted this scale into

a new version, taking on comments from previous studies and the results from this support the theory in its basic form.

There has been very little qualitative research, relating to romantic relationships, which use the triangular theory as a framework. It would be interesting to look at how people's subjective experiences fit into this, if at all. Sternberg's (1986) theory is what will be used in the current study as a lens through which to explore participants personal meanings of love. It should be of value as this theory suggests that love is experienced in a multitude of different ways by each individual.

Additionally, Sternberg (1986) suggests that more work should be done on studying people's *implicit* theories of love and how they have affected their romantic relationships. Implicit theories are those ideas about a particular phenomenon which each person holds, for example, what they believe a healthy relationship looks like (Cobb, et al., 2013). These can affect their cognition and behavior in ways that might not be obvious until further inspection (Cobb, et al., 2013). These implicit theories will be explored through discussing participants' personal views and opinions, with reference to how their experiences may have shaped these, or *vis versa*.

Love in older adulthood

The present literature reflects that love and romantic relationships contribute massively to wellbeing and life satisfaction, especially in later life. There is a direct correlation between companionship in later life and life satisfaction (Grau & Susser, 1989). While a study by Sorokin, Rook & Lu, (2002) found that higher levels of loneliness and lack of companionship predicted future heart problems. Additionally, older adults in romantic relationships report better moods, less loneliness, and less social isolation than their single counterparts (Cornwell & Waite, 2009; Gierveld, 2002; Peters & Liefbroer, 1997); as well as increased vitality (Söderbacka, Nyström & Fagerström, 2017).

It is clear from literature that romantic relationships and companionship, positively affects the wellbeing of older adults. Therefore, the current research, exploring healthy and unhealthy relationship qualities has the potential to add to this field, particularly relationship counseling.

Additionally, considering Scotland has an ageing population, research about and with older adults is needed in order to best understand their needs. With this in mind, it is obvious that the study of older adults' experiences in romantic relationships is warranted, yet is also lacking in the literature, in a Scottish context. Thus, this study aims to address this gap and

contribute a foundational investigation in to the relationship dynamics of older adults in Scotland.

Participants will be asked to reflect on their own beliefs and experiences, positive and negative aspects of relationships, lessons that can be learned, the best ways to communicate and how to deal with conflict. The aim of this study is ultimately to explore how older adults in Scotland experience love in romantic relationships using a psychological lens.

RQ: *How do older adults make sense of love in romantic relationships?*

Methodology

The current study has utilised qualitative research methods within the IPA framework (Smith, Flowers & Osborn, 1997). This particular approach is a bottom-up enquiry, with the aim of understanding how people make sense of their lived experiences (Smith & Osborn, 2004). IPA requires the researcher to delve into the world of the participant and view the phenomenon from their perspective. It is particularly helpful for researching people's shared views and experiences, in a specific context, which is why it has been chosen for this study (Smith & Osborn, 2004).

As IPA is concerned with people's lived experiences, the questions were based around how the participants understand love and what they think makes healthy and unhealthy relationships. While the questions were not all directly asking participants to describe their personal experiences, they left room for people to draw from their experiences if they wished to (Smith, Flowers & Osborn, 1997).

Research Design

Data collection method

The methods used were face-to-face, semi-structured interviews (Smith, Flowers & Osborn, 1997). Semi-structured interviews ask open-ended questions, so participants are able to provide rich detail. They add much needed structure, ensuring conversations stay on topic, while allowing for flexibility to look further into any interesting topics that may arise (those of which are unable to be explored in structured interviews and questionnaires). Additionally, semi-structured interviews are the most popular method of data collection for IPA (Smith & Osborn, 2004).

This method was decided to be preferential to both written questionnaires and focus groups. Questionnaires are often multiple choice which would not provide enough in-depth information for the subject being studied (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Open-ended questionnaires would be more suitable but it is often easier for participants to talk at length than write and these responses tend to be limiting in the depth of explanation they give (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Additionally, there are added benefits to face-to-face interactions in qualitative research, such the interviewer being able to pick up on potential non-verbal cues which can supplement the data (Smith & Osborn, 2003).

Pilot study

The pilot study was helpful as suggestions were given about removing some questions from the schedule and rewording others. Some questions were changed as were deemed to be

too leading, while others needed more prompts to be added to ensure that they would be understood. This process provided the interview schedule with face validity as described in Yardley (2008).

Constructing the interviews

The interview schedule was created from an initial list of themes related to the research question: *How do older adults make sense of love in romantic relationships?* These themes are as follows: what does a healthy relationship look like to them and how is it built; what are the aspects of unhealthy relationships; how have their ideas changed over time (in order to see how experiences may have altered opinions). The participants' personal description of love was seen to be important so this was asked as the first question in order to be able to understand what they meant when they referred to it later.

An interview schedule, found in Appendix A, was then created with a list of themes and questions but these were not prescriptive, so as to give participants the opportunity to have more freedom and decide what aspects of the topic they saw as important, (Smith, Flowers & Osborn, 1997).

Sampling and participants

It was important that participants were 45 years old and over as the study was looking into experiences of older adults. It was also crucial that all participants had been in a long-term romantic relationship at some point in their lives, so as to have personal experiences to draw from during discussion. The length of what is considered 'long-term' was decided by the participants themselves.

