



Love February 2011

The Verdadera staff encourages you to discuss and explore the issues and stories, as the publication aims not only to offer an outlet for expression, but to improve our lives. Keep in mind that the emotions that flow through the text and the feelings behind the words could be those of your child, your classmate, or your best friend.

Things to consider:

- *Have you ever experienced love?*
- *Do you have faith in love?*
- *What are the different types of love?*

Student Submissions

Generally I roll my eyes when a story starts off by defining a common word. My apologies if you feel the same way, because I am about to be a complete hypocrite. Here is my story. Serendipity (-noun) luck, finding good things without looking for them.

When I was little, I stumbled across this definition on the inside of a Hallmark card and immediately I declared it to be my favorite word. Perhaps it was the five syllables of ser-en-DIP-i-ty, or maybe it was the way "'dipity'" gives the word an upbeat ring. But my main love for this word was hidden in the definition. Contrary to the seemingly tomboy-ish image I tried to project at that young age, I was a secret romantic. And when I saw this word, serendipity, something inside me knew that I could only find love if I didn't look for it.

But of course, when you tell yourself not to think of something, your mind automatically thinks about it. And

when you tell yourself not to search for something, your mind is triggered to search for it. Thus, my preteen years were full of quixotic crushes and terribly desperate attempts at setting myself up for a future romance.

At one point in high school, I thought I finally succeeded in finding a good relationship serendipitously but deep down inside I knew I was lying to myself. It didn't form naturally at all, it was just a situation that I thought I could form into something perfect. So when the relationship failed, I blinded myself to the reality of what actually went wrong. It took me a long time to admit that I had tried way too hard to turn the relationship into something it could never be. Everything leading up to that point had been artificial serendipity. Essentially I had been roaming the beach with a metal detector and claiming that without trying, I had stumbled upon treasures lying on the street.

From that point on, I promised myself that I would no longer be on the lookout for potential love. I convinced myself that high school love was impractical and that relationships at this age were pointless, and soon enough I was able to leave the beach and stop searching for treasures.

And that's when I finally experienced serendipity and fell in love with a great friend. He effortlessly Mythbusted every theory I had about how love at this age was fake, and naturally our relationship built itself into something so surreal that I constantly wonder how we got so lucky. I never even knew it was possible to feel this understood by somebody or to understand another so completely. He's the rock I can always cling onto, he gives me the self-esteem that I used to lack, and I could go on and on until you want to gag about why I know this is real love, but I won't. In my experience, love is serendipitous - true love isn't found, true love finds you.

~~~~~  
"Love is an irresistible desire to be irresistibly desired." ~ Robert Frost

~~~~~  
There was a time when life was headed in the right direction
All of a sudden there was a demonic insurrection
She no longer felt the same way, if she ever really did
I still can't seem to get over her even though I'm just a kid
Without emotion or feeling, she removed me from her life
To her, dealing with me was just strife
I began bruising my knuckles, pounding on the floor
Not willing to get off my back and out the door
Writhing at night, alone and in pain
What I have lost, I will never again gain
She was to be the one for me, till death did us apart
Instead, one day, she chose to take a hammer to my heart
Crushed it into little pieces, which I gathered in dismay
Sure that I would never ever feel again that way
I'll never find another that knows exactly how I feel
Or shares the love with me for my favorite breakfast meal
For now I lay on my bed, hopeless, without direction
Trying to hate her, yet all I feel is affection
Hoping against hope that someday she'll want me back
That day I'll hurt her, now a kind soul is what I lack
We'll see where life takes us all, be it for better or for worse
I know not what exactly I have lost; the loss may be a boon or a curse

~~~~~  
"The love that lasts the longest is the love that is never returned." ~ William Somerset Maugham

One day while talking about deep topics with some friends one of them mentioned that they don't believe in true love. I found this extremely sad and immediately tried to refute it. I explained how I understand why someone would think this because of their own bad personal experiences, so I tried to explain some of my own. First, I explained why I believe true love exists by citing my parents and how much they love each other and how I know neither of them would ever leave each other. Then I explained my own experience and that how for the person it was unlucky to never have witnessed true love, and how for me it was lucky. To experience it in high school was lucky for me and is kind of an extreme but the other side, not believing in love entirely, is an extreme as well. My last input was on how if one does not believe in true love then what is dating for, even life. I feel that without true love, relationships would be worthless, and to me, that would be a melancholy way to think about life.

