

# EVOLUTIONARY LOVE

One Love—  
Kosmic and Impersonal,  
Intimate and Personal<sup>1</sup>

IN MUCH OF CONTEMPORARY ENLIGHTENMENT teaching rooted in Eastern sources, the evolutionary impulse is assumed to be impersonal in its essential nature.<sup>2</sup> In this sense, it is viewed as being beyond and higher than the “merely personal.” Sharp distinctions are made between absolute love, which is considered “real,” and relative love, which is said to have nothing to do with absolute love at all, so much so that they should not be “called by the same term” or in any way compared.<sup>3</sup> This teaching, which has been referred to at times as impersonal enlightenment, reflects a powerful mystical teaching that views enlightenment as moving beyond the personal.<sup>4</sup>

As I have already implied in our earlier discussion of the personal and impersonal visions of enlightenment, in many explicit passages this teaching seems to mistakenly conflate the personal with the separate self’s egoic personality.<sup>5</sup> The personal is therefore relegated to the realm of ego, and seen as an expression of the striving and grasping of separate self. It is taught that to evolve beyond ego (ego being understood as the personal egoic personality) is to align with the impersonal evolutionary process, or to awaken the impersonal creative impulse of evolution that lives in you. The higher Authentic Self, which Zen master Maezumi Roshi referred to as the “free functioning human being,”<sup>6</sup> is considered to be an awakened impersonal function. The assumption rooted in the great traditions is that the awakened self, and the evolutionary impulse or process with which the awakened

self aligns and even incarnates, is profoundly impersonal, that it is utterly beyond the personal.<sup>7</sup> Evolutionary processes and impulses are assumed to be impersonal. All of this is a true and important teaching. But from the perspective of Unique Self enlightenment, it is only part of the story.

In the teaching of the Unique Self mystics and in the leading edge of Integral Theory, the inner nature of the evolutionary impulse is none other than love. That love is both intensely personal love and at the same time fully beyond the personal—an impersonal love. Deeper truth always lives in paradox. *Holiness is not paradise but paradox.* The impersonal evolutionary impulse, which beats in your personal heart, is the very heart of the kosmos. It is one love. Personal and impersonal are simply distinct faces of the One.

In a dialogue on love that I did with John Mackey, the founder of Whole Foods, John said, “Love is not weak. Love is strong.”<sup>8</sup> He then talked about the strong force of love in the Whole Foods organizational culture that he developed. John was absolutely right. Love is not weak. Love is strong. It is the strongest force in the Uni-verse. John was intuitively pointing to the great teaching of one love.\*

To really get the great esoteric teaching of one love, to know love as the strongest force in the Uni-verse, we first have to understand that love is not just a feeling. Rather, love is the motivating force driving and animating the entire Uni-verse.<sup>9</sup> *Love is not merely a human emotion. Love is both the currency of connection between human beings and the essential Eros that drives the evolutionary process as a whole.* Love is the Eros of all relationship even as it is the very Eros of evolution itself. Personal and impersonal love are one. One Love. Evolutionary Love.

At this point I want to share with you something of the Great Story of One Love. It is the deepest insight we have into the nature of all-that-is, an understanding shared by the great traditions and implicitly supported by leading-edge scientists. It is this story that is the narrative and mechanism of evolution itself.

\*This essay emerged from the first dialogue in the Future of Love Series between Ken Wilber and Marc Gafni. It is a version of that core content which additional pieces integrated at a later date by Marc. This might be considered a first take on this material. A fuller essay on Evolutionary Love by Ken and Marc is forthcoming in a future publication.

There is one thing upon which virtually all the great traditions of knowing fully agree. The transcendent, unmanifest Thatness<sup>10</sup> decided to move from nothing to something. From infinite no-thingness to Uni-verses of infinite diversity, from the splendid eternal perfection of aloneness to dynamic evolutionary imperfection of relationship. The Unique Self mystics realized that this mysterious movement of manifestation within divinity is motivated by love.<sup>11</sup> The great traditions, supported today by the implications of quantum physics, taught that this process of manifestation takes place anew in every moment. The mystics were able to access something of the intention of mystery which motivates manifestation. They did so through the investigative methods of the eye of the spirit. It is through the eye of the spirit, sometimes called the eye of the heart, that we are able to catch the reverberatory waves of spirit's information available in the subtler fields of knowing that undergird and animate all-that-is. The mystic sees that, all-that-is, is motivated to manifestation by love.