A poster, found in Appendix B, was designed to attract potential participants to take part in the study, who fitted the above criteria. These were put up in the researcher's place of work, where three participants were recruited from. In order to recruit more participants, another community engagement centre in the local area was approached, where a further three participants expressed an interest. A total of six participants expressed an interest but one was younger than the age limit of 45 so could not take part, leaving five adults in total, between 48 and 62 years old, with two males and three females.

Conducting interviews

Interviews were organised through email and took place at a time which was most suitable for the participants. The researcher suggested to meet in the place where the participants had been recruited from as they were familiar to both parties. An example of this was the researcher's place of work in a café of a community engagement centre, which had

varying levels of noise. In order to mitigate this, after the first interview, sessions were conducted in a quiet room beside the café.

The interviews lasted between 25-40 minutes and at times had to stop and *then continue* due to some minor interruptions. The researcher spent some time prior to the interview speaking to the participants and building rapport, *which is evidence of good practice* (Smith & Osborn, 2003). This was helped by the fact that two of the participants were already known to the researcher.

At the beginning each participant was given the Plain Language Statement, found in Appendix C, to read over and ask any questions. All participants were happy to continue so were then given a consent form, Appendix D, to sign and date. Participants were then reminded that at any stage they could stop the interview and no questions would be asked. This was important so that participants did not feel pressured to continue as they may not feel as though they have to out of courtesy (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Additionally, participants were told that if they did not want to answer a specific question this was not an issue, for the same reason.

A Dictaphone was used to audio-record the interviews, which allowed the researcher to be completely present and able to actively listen to the participant's account and respond appropriately, as well as building rapport (Smith & Osborn, 2003). A few handwritten notes were taken of things which were emphasised by the participant themselves (Smith & Osborn, 2004). For example, some of the participants tended to go back to specific phrases and the repetition of this signified its importance to them.

Analytical guidelines

After each interview, the audio-recording was manually transcribed, verbatim which demonstrates academic rigour, as no information is lost in the process (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Participants were assigned pseudonyms at the stage of transcription in order to de-identify the data, which is an important ethical consideration (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Only the researcher has access to the key (kept on a password-protected laptop) which identifies the participants using their real name and would then link to contact information.

Ethical considerations

The current study was approved by The School of Education Ethics Committee (Appendix E). The research aligned with the ethical standards of the British Psychological Society.

Interpretative Phenomenological analysis (IPA) was used to analyse the data, following the guidelines set out by Smith & Osborn, (2004). The stages of this are as follows:

Stage 1: Working with one transcript at a time, it was read and re-read to gain an initial understanding of what had been discussed. Preliminary notes were made in the margins during this process which was mostly paraphrasing.

Stage 2: Transcripts were coded and a list was created by compiling similar codes, an example of this can be found in Appendix F. This was done for each transcript by starting from scratch. Through this process larger themes were found and each emergent theme was divided up and examples from the text were copied into a table for each interview, Appendix G.

Stage 3: Upon further analysis and interpretation, it was clear that there were many crossovers throughout the transcripts. Themes emerged which covered either all or most of the accounts and these were chosen to be included in the final analysis

Reflexivity

I attempted to approach the topic with curiosity and in a bid to understand the participants' lived experiences which have influenced their opinions on the subject, which is in keeping with IPA guidelines (Smith & Osborn, 2004). I let the discussion run into areas the participant seemed interested in, probing ideas that appeared to be important to them while staying on topic (Smith & Osborn, 2004).

I enjoy talking about love and relationships with others and I deeply believe in the validity of personal experience. This has clearly influenced the topic of my research and the direction it has taken. It was interesting for me to talk to older adults and learn about their life history, think about how their experiences have affected their opinions and how these may have changed over the course of their life. Although I am not an 'older adult', I feel as though my experience with romantic relationships has enabled me to be in a position to conduct this study through the lens of IPA as a personal 'lived experience' of the topic is important to be able to understand it more fully (Smith & Osborn, 2004).

Results

The following results are analysed through IPA (Smith & Osborn, 2004).

Transcription symbols are as follow: If ... this means that text is missing. If .. it signifies a pause in speech. [] is where speech has been paraphrased, or a non-verbal expression.

There were four master themes which arised through analysis, with corresponding emergent themes. These were as follows:

1) *Defining love*

This master theme seeks to explore participants' initial explanations of love. This came from the warm-up question: What is love? But some people were able to speak at length about this and had different definitions. As we have seen previously, there are countless theories about what love is. However, it was important to understand what the term means to the participants, firstly, in order to have a frame of reference for the rest of the discussion.

Four of five participants initially agreed that love is an emotion. However, later it became clear that their definitions were much broader than this and included the expression of love through various actions. These will be discussed in later themes.