~~~~~  
"Real love stories never have endings."
~ Richard Bach

~~~~~  
I've never fallen in love before, but I know I've come close to it. I guess you could think of it as just a crazy obsession and infatuation, but I'd beg to differ. Maybe if it wasn't just a one-sided thing, it could be considered love. But it's definitely something that has consumed me for years. Who is Mr. Wonderful, you might ask? Johnny Depp.

~~~~~  
"First love is only a little foolishness and a lot of curiosity." ~ George Bernard Shaw

~~~~~  
I don't know what love is.

I guess the clichéd explanation that one only can know this emotion after many years of experience has proven to be true.

It's the allure of love that entices us to get lost in the 'concept.'

How do I explain it, we teenagers love to get lost in the idea that we are in love because we romanticize the feeling to an extent that we are convinced we NEED to feel it.

When I was a sophomore in high school I thought I had met the guy. He was a little dorky but he was simple and a little quirky. He was already a really good friend of mine even though he was a couple years older than me and he knew everything about me, I felt so comfortable revealing

my experiences and feelings to him, even the not so savory ones. He would tell me he loved me when we texted late into the night, on chat, over the phone, on little notes we passed during bio—but never in person. My friends warned me, don't take these bouts of affection seriously because they don't mean anything till vocalized, but I still did because I wanted to be loved.

It turns out, for him, it was 'bros before hoes,' and when his buddies asked about what we talked about he put my entire life story out for display. They joked about his 'gestures' of love and whether or not he meant them or not, they convinced him that it would be funny to lead me on with those 3 empty words: I love you.

Finally, it was winter ball and I was really excited because I'd heard he was going to make a grand gesture, which he did, and I was truly head over heels in love.

After the dance he insisted that we go over to his brother's apartment in Palo Alto, but while I sat my table alone while he went off lost with his senior buddies in the crowd (probably freaking with some other girl) one his friends (coincidentally also one of my brothers friends), ashamed of what they had been telling my boyfriend told me what had happened. He told me that my alleged lover was going to take advantage of me that night and ditch me by the end of the month—the ultimate ending to their little game.

So love.

Do I believe in it?

Of course, but I guess I would have to say, I don't think it's going to make an appearance in my life for a long time now that I know its traps.

~~~~~  
"I like not only to be loved, but to be told that I am loved." ~ George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans)

~~~~~  
Love. Love is the feeling you feel for a deceased family member, not some bullshit "high school sweetheart". You may feel "love" for that person, but later on you will ask yourself why you even bothered to care. I thought I fell in love and it was true and nothing else mattered, but in the end I realized that the other person had not felt completely this way. Love is supposed to be selfless. If anyone tries to change you in order to love you, that is not love.

~~~~~  
"If you judge people, you have no time to love them." ~ Mother Teresa

I love a lot of things.

1. Moroccan Food
2. Bananas
3. Birds—wrens to be exact
4. Kale
5. 90's music
6. Green
7. Stripes
8. Math
9. That's what she said jokes
10. Post-it notes

But I've never really told a person that I loved them.

Yup, not even my family.

So if I haven't said it, does it mean that I don't love them? I don't know. All I know is that I love the color green, but that's not how I've ever felt about a person. But, aren't people supposed to have an innate love for their own kin? Sighs. This is all quite depressing. I wish I knew.

~~~~~  
"Love is like pi - natural, irrational, and very important." ~ Lisa Hoffman

~~~~~  
"It's a love story, baby just say yes," Taylor Swift sang as she glided through her music video in a beautiful princess gown. Her curly blonde hair cascaded down her back and her eyes were enchanted as they met her true love's. Every girl dreams of marrying a prince. Since we were young, we've envisioned being swooped up by a knight on a white horse. However, in most cases, that does not happen until later years.

I try to be there for my friends when their girlfriend/boyfriends/crushes/persons of interest dump them or whatnot, but it is hard to refrain myself from saying, ""DUDE! Everything happens for a reason! Don't worry about this...you're going to find someone else."" But of course, I must sympathize with them...

I myself get worked up over my crush(es), but I have to remind myself that we are just in high school. There are times when we meet our ""true love,"" but for now, I want to try to maintain friendships and work hard in school. Have a boyfriend/girlfriend? Chill! That's great. Hope you guys have a great experience, but just remember that things change and life changes..