Love, however, is not only the initiating energy of evolutionary manifestation. Once manifestation takes place—at the moment of the big bang—love continues to reveal itself as the animating Eros of evolution, from the cellular level all the way through to the highest levels of human evolution.

The movement of love at the human level is the Eros that motivates us to move beyond separation to higher and higher levels of mutuality, recognition, union, and embrace. It is the very same moment of love that motivates the very process of evolution itself from the subatomic to the cellular level, all the way up to the highest reaches of human consciousness.

One Love. Evolutionary Love. It is really very simple.

Let's start with the big bang. Here, separate subatomic units, which physicists have called quarks, are the only forms in existence. Some force then moves these separate quarks to transcend their merely separate existence and reach for a level of union with other quarks. They are attracted to each other, allured by each other. This implicit allurements is the face of mystery itself. It did not have to be this way. The mutually attracted and allured atoms recognize each other and embrace. Separate subatomic units are moved to form a single unit. A boundary drops around them. Whole atoms are formed. What moves them? The Eros of evolution, which is the Eros of love.

*Then it happens again.* Various groups of separate atoms are moved by a mysterious force to come together. Separate atoms recognize each other in union and embrace. This is Eros as allurements. Molecules are formed. What drives this process? There is a self property inherent in matter itself that moves toward higher and higher levels of mutuality, recognition, union, and embrace. It is this mysterious internal Eros that drives separate subatomic particles to form a new union, an atom, and which drives the separate atoms to form a new union, a molecule.

*Then it happens again.* Separate molecules, what are called complex molecules, are in proximity to each other. Against all statistical probability, these separate complex molecules come together, reaching for higher and deeper levels of mutuality, recognition, union, and embrace. A separate boundary falls around them. The first cell is formed. Life is born.

Shimon bar Yochai describing the Eros of existence, writes in the ancient Zohar, "It all depends on love." The Christian mystic Thomas Aquinas perceives the same truth, and Dante writes of the love that moves the sun and the stars. Rumi sings of the same. All of these great mystics see through the contemplative, ecstatic, or discursive methods of the eye of the spirit. But the modern person is able to nakedly see the motivating force of love at play in the very cellular roots of reality.

The Eros of evolution is love. Seen from the outside, it is what Erich Jantsch refers to as "self-organization through self-transcendence."<sup>12</sup> The individual "self" of an atom transcends itself. The trance of separation is broken, and the individual atom organizes itself as part of a larger molecule. A new identity as a molecule is formed even as the old identity as an atom is not lost. Rather, the core mechanism of self-organization through self-transcendence is "transcend and include." The atom transcends itself to a higher level of complexity, even as its core identity is not lost, but rather expanded and evolved. It is this internal drive within matter that, according to Jantsch and many other leading-edge theorists, moves evolution to ever-higher unions, through ever-higher levels of complexity. From quarks to atoms to cells to molecules, onward and upward. Teilhard de Chardin, Abraham Kook, and many other evolutionary mystics point out that complexity is but the outside view. The interior—not addressed by Jantsch or any of the chaos theorists—reveals that the higher the level of outer physical complexity, the

more evolved the inner depth of consciousness. What emerges is that the movement of evolution is the movement to ever-higher levels of complexity and consciousness. At this point, the eye of the mind has reached its limits. Now, a new faculty of perception enters our conversation, what the Christian mystics called the “eye of the spirit,” what the Sufi teacher Rumi called the “eye of the heart,” and what Hebrew mystics called the “hidden eye.” The eye of the spirit, deployed throughout recorded time by the great realizers in all the traditions, in a great double-blind experiment of spirit, always revealed the same inner picture. The eye of the spirit sees clearly that the inner fabric of consciousness is none other than love. It would therefore be entirely accurate to say that the Eros of evolution is none other than the force of love.

*Then it happens again.* Numerous perfectly tailored cells are all brought together into a single functioning unit with one boundary. Multicellular organisms are formed. The Eros of evolution dances up the evolutionary spiral to higher and higher levels of complexity, and deeper consciousness emerges from the evolutionary soup. It is a continual process of self-organization through self-transcendence, in which self transcends itself to recognize and join other in higher embrace. Love by any other name. The evolutionary ladder continues to spiral to ever-higher and deeper levels of complexity and consciousness. Each higher level is always defined by ever-higher levels of mutuality, recognition, union, and embrace between the evolving cells and organisms. Plants, amphibians, mammals, then higher mammals, until we get to the full bloom of human consciousness. This is the Great Story of One Love. Evolutionary Love.