The first emergent theme being considered is: *Importance*, which covers the significance of romantic love in the participants' lives. The second emergent theme is: *Fate or Choice?*. outlining participants' beliefs about how the process of love occurs.

a) *Importance*

For Dana, there is no substitute for love. Three of five participants, all of whom are currently in relationships, agree that romantic love is one of the most important experiences in life:

After air and water... and food, it's probably the next one down the list. Because if you want to have a decent life, you don't think you can have one without having at least felt love once in your life, you know? To be loved is.. it's *essential* for me... (Jim)

Jim relates it to his basic needs in life. He believes that 'feeling love', no matter how fleetingly, has been vital to his own human experience. Paul agrees that love is fundamental to life and like Jim, links it to 'needs':

A think ever since a was a wee boy, a realised, that's what we're here for. A think every human being naturally is... in a normal state, that's what we.. *need*. That's part of bein' a human being a think is, y'know, the companionship. (Paul)

He believes that it is a normal and necessary part of being alive on earth and has had these views since childhood. However, this seems quite idealistic as he was still a child and had not experienced romantic love, yet considered it to be the most important thing in life. Also, he mentions that, for him, love is companionship, but can this intimacy not be created through simply having close friends? Paul discusses the concept of being happily single and due to his belief, that being in a relationship is 'natural', he argues that, people who express this view must be lying to themselves or have been 'hurt' in some way in the past to bring them to the point where they are content in this reality.

For Mariella, this idea of pain seems to be a significant factor in her acceptance of being alone. Interview with Mariella tended to go off topic a lot to talk about her career. It became obvious how important this was to her and that she did not 'have time' for relationships at the moment. However, through further discussion it became clear that this was only partly true as she uncovered past trauma in relationships and how these have affected her current struggles with trust.

Mariella came to the conclusion that although 'it would be nice' to have a 'life partner' by her side, she has been able to come through substantial challenging periods, her mother getting terminal cancer, without one and now feels that it is not necessary for her to be in a long-term relationship. In part, she acknowledges that her past experiences of heartbreak and emotional abuse have meant that she finds it more difficult to trust and open up to partners. This has led her to shy away from long-term commitments and the potential for 'love' in the recent past.

Both of the participants who are currently single (Mariella and Sandra) mentioned that the love and support of their families have been incredibly vital to them as it has been a constant in their lives when relationships had failed. Although they had been hurt in the past and it has taken a while for them to recover from this, they still held out hope that the future would be brighter in this part of their lives. Both believed that they had yet to find their soulmate, which leads on to the next emergent theme.

b) Fate or Choice?

Do we choose who we fall in love with or is it just a game of chance? For most participants, it seems to be elements of both. This emergent theme will explore the concepts of fate in terms of what role luck plays in relationships, what people's ideas around soulmates are and what aspects of love they consider to be related to making a decision.

Following on from the previous theme, three of five participants mentioned that they believed in the concept of having a soulmate, one person who they are 'meant to be' with. Interestingly, only one of the three said they had experienced this first-hand:

We were both, a think wantin' the same things out of life, and we met each other at that time. So then you think to yourself, is there a soulmate? Were we meant to meet at that time, both of us as individuals? Is that something that ye agree in a different level of existence? A don't know. But it felt like that, a have to say, y'know. Either that or it was just an incredible piece of fortuitousness. Who knows? (Jim)

He seems to believe they came into each other's life at exactly the right moment as they were at the same stage in their lives. This is interesting as he previously expressed that he 'wasn't ready' at the time and had to wait a while longer to accept that this relationship was right for him. He seems to debate whether this was to do with luck or fate but errs on the side of them being right for each other.

Sandra, however, is adamant that finding 'the one' would be down to fate, however she does seem to hold contradictory views about this:

I think it can be a choice... because I don't think anyone can dictate who you fall in love *with*. That *is* your own personal choice. Who you feel you're going to *find* romantic love with. (Sandra)

Here she states that falling in love with someone and is a conscious 'choice'. Perhaps these views are confused as she has not actually experienced finding her 'soulmate'. Paul would disagree with this idea of choice:

A think a lot of people look for it [love], so they might think it's a choice, I'll choose to be wi' him or be wi' her.. But naw, a think if you were bein' honest then ye don't have much control over that emotion, any more than you do any other emotion. (Paul)

He believes that being in love with someone is not a choice as it is emotional. However, later when talking about past relationships, he said that he had rushed things at times and perhaps made some mistakes, which seems to suggest that he had the choice to continue or to end the relationship. This can be interpreted to mean that he thinks the initial falling in love is not a choice as it is dictated by emotions but then continuing to be with someone is

Three of five participants talk about how luck seems play a part in romantic relationships. Both Sandra and Paul note that they believe others who found their partner early on in life and have been with them since are 'lucky'. This is clearly due to the fact that they have both experienced divorces which have been emotionally draining. They seem to be slightly jealous of those who have not been through this turmoil. For Sandra, she thinks of her own situation as 'unfortunate', which may be related to the fact that she has been unable to find a lasting relationship. Although Paul identifies that others are lucky in some respects, he also considers himself to be fortunate, which again, may be linked to being happily remarried very recently.

Throughout the interview, Jim continually expresses his gratitude for many aspects of his life but especially the love he has been surrounded by:

It's important to nurture it [love] when you find ye have it. Cause not everybody's that fortunate, y'know? I have been lucky. (Jim)

He is 'lucky' that he has this love and has been given the chance to express this fully in his current relationship. This idea that having a life filled with love in his older age, It is almost as if he feels he has not been deserving of this because of his past, having regrets about mistakes he has made and it seems he is slightly ashamed of these.

2) *Unhealthy relationships*

This master theme is important as it gives the reader a sense of what aspects of relationships they believe to be potentially harmful. All participants had strong opinions on the topics that came up in discussion, either drawing from their own experiences of being in these relationships or being around them.