For both girls AND guys, my advice for now to you is this: love everyone. Not the type of flirtatious 'love' you exchange between your crush, but love that is forgiving, caring, patient, understanding, selfless and pure. Love on the person everyone makes fun of.

A couple times, I have made friends with that person. It was hurtful to see how inconsiderate people could be towards someone. A while later, I saw that person get stronger. They believed in themselves more. Not due to the fact that I talked to them a couple of times, but that someone actually cared about what they thought.

I might sound like a goody-two shoes. (Well..I kinda am! :P) And perhaps you don't want to listen, but if you love on people, you will see that you get love in return. Love can melt the hardest of hearts and the darkest of souls. Just love everyone and you'll see lives change - including your own."

~~~~~  
"Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same." ~ Emily Bronte

~~~~~  
I always see couples together at school or just around, "loving each other" and spending a lot of time together, but in my mind, I don't understand how they can really spend that much time together. I've tried dating, and I've dated a couple guys, but I always ended it because I would get bored. It was always really awkward when we would hang out one on one so I don't really understand how the couples I see around can spend that much time together. Isn't it awkward? Or am I just the awkward one. Hopefully someday I'll find someone where it won't be awkward, but for now, I pretty much just shy away from dating and love.

~~~~~  
"Years of love have been forgot. In the hatred of a minute." ~ Edgar Allan Poe

~~~~~  
Summer love. I had imagined it to be like something out of Grease, including the happy ending. But of course nothing ever works out that way. I had met someone so special to me, he's still my best friend even though he's halfway across the country most of the time now. We spent a lot of time together, from noon when we woke up till three in the morning every day. My mother loved him and we spent a lot of time with each other's families. Life was good and it was almost unbearable when we separated after summer. He has unknowingly changed my life. I've become deeper, in a sense, and more serious about the people I choose to have in my life because of how vulnerable I had felt. It was literally like feeling like I was in the palm of his hand, so

tiny and so fragile. It truly made me wonder how people pick themselves up after a serious relationship like after they've moved in together or after they've been married. I myself was depressed for months after he had left but felt I had no one to turn to because I had recently become distanced from my best friend. Instead I shafted all my friends, and became a quiet person who came home from school every day to focus on school work, because in the end I knew I am quite young and who was I to say that I met someone who was special to me? "You're young, you don't even know what you're talking about, you'll find another guy and move on."

My aforementioned best friend and I had been inseparable for 3 years before. After high school started I joined so many clubs and met so many new people while she, being the more reserved one, did not and soon I found I had little time for her, let alone family. However I won't forget the love I felt for her, because I sincerely felt as if she was my other half, the one who knew me best, the one who I thought would be my maid of honor on my wedding day. Sometimes we would sit together in companionable silence, content with each other's presence and I loved her as much as I would have loved a sister. My mother even called her her second daughter.

With all these love stories, though I was insanely attached to the guy from summer, I would not say I believe in love, only in platonic love, a deep care for someone that runs deeper than "I love you" 's and wedding vows. Perhaps it fostered from my parent's divorce from early on, when I thought it was odd seeing my friend's parents kiss or learning that husband and wives traditionally share the same bed. All in all though, I'd say I love and cherish my friends and family more than anything. Fairytale love stories don't happen, but a simple gesture such as a thoughtful gift is the only love I need.

~~~~~  
"Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage."  
~ Lao Tzu

~~~~~  
Dear parents,

It's unfair how you don't let me see him for a number of reasons.

1) You didn't give him a chance. I realize people intuition comes from a gut feeling but no person deserves to have a book cover judgment of them determine their status. If people categorized me after the minute they met me I

would be too loud, too obnoxious, and a bunch of talking no doing. If you were judged you would be too stubborn to get married, no guy could handle it. If you were judged you would be too lazy to get married, no woman could tolerate it. When someone looks at another person at an outward glance, their flaws are glaring and their inside strengths hidden. Even more so in this case, he doesn't break down the walls built up around him easily (maybe the mystery is the attraction for someone as blaringly obvious like me). But to those who love him, the walls crumble and the flaws, that are still there, simply don't matter because the strengths baffle me.

2) You didn't and don't trust your daughters intuition.