As human beings emerge in the evolutionary unfoldment—their emergence motivated by the same love that moves the sun and the stars, the upward driving Eros of all reality—there is another momentous leap of development. At the higher levels of human development, manifest consciousness awakens to itself. Human consciousness becomes aware of itself. The evolutionary trajectory is to ever-higher levels of union and embrace driven by Eros. Now, at the human level, love continues its evolutionary unfolding to higher and higher levels of human consciousness. But in human beings, love sheds its disguises and reveals itself in all of its naked wonder.

It was the pioneers of developmental psychology, through cross-cultural empirical studies, who caught this movement of evolution.<sup>13</sup> Human beings

at the first level of development are *egocentric*. At this level, our sense of mutuality, recognition, union, and embrace—at the level of our fundamental identity—is limited to ourselves and the close circle upon which we depend for survival.

*Then it happens again.* Love expands and deepens, and we move up the evolutionary ladder of human development. We transcend egocentric consciousness, and move into *ethnocentric* consciousness. Again, we see operating the same process of self-organization through self-transcendence. As we saw is the core mechanism of evolution from the very cellular level all the way through to the highest levels of human development. The individual transcends self into a higher level organization. The tribe emerges, which both honors and transcends the individual. The move from egocentric to ethnocentric is a move to expanding circles of mutuality, recognition, union, and embrace. This produces the sense of connection that was traditionally the inner fabric of tribes, clans, villages, cities, and even nations.<sup>14</sup>

At the ethnocentric level, love extends its recognition and union with larger contexts of identity. Your feeling of love extends to the whole tribe or group in which you include your self as a core part of your “I” identity.

*Then it happens again.* Eros continues its expansion. You develop from an ethnocentric level to the level that Lawrence Kohlberg defines as “*world-centric*,” increasing dramatically your circle of mutuality, recognition, union, and embrace. At this level of consciousness you feel love—a sense of identity and empathy—with all human beings alive on the face of the planet. You are still at the level of separate self—but you are able to feel your connection to all the separate-self personalities living around the globe. You can feel empathy and essential connection with a Rwandan mother, a French truck driver, and an Algerian farmer.

*Then it happens again.* The movement of evolutionary love continues its upward dance of deepening. Human beings at the leading edge of consciousness move from worldcentric to what has been termed *Kosmocentric* consciousness. At the Kosmocentric level of consciousness, you initially experience a felt sense of identity with all sentient beings, with animals, and with the earth itself. Your circle of recognition, union, and embrace has extended still beyond even your narrow sense of egoic identity with all other separate selves. You identify now with all beings—with the natural

world itself. And your consciousness continues to deepen until you transcend your limited identity with your separate self egoic personality, and realize your True Nature. You recognize your True Self as being an intrinsic part of the larger whole, and eventually as being the wholeness itself. You realize what the Sufis called your ultimate Supreme Identity with the Godhead, with all-that-is.

And then your consciousness deepens one last level. You realize that you are not only True Self, not only one with the Wholeness. You recognize yourself as Unique Self. You experience the Unique perspective of divinity that lives in you, as you, and through you. You awaken to your evolutionary context and you realize that as kabbalist Isaac Luria taught and Jesuit priest Teilhard de Chardin reminded us, evolution is waking up as you. Evolution is becoming conscious of itself in you. Evolution is seeking to advance through you. You feel a powerful sense of responsibility—more powerful than anything you have ever felt before—to live your story, to live the unique God-story that lives only and exclusively as you. Paradoxically, in that self-recognition, union, and embrace with your Unique Self, you feel naturally connected and empathetically identified in love, recognition, union, and embrace with all-that-is. *Love is the natural function of Unique Self. For in Unique Self you are so at home in yourself that all grasping falls away, and the lover that is your True Nature emerges as you.*

Ethnocentric transcends and includes egocentric. Worldcentric transcends and includes ethnocentric. Kosmocentric transcends and includes worldcentric. Each of these developmental levels expresses the same core movement of evolution we have seen from the beginning—in which every evolutionary level results in widening circles of recognition, union, and embrace. The principle of self-organization through self-transcendence, which defined the earliest stages of evolution from the level of quarks and cells, is also at play in the evolution of human development. It is all the play and dance of love climaxing in Unique Self.

