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Many Loves

By **Rebecca Rodriguez**

It seems we are always looking for love, many times in all the wrong places. We look to other people, material things or, social status to give us love. In writing this piece I explored the many aspects of love, external and internal, which touch a person. Love seems to be as important as food and water for one to thrive, and somewhat easier to give than receive.

I have personally struggled with self-love and continue to remind myself that I am a unique, complicated person that contributes positively to society. As I stated in the piece, "To love one's self takes so much effort and pain, time, learning, and acceptance." Maybe we are the artist and the work in progress!

Love is strange and comforting, just as all living things it begins small. How you know this miracle is part of your relationship with love.

There is the love which begins, as a man or woman finds that soul which is also looking for it's other half and the seed of love begins to bloom with the warmth, energy and excitement of discovery, they are found.

There is the love which grows within a woman with each month of pregnancy, her child grows and a bond is formed intertwined and etched into the mother's sole. Nine months which are theirs, truly only theirs, time nurtures this love; man, time nor distance can diminish its strength.

There is love of art, the undeniable driving force to express the urgency waiting inside of the artist, the writer, the sculptor. This also starts out small, an idea, a thought, when acted upon takes on an unbridled passion to be expelled, this which grows, just as the child must be born and thrust from its

mother, this surging energy must come forth and become...

There are many loves, the only love I know which is forced and has to be learned and sometimes rots and mildews to never bloom... the love of self it is so easy to love a child, art, a book, a sunset, the one you know to be yours.

To love one's self takes so much effort, pain, time, learning, and acceptance. Do you really find the way to love yourself, to accept who you have become through life's pain, joy, success? Unconditional love for self, the way a mother loves her child, the artist loves the final touch to his work, one soul loves the other. That forceful, unfaltering, unconditional, total love. Is that kind of love for self truly possible? Maybe, the self centered, egotistical, conceited, those few whom are branded with these negatives terms; have they achieved that love we all desire but cannot germinate or begin to nurture within?

Love is strange and comforting.