You have told me about other friends that I should be wary of left and right. Some I learnt to actually agree with. Believe it or not, I have broken off ties with a lot of people who aren't considerate about anyone but themselves. But he isn't like that.

My intuition may be only 16 years old while yours has the wisdom of Jurassic years and I may have hazy, love crazed eyesight but my guts tell me so. And even if I am wrong and blinded my a high school sweetheart, I know, I KNOW, that he couldn't ever in all my life ever ever ever hurt me. And if he doesn't HELP me, isn't a high school relationship supposed to be met with some experimental, learn from your mistakes mentality so you don't end up committing to your first love down the line?

Imagine your first love (i know it wasn't each other). But could you have found each other if you didn't learn why the first one didn't work? The first one may not have HELPED but I assure you it doesn't hurt. I'm just saying, love and who to love is one of those things I have to learn from myself, not from your intuition or life lessons. And from my own self I assure you this would never hurt and if it doesn't help, I'll learn why.

3) I love him. I love him in the most teenage-loveydovey-genuine way. He's the number one thing in my life. I do love him. I love just sitting and talking. I love laughing. I love arguing. I love, I do love.

4) He helps me, honest. He's the one positive vibe in my life that boosts me up. God knows barley any Matador gets a boost from their school environment and lately my boost from home has been lacking. A life is about balance and if I got tough parents and tough fellow students, I can't have a competitive, totally driven, wired robot as a boyfriend. I would crack. So he is the only thing in my life that gives it

balance. And in that way I am that wired robot in his life to help boost him in my own way. Despite our glaring differences, I think that that is the reason we fit - opposites, no matter what you say, in this case, attract.

5) Because if you break this off, all your lessons to me will fall. I'm old enough now where not only do I deserve a voice in the rules dictated to me but I deserve an understanding. And if I don't understand this and your illogical laws, I'm goanna start not understanding any of them.

6) Because lying is annoying and a bad habit. This is the one and only thing I've lied about and I'll be honest, follow my logic. If I have gained something so great out of this lie, a high school love that I won't regret, what's to say I won't gain something out of lying to everyone, the rest of my family and my friends to bypass the restraints they have? I am going to start believing this if I continue to lie. Every teenager lies. Putting more guards up doesn't stop their lie. Making them understand the rule stops their lie. I am at a blank at your rule, and thus I lie to bypass it.

And because of all these reasons, it's unfair. And call me a whiner, I'm not backing down until someone listens to these reasons, even if they come from a blinded by love 16 year old.

~~~~~  
"Love never claims, it ever gives."

~ Mohandas K. Ghandi

~~~~~  
Love must be something amazing, because apparently all our mainstream songs are about it, books are about it, and movies and tv shows are all centered around it. But no, I've never really experienced love. In a way, I feel that I'm unworthy of experiencing it because I'm such a flawed person, and love seems so magical. I know that love doesn't mean perfection, but it must be something very powerful if people are willing to change themselves for it.

I don't believe that anyone our age has ever experience real love. Liking someone, infatuation, brief moments of passion, maybe, but not real love. We are all too young and immature to know what real commitment and care is. A lot of the relationships that I observe only happen because people ""like"" each other. Yet high school relationships always crumble. Couples toss around words like ""i love you"" even though they've only dated for a couple of days. Then they get tired of each other and break up when they don't like what they discover behind the cute face and nice clothes.

I'm not trying to put myself on a pedestal when I've made the same mistakes. I once thought there was a guy who could make me happy. But things changed, we pursued different interests, and I found out that he didn't really like me as much as I thought. And it turns out, I didn't like him as much as I thought, either. I thought I loved him, but when I stepped back to reflect on what really happened, I realized that my interest in him was very superficial and that I was part of the relationship only for the sake of being in a relationship. That isn't love.

We're all still very young, and we will all grow and change. Our interests and outlooks differ as we mature. Though a relationship may seem perfect now, it may not work out in a year, or even a month. To me, love is when you look someone in the eyes and know that you would be willing to spend your entire life with that person. I know that I have yet to truly love someone. But I will wait until the time is right. (:

~~~~~  
"The hunger for love is much more difficult to remove than the hunger for bread." ~ Mother Teresa  
~~~~~

I was listening to 94.9 and they were talking about a 16 year old girl in love. That sounds like me.