### Three Core Perspectives

Another way to understand this core teaching of Integral evolutionary mysticism is as the integration of the three core perspectives on reality, first, second, and third person, which reveal the three faces of God, of all-that-is.

To explain this teaching, drawn from the great traditions, evolved, and placed front and center in contemporary Integral Theory, let me first briefly explain what I mean in referring to the three faces of God, or the first, second, and third person of God.

Your inner experience is your first-person perspective. The experience of taste, for example, is a first-person experience. Bliss as well as pain are first-person experiences. Your inner experience of the energy of another person, of the taste of ice cream, the spaciousness of meditation, or the inner feeling-tone of love, are all first-person experiences of reality. Your experience of God in the first person is therefore what we are referring to as the first person of God. To experience yourself as divine love, for example, would be to experience the first person of God.

Your experience in relationship to an other is your second-person perspective. It is relational. Second person is your inner experience of the reality of we, of relationship. Your experience of loving and being loved is a second-person experience. To experience yourself as loved by God is to experience God in the second person.

Your experience of an other as an object of perception—as an “it”—is your third-person perspective. It is neither your inner I-experience nor a relational We-experience. Rather, it is your objective recognition of an aspect of reality as an “it” outside of your inner experience or direct relational field. So, for example, when you recognize your friend’s height, weight, hair color, and social or political characteristics, or when you look at the physical Uni-verse and describe how it looks, or go deeper into the principles that define the way things work, you are taking a third-person—an impersonal—perspective on reality.

From a third-person perspective, love is an impersonal energy of eros that animates the evolutionary impulse and process. From a second-person perspective, however, the love that animates the evolutionary impulse is more than just an impersonal process. Rather, the process is also personal and intimate. You are personally addressed by the evolutionary process that knows your name. From a first-person perspective, you are lived as love; the evolutionary process lives in you as love.

In the next few pages, mixing freely my own words and those of the Unique Self mystics of my lineage who experienced their spiritual lives as

profoundly evolutionary, as well as with other seminal evolutionary thinkers like paleontologist and Jesuit priest Teilhard de Chardin, Integral philosopher Ken Wilber, and proto-Integral theorist, Charles Peirce, I will outline this utterly pivotal teaching on the evolutionary impulse whose inner quality is love. But this time we will look at the exact same teaching through the prism of the three perspectives.

The essence of the Unique Self transmission that we have been unfolding in this book is the second-person perspective. If we are all only True Selves—that is, we realize that we are impersonally part of the One, and as Whitehead pithily reminded us, the total number of True Selves is one—then there is no room for relationship, that is, no room for second person. Second person and Second Taste imply distinction within the One. Second person breaks the monism of the One. It is utterly personal. This is precisely the teaching of Unique Self. If all is one, then there is nothing personal and no relationship. Although, as we have seen, relationship does not require separate selves, it does require Unique Selves.

Mystical realization correctly points out that the separate self is an illusion: you are not ultimately separate from God or other. But even within your oneness, you are not only a nonseparate True Self, but a Unique Self. You and every other person, as a Unique Self, are an infinitely unique, necessary, and dignified expression of the One. Authentic relationship takes place between Unique Selves.<sup>15</sup> The evolutionary impulse is expressed uniquely in every person. The unique quality of the evolutionary impulse expressed through each individual's perspective is the personal face of evolutionary impulse. The ostensibly impersonal process of evolution reveals itself as radically personal. This is the great realization of what I have called in another work "Nondual Humanism". Moreover, the realization of Uniqueness implies that the allegedly impersonal evolutionary process addresses each person personally.

To describe the evolutionary impulse primarily as an awakened impersonal energy that emerges when you evolve beyond ego is to limit your experience and description of the evolutionary process to a third-person perspective. This perspective, as suggested above, is true but partial. *When you move from the third-person perspective to the first- and second-person perspectives, you realize that the inner fabric of all reality is love—and that you are personally addressed by that love. And that*

*there is ultimately no distinction between impersonal and personal love. Both participate in the same essential energy.*

This teaching of One Love is the nondual transmission that I received from my lineage teacher, Hasidic master Mordechai Lainer of Izbica. It is the core transmission of Rumi, Kabir, Hafiz, and all of Sufism. It may be the essential teaching of the Cathars in mystical Christianity, and of the Hindu devotional tradition. In describing it, I will speak from my original tradition, which is the lineage of Hasidic realizers originating in the master Israel Baal Shem Tov, rooted in the teaching of Isaac Luria.