Unhealthy relationships are not discussed in terms of those when you are young vs old, but this does come into the conversation. It is more related to relationships which are based on an aspect of love that are considered destructive. For example, the emergent theme:

control, is about the experience of trying to change your partner in some way and make them become someone else.

a) Control

All participants mention the harmful notion of trying to change your partner. This is understood as an attempted control over another person and seems to signify an unhealthy relationship.

From Dana's perspective, she is adamant that you cannot change the 'nature' of a person, no matter how hard you try. Her personal experience was trying to change her partner when they were much younger and failing. Eventually, over time, she realised that this would not happen and she would have to accept this reality. Her definition of what love is, 'understanding and accepting the differences', has clearly come as a result of this learning process throughout her relationship.

The idea of trying to change your partner does not sit well with Jim either. This is likely due to the fact that he has experienced this first-hand. His ex-wife was very controlling and attempted to morph him into the person she wanted him to be. Before this, his mother tried doing the same and he resisted against this. Additionally, Jim describes the very macho culture he was surrounded by as repressing his true desires and not allowing him to fully express himself.

Jim felt stifled from all angles until he was in his mid-30's and had a crucial 'turning point'. Him and his wife split up at the same time as changing his career path, moving from the male-dominated world of engineering to the 'literary world'. This transformation was an incredibly difficult process for him, recounting that he, 'lay in bed night, after night, after night, on ma own, terrified cos ma life had changed so much.' It was important that Jim made what he saw as necessary changes to himself and his life, on his own terms. However, this was not something that someone else, be it his wife, mother, or society, could dictate for him. For Jim, this attempt at control is the complete opposite of acceptance as does not seem to be found in a loving relationship:

[Trying to change someone means they] 'are in love, not with the person in front of them, but the person they think they're gonna be,' (Jim).

Their 'love', if it can be called that, is not based in reality and both Jim and Dana agree that they can be traced back to the concept of expectations of an 'ideal' partner or relationship.

These unmet expectations can be incredibly frustrating for the person on the receiving end, as both Jim and Mariella can attest to, as they do not feel valued for who they are. It can also be 'painful' for the person who is attempting to control their partner as they will continually be 'disappointed' when their partner fails to live up to the fantasy they have created in their mind (Jim).

Mariella disclosed that she has been emotionally abused by previous partners who have tried to control her in some way and change who she is:

Mariella: I don't like men who are abusive to women, either.. cause I've been, I've experienced that, all women have in some way, shape or form... when they try n change you, manipulate you to the way, conform to the way they want you to be and it can be done gradually that a woman doesn't *realise* that, that's happening to her, until it's too late... And you can see the most intelligent women.. You think, why am I allowing that?

Int: Why do you think that happens?

Mariella: I think they just want to be loved.

Here, she displays frustration that an 'intelligent woman' would 'allow' the abuse to continue. However, there is also an understanding that the desire to be loved is powerful and can potentially override rational thought. This is perhaps her attempting to explain her own experiences but it is unclear. Mariella later mentions that some people 'mistake abuse as love', which may also be an indication of drawing from personal experience but it was not probed.

3) *Relationships as work*

All of the participants agreed that individuals are required to put in effort in order to create and develop healthy relationships. This was discussed in various terms. The first emergent theme: *working together*, explores the idea that couples need to both be in tune with each other and be putting an effort in to make things work, especially through disagreements.

The second emergent theme: *self-development*, relates to effort which is made individually which leads to a strengthening of the bond between partners.

a) Working together

Although all participants believed that putting in work in a relationship is necessary, Sandra and Dana explicitly mention that it is usually hard work. For Sandra, it seems as though her attempts to make past relationships work have failed so this may be why she sees it as challenging. Dana, on the other hand, has the personal philosophy that love is about ‘self-sacrifice’ and her relationship is something she has been working at for her entire adult life.

Everyone agreed that discussions are a crucial part of relationships. Dana explains that they help you to be able to form a ‘realistic’ idea about your partner which is not based on personal expectations. For both Dana and Paul, are attempts at trying to ‘understand’ one another from the other’s perspective. This is, in part, why they are so important in relationships. Paul widens this idea of discussions to relate to any other type of ‘negotiations’.

As far as disagreements are concerned, all participants agreed that they are normal, healthy parts of any relationship but it is how they are handled which can lead to potential problems. For Sandra, communication through conflict is crucial:

I feel if people maybe don’t agree on certain things, and they don’t want to say... y’know it leads to a bit of mistrust between one another. Whereas if you maybe sit down and discuss issues which are buggin’ ye, it does help to smooth the path a wee bit. (Sandra)

She states that people need to talk things through and sort them out. Not doing so will cause more issues to arise such as ‘mistrust’ as partners are not able to express themselves and it may be obvious that they are hiding something. She later explains that without this open communication, problems can build up and become bigger, ‘...then all of a sudden [it] just explodes...’ Her usage of vivid imagery suggests that she is speaking from experience.