Then they were talking about how the boy all of a sudden, after such a long relationship, tells her he wants to spend spring break with a different girl. They break up but she accepts him back after break. Obviously, that relationship doesn't last long.

I thought wow, that girl is dumb. I am not doing something like that.

But then the host said something that almost scared me. The host's reasoning was that the first love, that first love, feels SO STRONG. Stronger than anything else because there is nothing to compare it to. The feeling, there is no other feeling to compare it to.

The first kiss. The first touch.

Is that how it is for me?

A couple days back, my two best friends sit me down and tell me up front, "you have been disrespecting us."
And I am trying to explain in plain English why I would choose my first love, who may/probably won't last forever, over a friend who has been there for 10 years and probably will be there forever.

And I have realized it because I am a newb at love and this strength is so overwhelming that I feel that he is my #1. That there doesn't need to be any balance in my life because all I need is love, according to The Beatles.

But in the back of my head, my less impulsive more logical self is telling my body, what the hell are you doing? Ditching friends? He isn't the one you are gonna marry (is he? My impulsive side fights back) He doesn't like kids, his room is too messy, his life is different. All the things that would make forever a difficult thing doesn't matter now because we haven't made any commitment like that.

But then that impulsive side completely takes over. I don't care how long this lasts, because it was totally kick ass, something I know I won't regret.

And because I am that newb, that's why I am so in love. It doesn't make a whole lot of sense to my logical side but my impulsive side is screaming with joy.

I just hope I don't become dumb like that girl on the radio.

~~~~~  
"Nothing takes the taste out of peanut butter quite like unrequited love." ~Charlie Brown  
~~~~~

Someone once told me that love is like a bird. At first I laughed, thinking to myself how cheesy and ridiculous it sounded, but over the years I've learned that there is much truth to that saying. I've always been the person that seems to love a little too easily; there was one time I remember to be especially haunting. I fell in love for the first time with someone that acted like they cared but in reality just didn't want anything to do with me. It was crushing, I felt worthless and believed that I would never be good enough for anyone. Eventually I was able to pick myself up and taught myself how to feel again, it was hard but I managed. Once I could finally tell myself that yes, I was worth something, was when I remembered that saying: "Love is like a bird. If it flies away and is never seen again, it wasn't meant to be, if you look up one day and see it flying back to you, it was". The truth of the matter is that there will be many times that we look up to the sky, hoping to see it coming back our way, disappointed time after time. Don't waste your time and don't hurt your neck, have patience. And if it never comes back, take it as a lesson. If someone left you crushed and made you believe you couldn't go on without them, don't hold onto it because it will only hurt you more, let it go. In the end you'll be happier that you

did, because that person made you stronger. In a weird way, they might almost deserve a thank you, but only if they're still worth your time. Chances are they aren't, so don't go trying to catch the bird that flew away if it hasn't come back to you. And that was something I had to learn the hard way.

~~~~~  
"Don't forget to love yourself." ~Soren Kierkegaard  
~~~~~

I've never been in love--and by the sound of it, I don't really want to be in love.

I can't stand couples who declare their 1month, 6month, 2 year anniversaries on facebook and put the date numbers with little hearts or smiley faces that don't have noses. It's ridiculous. To me, it's as if they're showing off the fact that they have someone who loves them, it's not about the fact that they love each other, but their attention. I don't ever want to be in one of those couples that constantly must have the attention of the other as if they were the only people that existed. Not being misanthropic or anything, but highschool love is overrated. I think it's just ridiculous how my friends who have partners can make such a big deal out of an ignored text or call. Someone please tell me what's the point of marriage, by the way.

~~~~~  
"The course of true love never did run smooth."  
~ Shakespeare  
~~~~~

We are strangers. I keep wondering when I will meet you. I fall asleep at night seeing into your eyes. I love sleeping at night. I love knowing that night is the only time I can escape all my problems and live in my dreams. My dreams are always nicer than reality.

Sometimes, when nobody is around, I pretend you are there. I pretend you are the only one that accepts me as who I am and that you pick me up and spin me around. I pretend to give you bear hugs and pretend that you go to an amazing school and we rarely see each other except in our dreams. I see your eyes -- they are so beautiful. You are just a bit bigger than me, so caring, so kind. You have gentle hands. Your embrace -- I look forward to that. I see myself walking down the aisle towards you.