My teacher, Mordechai Lainer, is of this lineage. Luria and Lainer's enlightened realization, born of radical knowing and practice, is that the ever-evolving divinity that appears externally as matter, is realized on the inside to be nothing less than love.<sup>16</sup> This realization is the central teaching of what I have termed evolutionary Kabbalah.<sup>17</sup> This realization finds expression in many ways, including the ecstatic prayer, chant, and dance practice of Hasidism.

The love that animates the evolutionary impulse is not merely personal in the sense of separate self or personality, but it is also not in any sense merely impersonal. It is rather the inner essence of all-that-is, which expresses itself both as the vast impersonal cosmic love that suffuses and sustains all-that-is, and as the radically personal love in which spirit holds every being, as well as the personal love that exists between all beings who have realized their True Nature. For in your True Nature, you are not separate from the True Nature of all-that-is. *Your True Nature and the True Nature of all-that-is—which is love—expresses itself as the drive to ever higher and more sustained unions.*

The utter identity of the impersonal cosmic love and the personal love between spirit and between all beings is the core transmission with which I was gifted by my lineage, and which I have come to know in my own realization.<sup>18</sup>

Personal love cannot be reduced to the egoic posturing of the unrealized, fearful, and insecure personality, which always seems to be searching and working for love from outside itself. This reduction of love to the level of the grasping of the separate self yields an intimacy of impotence. At the same time, love cannot be magnified to the merely impersonal. Love, distanced into vast impersonal spaciousness, yields an infinity of indifference.

## On the Nature of Evolutionary Love

Evolutionary love is the impulse to recognition, consciousness, and union. All forms of caring, concern, and passion are expressions of all three of these qualities. You recognize other, are conscious of the infinite subjectivity of other, and move toward closer intimacy through care, compassion, and passion.

In the words of Teilhard de Chardin, “Love is the affinity that links and draws together the elements of the world. Love, in fact, is the agent of universal synthesis. Love alone can unite living beings so as to complete and fulfill them. For it alone joins them by what is deepest in them. Our most urgent need is to imagine our ability to love developing until it embraces the totality of men and the earth.”<sup>19</sup>

Here again is de Chardin, in a famous phrase that I have amended slightly: “Someday, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for and *as* God, the energies of love, and then, for a second time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire.”

In every single moment, aware of it or not, you are drenched in the kosmic love that animates the kosmos, and which is alive in and as all-that-is. Every single corner of you is loved and accepted in that love. It is utterly nourishing, radically enlivening, and profoundly awakening. In this sense love is not hard to find. Love is not difficult to achieve. Rather love is impossible to avoid.

This love described by the Unique Self mystics, in my own teaching and that of my realized lineage masters, in Charles Peirce’s essay on evolutionary love, as well as by de Chardin and by many of the great traditions, is absolutely beyond the personal, even as it is radically personal.

Leading-edge scientific thinkers are now searching to identify the animating quality of the evolutionary impulse. Some thinkers describe the complex self-organizing system of the Uni-verse as the great web of life. The leading edge of systems theory, and chaos or complexity theory, deal specifically with the mysterious workings of this force, which is sometimes called the fifth force of the Uni-verse. The fifth force is the energy of attraction (which I would call Eros) that brings things together, called the “fifth” to distinguish it from the four physical forces that govern reality. The first four forces are generally thought to be nuclear, gravitational, magnetic, the strong, and the weak.

The fifth force is the inherent tendency of matter to self-organize, to rise above a chaotic state to more complex forms that are more unified. Seen from the inside by the great realizers, through the eye of the spirit, each level of complexity is innately more conscious, which ultimately means more loving.

A phrase like “fifth force” describes the outside of the reality. Seen from the inside, that same force can be described as love.