Dana’s advice during times of disagreements is as follows:

Working together and argue about that and make that person if you... he, not selfish, he self-sacrificed... together you can worked on it... if there is no selfish, you can do

everything! Because that person *trying*.. and you are trying as well. So I, when you something you trying to get something, you can worked on it. For that reason is argument, the best. And find *the way*.. how that person, your partner, accepted... your point of view. (Dana)

For Dana, there is an importance placed on ‘trying’, putting the effort in being necessary for a relationship to be able to develop. If both partners are willing to work on the relationship in this way there is hope and the emphasis is on the attempt rather than the outcome as it demonstrates love. Dana believes that if you are not happy with certain behaviours or habits of your partner, you should discuss it and it come to an agreement over time. If the partners’ cares about each other, they will try to adapt and change certain things. However, this is different from trying to change the nature of someone, as discussed previously in *control*. Jim also discusses this aspect of being ‘better’ for your partner and working on things together for the benefit of the relationship.

b) *Self-development*

Dana’s idea of self-development is related to learning the importance of ‘self-sacrifice’ which then leads to a greater understanding and trust of your partner. This notion of ‘self-sacrifice’ was not a view that was shared with the others and perhaps highlights cultural differences, in that, coming from the Middle East, this concept of servitude to a partner is more pronounced. However, the core idea of self-development being crucial for the health of relationships, was shared by everyone.

Mariella takes the concept of self-development incredibly seriously and relates it to ‘self-love’. She specifically talks at length about the importance of this in her own journey and that she feels she is not quite at the stage to be able to commit to a long-term relationship as she does not fully love herself. Paul also explicitly mentions the importance of self-love in his own life. His understanding of it is to do with being comfortable in your own skin and ‘accepting’ your flaws. He also believes that this process is crucial before you are able to accept the flaws of your future partner:

Before you can love anybody else, you *needty* love yourself. And it took me a long time, it took me a long time to understand what that actually... what that phrase means... if you say ‘love yourself’ if you put parenthesis round ‘love’ and love means respect and trust... ‘yourself’, if you can *do that*, you *havety* be able to that. Even just

understandin' yourself. You huvty huv that sorted, or youll never be able to.. you'll have to have that understanding about yourself... (Paul)

This seems to be slightly in contradiction with his previously discussed beliefs (in: *importance of love*) that people are not truly happy to be alone. Surely having time and space to develop this self-love would mean that you would spend a period of time being single and working on yourself. For Paul, during this period of time he would then not believe that people can be happy and fulfilled? Perhaps he means that he doesn't believe people are content to be single for the rest of their lives and are not interested in starting another relationship. This seems to be the case as later in the discussion he talks about how proud he is of his daughter for staying single as she has not 'found' the right person to be with yet. Sandra also discusses this idea and believes that:

[being single] gives you time to reflect and think more about the mistakes you've made and you sort of make up in your mind that it's not going to happen again. You feel like you've maybe got used to certain [unintelligible] and you don't want that to happen again so are prone to reflect more on what you've done and think about where you want your next destination... to make sure it's different next time... [laughing].
(Sandra)

For Sandra, having time alone has been important for her personal development, following the breakdown of long-term relationships. She needed a chance to look back and process everything in order to learn from it and 'make sure it's different'. Sandra's choice of words here seems as though there is an element of blaming herself for things that have went wrong in the past and this time on her own has led to ruminating and overthinking. Sandra mentioned that she had regrets and picking the wrong person. All of the participants express regret for past decisions however they believe that they have learned from these experiences. For Jim and Paul, they realise that although they may have made mistakes, it has brought them to the stage they currently are in life and they are grateful for that.

4) Qualities of healthy love

The main qualities of a healthy relationship are discussed in this master theme. The first emergent theme: *Being there*, will explore the idea that most of the participants agreed that one of the most important factors of a relationship was having someone to rely on and trust

through good and bad times. The second emergent theme: *Lovers as friends*, is linked to this concept but is focused on how participants tended to describe their perfect romantic relationships, similar to that of having a very close friend or companion.

a) Being there

This is a simple concept but it was obvious it was important to all of the participants. For Sandra, it was of particular significance, explaining that she wanted:

...somebody who's dependable and who wouldn't want to just walk away at the first opportunity. I think the older you become, the more that's the kind of thing you're looking for... as you get older, personality and the kind of person that you're looking for changes. (Sandra)

It is clear she wants someone who will stay, considering that previous partners had decided not to. Loyalty and 'dependability' seem to be the most important factors for her as this is what was missing from previous relationships. Mariella also expresses this need to have someone to rely on when things get difficult:

I just want somebody that can... just be my rock when I need someone to be there and can cuddle me. Love is seeing somebody at their worst and being there at the worst. (Mariella)

She also describes wanting to be with someone who will 'be there' for her not leave when time get tough. She seems to be expressing a yearning for unconditional love that she has not experienced in the past. Mariella has a similar relationship experiences to Sandra in that, her previous partner left her when her mother got cancer. This has clearly had a negative impact on her and has led to her having an even stronger desire to attain this quality in future romantic relationships.

Another factor that was seen as crucial to healthy relationships for participants was 'mutual respect' as it lays a solid foundation on which to build a strong bond.

b) Lovers as friends

This emergent theme was explicitly mentioned by two of the five participants who talk about the importance of being in a relationship with your 'best friend':

...the best part, is havin' a *pal*, yer *best* pal... there. To share things way, whether it's just a meal or, anything really... "What've done today?", y'know that kinda thing, "what were ye up to today?". Aye. The wee things, the *wee* things are important.
(Paul)

...you're with your best friend. That's the most important thing. He's your best friend, but you have time outside that relationship and you have mutual friends, but you have your own friends and you have your own life and your own, lane. (Mariella)

Both participants emphasise the simplicity of this idea. Paul talks about how the little daily conversations he has with his partner are of significance, while Mariella focusses on the independence aspect of having a lover who is also a close friend in that you share some things but still 'have your own life'.