When nobody is there, I see myself at the beginning of life. I see my life taking flight in front of me, going places that I have only dreamed of. I see everything so clearly -- everything that I have wished for. I talk to you all the time. I love spending time by myself because when I do, I

get to see you. You. Whoever you are. I know you are amazing, because you just are.

We have our fights. I pretend we fight a lot. But who doesn't? After the fight I can see it all ending and you are there waiting for me, to take me back. It is so perfect. Why does it have to be this way? We both wonder every time we fight. Yet in the end we sort it out and move on. We continue to grow stronger every day.

I wonder when I will meet you. You are just a figment of my imagination.

~~~~~  
"Love me when I least deserve it, because that's when I really need it." ~ Swedish Proverb  
~~~~~

"Do you believe in love? Yes I do. What about soulmates? Maybe.

Here's the thing: love is something that cannot be classified. It is a mutual feeling that two people have for each other that nobody can say, ""oh ya I know what you are talking about"". Because to be honest, you don't have a clue. If we all had a clue, then how come there are such things as divorce, break-ups, cheating, and all the negatives around 'love'?

Growing up, I never knew what 'love' is. I was in a relationship my Junior year and part of my Senior year while at MV and I thought I was in 'love'. But was I? Looking back, I wasn't. I probably tricked myself into it. And sure it was nice. It is always nice to have somebody to trust, to hold onto, but what is it really? More like a friend with benefits. My parents never talked about 'love'. My parents never said ""I love you"". My sister doesn't even say it. Sure, we say it jokingly, but do we ever say it with sincerity? No. And the reason why has to do with what my perception of 'love' really is.

As I am now in college and in a new phase of my life, I am constantly surrounded by adults. Adults who know what their limits are and know what is important to them at this point in life. This is not to imply high school students don't have goals and don't have limits, but what I am saying is that the difference is in the realm of 'love'. As adults, we begin thinking about what our future looks like. Where we want to live, what we want to do, do we want to continue schooling, do we want to settle down and have a family...what is it that we want?

And when it comes to talking about 'love', things get tricky. You begin to wonder, what is it that I want in my future spouse. What traits? What qualities? It becomes more difficult to pinpoint what it is that qualifies to yourself as more than just 'friends with benefits'. And when people say that they have met their 'soulmate', I question this term and start to wonder.

Like I said before, 'love' is this thing that nobody can pinpoint. In my past relationship, I thought I 'loved' this person. I thought that we were 'meant to be together' and so did the people around me. But looking back and thinking about this experience and part of my life, I began to think maybe there is no such thing as 'true love'. But instead, I think there are things such as best friends for life, that if conveniently happens to be a person you spend the rest of your life with, then that is love. Falling for somebody is like falling for something. Sports, hobbies -- you can't just say after partaking one or two times 'I LOVE THIS'. Sure you can, but over time, will that grow on you? Will you start to hate it? My past relationship made me realize that sometimes things just fall out of place and you stop loving something you used to. Times change. So do people. So you can't always settle. But then again, there are those stories out there about 'high school sweethearts' and what not but those are the rare cases. And if you do meet your 'high school sweetheart', by all means I am happy for you.

But it is hard to meet 'the one'. There are so many, many people out there in this world that settling seems unreasonable. And I know that settling for me in high school did not work out one bit. I regret a lot of things, but at that time I was naive. I was young. After writing all of this, I can say that I don't believe in 'first love'. I don't believe in 'soulmates'. What I do believe in are best friends who happen to fall in love. Oh and a unique, funny first meeting story is always welcome :)

~~~~~  
"You know you're in love when you can't fall asleep because reality is finally better than your dreams."  
~ Dr. Seuss  
~~~~~

i love the impromptu moments that just fall together. waking up on a lazy day, not doing much of anything, going to a reunion to catch up with college-going folks, realizing, hey, there's nothing else to do, want to come over? then having a random group of friends, who individually have all been my friends for a while but together no one would have thought in their wildest dreams that we would be hanging out without anything in

mind, just chilling. watched tv, silly things on youtube, gorged on cookies and starbucks, talked about life and love and those things that just spill out when it's raining outside and cozy inside and there's nothing on your mind except how much fun you're having with friends. then walked in the rain, tried to escape from impending madness, sang off-key and told stories and hypothesized nonsensical things into the night. that's love right there. none of that achy-breaky heart nonsense.

~~~~~  
"Friendship is certainly the finest balm for the pangs of disappointed love." ~ Jane Austen  
~~~~~

I've never been on a date. I've never had my first kiss. I've never had a girlfriend. I've never been in love... There are several reasons why I probably have never attempted any of the above.