When we describe the Uni-verse as the great Web of Life, or use phrases like “fifth force of the Uni-verse,” we are taking a third-person view of reality. In third person, we see reality as a complex evolving meshwork of integrated matter—of “its.” This is precisely right. This perception of reality comes from deploying particular faculties of perception, namely the empirical and logical eyes of the sense and the eye of the mind. These faculties do not, however, exhaust our ways of knowing reality. Deploying the faculties of perception available through a different “eye of the spirit,” a different face of the same reality is revealed. *The eye of the spirit reveals beyond a shadow of a doubt that the inner quality of matter is consciousness, and that the inner quality of consciousness is love.*<sup>20</sup>

It is to this truth that the Hindu mystics pointed in their epigram *sat-chit-ananda*. *Sat* is being. *Chit* is consciousness, which is the inner nature of being. *Ananda* is love, which is the inner nature of consciousness. Evolutionary drive unfolding reality to successively higher and deeper levels of complexity and consciousness is none other than love.

It is to this love that Alfred North Whitehead referred when he said that evolution is really “the gentle movement toward God by the gentle persuasion of love.” *Love is the fabric of the Uni-verse, the glue that holds the Uni-verse together. The Uni-verse feels, and it feels love. It is one Uni-verse precisely through the gentle persuasion of love operating throughout the kosmos. It is this precise force of love that also manifests in the realm of the personal as authentic love between human beings.*<sup>21</sup>

### Love’s Direction

There’s a direction to evolution. This is the revelation of the eye of the spirit, which discloses glimmerings of the interior face of the kosmos. That direction is toward Eros, or love. Love manifests in third person as evolutionary emergence powered by a driving Eros. This Eros is now being expressed by

leading-edge voices in science like Stuart Kauffman and Erich Jantsch, as an inherent drive in matter toward self-organization and self-transcendence.

Whatever that drive is, one thing is clear: it is the opposite of chance. As I mentioned earlier, the dogma of scientism that claims evolution to be random, chance, or natural necessity is exactly wrong. It is simply impossible to make the probabilities and the numbers and the statistics work. As Ken Wilber likes to say, there is no chance that we went from dirt to Shakespeare by chance, that is to say, based on arbitrarily selected random mutations over billions of years.

### **Evolution in Second- and First-Person Perspectives**

So the evolutionary process, seen from a third-person perspective, is the self-organizing drive to greater levels of complexity. As we have seen, however, we can also describe the evolutionary process in first- and second-person terms. Every time a more complex material form emerges, a greater degree of consciousness emerges as well. This is always true. *Consciousness increases as the complexity of matter increases.* And with greater consciousness comes greater integration, cooperation, and union—that is to say, greater love.

We see consciousness increase from the little prehension it has in atoms, up to the emergence of amphibians and life-forms with neural nets, then up into paleomammals with limbic systems, followed by mammals with the capacity to form images and symbols, up to chimpanzees, apes, and gorillas with the capacity to form early concepts, and so on. This continues up to humans, who have a triune brain and the capacity to form complex rules, as well as the capacity to awaken to the source of this entire sequence, which of course is spirit, whether we look at it from first person or second person or third person.

In third person, it is the drive to higher and higher forms of complexity. In first person, it is the drive to higher and higher consciousness. In second person, it is the drive to more and more inclusive forms of love recognition and embrace. For instance, from a second-person perspective, we could say that when molecules form out of atoms, that the molecule is embracing the atom—even that the molecule is loving the atom. (Of course, I'm not suggesting that molecules have conscious personal agency!) From a first-person perspective, we might say that the interior proto-I-ness of the molecule is expanding to include others into its own self.

## Cellular Love in Human Beings

When we look at the way love works in human life, we begin to realize that human beings have emerged in part as a higher expression of love. Love is an insistent Eros, an insistent pressure in human beings. One of the major drives human beings have is the drive to love.

To uncover evolutionary love in human guise, let's turn briefly to the studies of the great developmental psychologist Abraham Maslow. Maslow began the developmental study of human beings' motivations. Why does a human being do something? Maslow found that there is a holarchy of needs.<sup>22</sup>

Holarchy means a nested hierarchy, a hierarchy that's inclusive of the levels that come before it, not a dominator hierarchy.<sup>23</sup>

Maslow's empirical research, backed up by other developmental psychologists, shows that as human beings evolve to higher levels of consciousness, they are no longer satisfied by merely meeting their basic needs for safety, community, self-esteem, or even self-actualization.<sup>24</sup> All of these needs are what Maslow called deficiency needs. They emerge to meet a felt sense of lack in the human being, which is fueled by the appropriate strategies of the separate self.