It is clear this idea of friendship being important also applies to the other three through their choice of words. One example of this is:

I think if people genuinely *like* each other, more than love each other to begin with, if they really like each other as people, if they have interests in common and they maybe want to work towards achieving certain goals together, I think that makes a difference. (Sandra)

Sandra specifically mentions that she believes that friendship should come before beginning a romantic relationship. This is something that she does not seem to have done in the past as she talks about 'rushing' and 'regretting' it later. Additionally, sharing a sense of humour was noted to be of importance to Paul and Sandra, which also relates to the idea of friendship.

Discussion

The research question for this study was: *what does love mean to older adults in Scotland?*. The themes were: 1) *Defining love*, a) *Importance*, b) *Fate or Choice?* 2) *Unhealthy relationships*, a) *Control*. 3) *Relationships as work*, a) *Working together*, b) *Self-development*. 4) *Qualities of healthy love*, a) *Being there*, b) *Lovers as friends*.

The results were that older adults had a variety of ways they have experienced love, both in healthy and unhealthy relationships. They believed that the key to a successful, loving relationship is based on open communication and making an effort for each other. This supports Sternberg's (1986) theory in that he highlights the important of communication as one of the main predictors of a happy relationship and additionally that the components of love need to be expressed through action.

For all of the participants it is clear that love is crucial to the human experience. In this regard, the first emergent theme: *importance*, supports the triangular theory as the concept of 'love' is being theorised about at all so it must have value. Participants also agree that there are different types of love, for example, 'family love' which would be considered *companionate love* (Sternberg, 1986). However, when participants talk of love in romantic relationships, this could relate to one of a few different types and does not necessarily refer to *romantic love*. For example, Jim mentions that he has experienced love without liking, which would be considered *empty love* as it lacks this component (Sternberg, 1986). Paul explains that his idea of love is related to companionship, which could either be considered *companionate* or *consummate* love.

The second emergent theme: *Fate or Choice?* relates to the passion component and the decision component of the triangular theory (Sternberg, 1986). Sandra believes love is a 'choice' you make, linked to the *decision/commitment* component (Sternberg, 1986) which is of more able to be controlled, stable and predictable. Paul also agrees with this decision aspect of staying in a relationship. However, for Paul, falling in love is not a conscious decision, mentioning a lack of control over this. This is linked to the *passion* component which is not as controllable as the other, is unpredictable and fast-acting (Sternberg, 1986).

The concept of soulmates mentioned by Mariella and Sandra could be linked to *fatuous love* as there is the imaging of an instant passion which draws them together, with the commitment that they are 'meant to be' for each other, while lacking any real intimacy. Jim's idea of having a soulmate, however, is based more on his experience of this and could be considered *companionate* or *consummate love*, due to deciding to commit to one another and building intimacy over the years (Sternberg, 1986).

In unhealthy relationships, the emergent theme: *control* discusses the insidious nature of attempting to change who someone is to fit in line with your expectations. This idea could be explained by the concept of *ideal* and *real/experienced* triangles (Sternberg, 1986). The *ideal* triangle is represented by hopes and expectations of what the relationship and partner *should* be like, while the *real/experienced* triangle is the perceived reality of what it is. If these triangles are mismatched, it can cause problems in the relationship as disappointment then occurs (Sternberg, 1986). In order to readjust this and be able to go one, one partner might attempt to change the real triangle to match their ideal, through which they are changing their partner's behaviour. This explanation may explain part of the motivation aspect of controlling another but it is clear there are many more factors that could potentially be involved in this power struggle, for example linking to insecurity and Jung's projection theory.

Communication was found to be one of the most important parts of a love relationship, in a study by Sternberg and Grajek, (1984). This finding is supported by the experiences of all of the participants, in the emergent theme: *working together*, who believe that discussions are crucial and can help build other aspects of a relationship.

Following on from previous discussion regarding the discrepancy between real and ideal triangles being linked to 'control'. The other option of readjusting mismatched triangles is to adapt their own ideals to fit with what is being experienced (Sternberg, 1986). This is akin to what Dana explains is important to her in relationships, being able to 'understand and accept the differences' of her partner and not try to change him based on her expectations.

In regard to the *intimacy* component, Berscheid (1983) argues that a relationship needs interruptions in order for it not to stagnate, which can be related to Mariella's idea that couples should go on date nights in order to 'keep thing fresh.

When talking about the self in regard to expressing love through actions, Sternberg, (1986) refers to the importance of how individuals need to work on the way that they express love to their partner. This idea is partly supported by the emergent theme: self-development, in that it is clear participants believe that there is an aspect of work to be done on the self in order to be ready for a healthy relationship.

Consummate love, for Sternberg (1986) can be argued to be the prototype of a healthy relationship. In the master theme: *qualities of love*, there are aspects of this description of an ultimate relationship however the *passion* component does not seem to be of utmost importance at first look. Although, taking on board Sternberg's (1986) argument that the

components are best expressed through action, there are examples of participants ‘hugging and kissing’ (Jim) which link to the *passion* component.