Once those needs are met, however, a new kind of need becomes dominant in the human heart. It is what Maslow called a need for self-transcendence. This need—motivated by the fullness of Eros and love—to include others in one's boundary of self, expresses itself as a profound desire to give, to serve, and to include others in one's own self-definition—is the miracle of We. In the original Hebrew, the word for "love" derives from the root word, *hav*, which means "radical giving." This is the movement of love and Eros, which began at the cellular level and ascends up the evolutionary scale to the leading edges of human consciousness. It is a constant movement toward ever-higher recognition, inclusion, and embrace.

This movement of love and Eros, which is visible in third person from the simplest cellular level to the most advanced human level, is at all times felt in the second person as love. *In the realized human being, love breaks out.* This is, finally, love revealed. Because evolution is the constant increase of complexity—paralleled on the interior by the constant increase of consciousness, whose inner relational quality is love—in the evolved human being who has reached the level of self-transcendence, the operation of love itself breaks into consciousness and becomes a prime motivator for individuals.

In evolutionary mysticism, self-transcendence is what happens when you become so full that you cannot possibly feel sufficient unless you break out of the small self toward True and Unique Self. In True Self, whose personal face is Unique Self, you not only act lovingly, you are lived as love. True Self and Unique Self, having trance-ended the limited identity with separate self, are moved by the infinite spaciousness of True Self, coupled with the infinite fullness of Unique Self, to ever-greater depths of love and Eros.

So, we might recapitulate this entire great movement to evolutionary love and Eros in the following manner:

1. The evolutionary process is the evolution of complexity. This is a third-person perspective.
2. Higher and higher levels of complexity in evolution are paralleled by ever-higher levels of consciousness. Complexity is the view from the outside, and consciousness is the view from the inside.
3. The inner experience of consciousness is none other than love. This is the realization revealed to mystics, over and over again, by the eye of the spirit.\* This great perception of the eye of the spirit was transmitted to us by the greatest mystics and realizers from all traditions over all of recorded time. None of them knew each other. In this sense, the practices that open the eye of the spirit and lead to enlightenment, enacted repeatedly by leading-edge realizers all over the world and who did not know each other, may be viewed as a great double-blind experiment of spirit. Over and over again, they report experiences of seeing the kosmos with the eye of the spirit—and recognizing that

\*A peak experience was made available to the masses through holotropic substances, whose effect in the brain can make possible an open-eyed recognition of oneness and love. In a filmed interview by Dr. Sidney Cohen, a researcher on LSD at the Los Angeles Veterans Administration Hospital in the 1950s, a man identified only as Joe is asked to describe his experience, and he says, "People who appeared dull in my eyes suddenly become so fascinating, so mysterious, so wonderful. Suddenly you notice that there aren't these separations . . . we aren't these separate islands shouting across to someone else . . . this thing is flowing underneath . . . we are parts of a single continent, it's all connected beneath the water . . . and with this flows such delight. The sober certainty of waking bliss." Love by any other name.

the inner face of consciousness is love.

4. The more complexity, the deeper the consciousness, the more we become aware of ever-increasing levels of Uniqueness. Just as the human physiological structure is more complex than that of the previous rungs of evolution, it is also more conscious and more unique. One has only to look at the human immune system to see a display of radical uniqueness.
5. The evolution of love is both the evolution of consciousness and the evolution of one's perception. In the intersubjective context, as we will see in a later chapter, love is a Unique Self perception, a spectacular awakened function in a human being that allows them to perceive and delight in the infinite uniqueness of an other.
6. The same love that drives the evolutionary process from cells to human beings, in ever-increasing levels of recognition, union, and embrace, is the very same love that manifests between people as Unique Self perception. It is that love as Unique Self perception that motivates human beings to transcend separate self and move toward each other in ever-increasing levels of recognition, union, and embrace.

Love, which previously was cloaked in third-person as an impersonal force, becomes obvious in second person and first person. This is the awesome realization that impersonal kosmic love and personal human love at their highest levels are one and the same. One love expresses itself all up and down the great chain of being, and all up and down the evolutionary ladder. We see love in action in our lives and feel love as Source from which we live. More than that, we are capable of articulating our first-person love and sharing it in second-person conversation and third-person reporting. This is the momentous evolutionary leap of love at the leading edge of human consciousness.