The strength of a romantic relationship is revealed by latent intimacy, which may or may not be obvious to the partners (Sternberg, 1986). This can be tested during periods where things change, for example, when one partner leaves, how much do they miss each other? Jim’s experience can attest to this as he believes that ‘missing each other’ is an important part of building this intimacy as it makes you realise how close you really are to one another.

In the first emergent theme of ‘qualities of healthy love’: *being there*, Sandra and Mariella describe their longing to have someone who is dependable, loyal and will not leave them when times get tough. For Sternberg, (1986) these qualities are expressions of the *commitment* component of love and are crucial to feeling loved in a relationship.

In the second emergent theme: *lovers as friends*, most participants talk about the concept of having a ‘best friend’ as a partner, which can be related to *companionate* love (Sternberg, 1986). Sandra believes that ‘liking’ someone before loving them is crucial to developing a strong relationship. Also as a component of Sternberg’s (1986) theory of love, he notes that it can lead to consummate love. However, it is not explained whether these relationships are more or less successful than those which begin through the passionate route.

For these particular older adults in Scotland, many of them express gratitude for the love they have in their life and see it as a crucial aspect of the human experience. They believe that the secret to a healthy relationship is based on mutual respect, understanding and effort. While attempting to control your partner is seen as particularly harmful and not indicative of a loving relationship.

The current study offers support for Sternberg’s (1986) theory, particularly regarding the importance of communication and the expression of love through action. However, it does not offer the depth of description needed to explain all of the findings of the research.

Contributions

In terms of its greater contribution, the present study investigates aspects of what older adults experience in romantic relationships, both healthy and unhealthy. By capturing the ideas and opinions of older adults, the findings of this study have contributed to current theories in the field regarding aging relationship dynamics. This could potentially be used to help others, for example in the context of counselling psychology (ie. relationship or marriage counselling).

Limitations

It would have been better if there had been more than one interview session with each participant but given the circumstances, limited resources and time constraints, the interviews provided sufficient data for the task. Due to interviews taking part in a community engagement centre, there were difficulties with this due to noise and distractions. The first interview was conducted in a café which, although was not particularly busy, this along with the fact that the interviewee's first language was not English, made it difficult to make out some of the things being said in the recording. Thankfully, not too much was lost but for the next interviews, another quiet room of the centre was used to conduct the interviews, after asking permissions.

Additionally, during the interviews, I did have pre-conceptions about what people might say and at times had to stop myself from passing judgement on the accuracy of their insights. However, as the interviews went on I was more able to accept people's experiences as exactly what they were, subjective, just as my own are. Of course, I had my own answers to many of the questions, derived from personal experience. I have my own ideas about what love is and how it should be built. At times, I noticed myself asking leading questions, partly due to the fact that the Sandra was not as open as the Mary had been, which required more probing. However, I acknowledged that this was coming from my own biases on the topic and adjusted my questioning appropriately.

Future directions

One way of gaining a new insight into this topic would be to interview couples separately and find out if their ideas are similar. This could then be linked to Sternberg's (1986) concept of real, ideal and perceived triangles.

In line with comparing accounts, future studies could interview both young people and older people, asking similar questions and getting their opinions to see how they relate or differ. This would be an interesting way of looking at love from a developmental perspective. Further to this, it would be helpful to look more into potential barriers that make it difficult for older adults to experience and build healthy relationships.

It was obvious that the participants enjoyed talking about their experiences and giving their opinions. It seemed as though many of them had not spoken about the ideas they discussed in a while as there were contradictions and changes of ideas throughout the dialogues.

The current study has explored how older adults in Scotland experience love and what it has meant to them throughout their life.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule

Warm-up

- 1) What is love? What does it mean to you?

Qualities in a partner

- 1) Describe your ideal partner
 - a. What are the most important things?
- 2) Do you think opposites attract?
 - a. What are the most important things that should be the same, and what can be different?
- 3) What do you think about the idea of soul mates?
 - a. Or that you are 'meant to be' with one person?

Opinions on love

- 4) How important do you think love is in life?
 - a. Should romantic relationships be the main focus? Why or why not?
- 5) Is love a choice or does it just happen?
- 6) Do you think things should develop naturally or have relationship goals in mind?
 - a. Do you think it is good to be friends before you get in relationship?
 - b. How long should you wait before kissing, having sex? Does this matter?
- 7) How accurately do you think movies represent love?
 - a. Is there one in particular you can think of that you relate to, or even one that you think of that it is nothing like?
 - b. What about songs?

Looking back

- 1) What were your ideas about love when you were younger?
 - a. What were your opinions, expectations, wants, needs?
- 2) Have these changed over the years? How? Why?
 - a. Have you learned any lessons?
 - b. Is there anything you would tell your younger self?

Appendix B: Recruitment Poster



If you would be interested in taking part, please email me at:

2103112u@student.gla.ac.uk



Appendix C: Plain Language Statement



College of Social
Sciences

Participant Information Sheet

Exploring older adults' opinions of love and romantic relationships

For more information please contact:

Dominique Ucbas u@student.gla.ac.uk
Dr. Dely Elliot dely.elliott@glasgow.ac.uk

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the study is to find out more about people's views of love and romantic relationships, how these may have changed over the life cycle, and how they influence wellbeing. We would like to compile accounts of what people think are the key elements which lead to successful romantic relationships and aspects which may act as barriers.

Why have I been chosen?

You have self-identified as over 45 years old and have been, or are currently, in a long-term romantic relationship.

Do I have to take part?

No. You do not have to take part. You are free to leave at any time without giving a reason.

What will happen to me if I take part?

You will take part in one 25-40 minute, face-to-face interview about your personal opinions on love and romantic relationships. The interview will be audio-recorded in order to be transcribed for analysis later. You do not have to answer all of the questions asked if you do not want to. If you experience any emotional reactions during or following the interview and wish to talk to someone, you may contact The Samaritans free help-line (116 123) available 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

Appendix D: Consent Form



College of Social Sciences

Consent Form

Title of Project: Exploring older adults' opinions of love and romantic relationships

Name of Researcher: Dominique Ucbas @student.gla.ac.uk
Supervisor: Dr. Dely Elliot dely.elliott@gla.ac.uk

I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

I consent to interviews being audio recorded.

I agree to take part in the above study as per the conditions outlined in the Participant Information Sheet.

I agree to take part in this research study []

I do not agree to take part in this research study []

Name of Participant..... Signature.....

Date.....

Name of Researcher..... Signature.....

Date.....

Appendix E: Ethical Approval

CSS May 2016



College of Social
Sciences

Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Research Involving Human Subjects
Notification of Ethics Application Outcome – UG and PGT Applications

Application Details

Application Type: PGT Application Number: CSS/SOE/2017/279
 Applicant's Name: Dominique Ucbas Project Title: Exploring older adults' opinions of love
 and romantic relationships

Application StatusApproved – Pending Permissions (please see below)Approved – No Permissions Required xNot approved – Minor Recommendations only (please see overleaf)Not approved – Full Resubmission Required (please see overleaf)

Note: Start and End Dates of Approval will only be given when ethical approval has been granted and when all the relevant permissions have been received.

Start Date: upon approvalEnd Date:**Permissions**

Please find below the list of permissions that you MUST obtain and submit to the Ethics Administrator before commencing with data collection. You can either provide a scanned copy of the permission letters to: education-ethics@glasgow.ac.uk, or send a hard copy to: C. Paterson PGT Office St Andrew's Building 11 Eldon Street Glasgow G3 6NH

Permission required from:

n/a

Received in Admin Office:

Appendix F: Example of Codes

Interview 4 (Paul)- Codes

Defining love

Universal love
 Meaning of life/Hardwired to love/ Need love
 Happy alone?
 Falling in love
 No control / Strong emotion

Qualities

Healthy

Companion/ best friend/ Sharing your life/ Deep connection
 Mutual respect
 Honesty/ truth
 Shared values/experiences
 Humour
 Express self
 Space, time alone

Unhealthy

Empty love/ superficial
 Immature love/ Rushing
 Physical attraction/ instant attraction
 Regret

Relationship as work

Reconcile, not stubborn, forgiving
 Negotiation / Communication
 Relationship as job

Self-development as part of this

Self-love, self-acceptance, understand yourself - Superficial vs deep love of self
 Confidence, arrogance difference
 Acceptance of flaws (self and partner)
 Worth, value of self – learning
 Non- judgemental of others

Issues

Fantasy vs reality
 Unlucky in love - Lucky/ Fortunate in life
 Pain/ hurt/ Heartbreak
 Positive influences - Negative outside influences
 Idealistic/ romantic

Appendix G: Example of Themes

Interview 4 Themes	
Defining love	<p>It means everythin'. It's what makes the world go roon. Without it, we're nothin'! (1, 3-4)</p> <p>A think ever since a was a wee boy, a realised, that's what we're here for. A think every human being naturally is... in a normal state, that's what we.. <i>need</i>. That's part of bein' a human being a think is, y'kown, the companionship. (1, 16-18)</p> <p>...personal love is also.. you <i>havety</i> have that! You cani go without it. (1, 24-25)</p> <p>...a don't believe it's a natural state, for human being's to be in, to be happy on their own. (1-2, 32-33)</p> <p>The physical.. falling in love, is an emotion, yeah. (2, 52)</p>
Choice/ Fate	<p>A think a lot of people look for it, so they might think it's a choice, I'll choose to be wi' him or be wi' her... But naw, a think if you were bein' honest then ye don't have much control over that emotion, any more than you do any other emotion. (2, 46-48)</p> <p>...we <i>are</i> what we are and who we are through mistakes that we've made and [laughing] so you cani.. we learn from those mistakes. (8 226-227)</p>
Mature love/ Healthy	<p>Respect. Honesty... (4, 110)</p> <p>Similar values (5, 134)</p> <p>Shared experience and shared happiness. (5, 148-149)</p> <p>Cause that's what a love about her, that's one ae the things a love about her, her <i>daftness</i>. It doesny annoy me. (7, 196-197)</p>
Lovers as friends	<p>...part of bein' a human being a think is, y'kown, the companionship. (1, 17-18)</p> <p>...av always realised that it's very, very important to have that companionship... And it is cause a think it's what makes human beings human. (9, 264-265)</p> <p>...when you talk about personal relationships, the wider spectrum of life, is just as important. Y'know these qualities that ye huv for your partner and your family,</p>