1) I'm afraid of what people will think/say. Nothing's ever private anymore. If I have a relationship when I'm older, I don't want people going behind my back and spreading rumors about it.

2) My parents...enough said. If I had a relationship, I most definitely wouldn't tell my parents until the relationship becomes pretty serious. It's awkward for them and even more so for me.

3) I'm just not ready for the commitment of being in a relationship. I know what you're probably thinking, "Everyone says that when they can't get laid." But for me it's the honest truth. I'm just not ready to spend all my free time and money on someone when I barely have enough time and money for myself.

4) What's the point of having a relationship when you're a teenager because you know it won't work out in the end. In just a couple years or even months, you're going to graduate and most likely leave that special someone behind, so what's the point of having a relationship in high school? When I go to college, of course I'm going to go on dates, have my first kiss, have a girlfriend, and maybe even fall in love.

College is the time to experience, try new things, and learn more about yourself. High school is the time to prepare for college...that's just what I think, but who really knows.

~~~~~  
"Gravitation cannot be held responsible for people falling in love." ~ Albert Einstein  
~~~~~


My first love started in elementary school. I knew she was "the one" right when I saw her, but I didn't get to know her until we got to the first grade. In the first grade, we became close friends. Our friendship intensified throughout elementary school, and so did my love for her. When we graduated from the fifth grade I wanted to tell her how I really felt about her...but then I chickened out. In sixth grade, she had her first boyfriend. That's when I became a little jealous. I didn't want her to be with someone other than me, but I didn't want to make things awkward between us either, because I'd rather have her as a friend than nothing at all. She went on to have a lot more boyfriends in junior high, like most girls in our class did, and at that time we were the best of friends. We were practically inseparable. But as we entered high school, we both started to drift apart for one reason or another. I wish I had the courage to tell her how I truly felt about her, so that maybe we could be together and things would be different. But that's not the way things panned out.

~~~~~  
"The way to love anything is to realize that it might be lost." ~ G. K. Chesterson

~~~~~  
They say parents are supposed to love you unconditionally, but honestly, what on earth does that even mean? It bugs me when you say something about your parents and people say, well it's okay, they love you, they're your parents. It doesn't always work that way people... my parents are so judgmental about my grades that it's like they won't love me if I fail, because I've disappointed them so much. And it hurts. Even more so because people think that throwing the line "They're your parents, they love you" out there just makes everything better. It doesn't.

~~~~~  
"A baby is born with a need to be loved - and never outgrows it." ~ Frank A. Clark

~~~~~  
I got rejected for Homecoming this year. I didn't LOVE the girl, I only liked her. But this rejection really got me thinking about high school love and what's it all about. Getting rejected sucked a lot and put me through a rollercoaster of emotions. I can only imagine what it must feel like breaking up with someone u think u loved in high school. With all the hormones and drama of high school, I really don't think that love exists, at least the love I think we're all talking about. U can still love your mom and dad, or ur pet, but this type of love, possibly the love between ur gf and bf is too confusing for a highschooler to understand and deal with. Just my take on the whole issue.

"Life's greatest happiness is to be convinced that we are loved." ~ Victor Hugo

~~~~~  
When I first heard about the topic for verdadera, obviously I thought about romantic love. I do believe in that type of love in high school, but I realized that my experience is so much more rich in another type of love: for my family. I admit, I haven't been the best child to my parents, or the owner to my dog. But the love I feel for them is so genuine, and so deep that I comprehend it perfectly, if that makes any sense haha. I think im trying to say is that I really understand the love I feel for my family. The crazy love between couples is something that no one will ever truly understand. But I know this for sure, I love my family. I'll back them up through whatever situations, and I will always support them. Its good to know that I have some things figured out, at least.

~~~~~  
"The more I think it over, the more I feel that there is nothing more truly artistic than to love people."
~ Vincent van Gogh

~~~~~  
I wish I knew what love felt like. I was shocked my junior year when my friend told me she was in love. I was instantaneously jealous and skeptical. How could a high schooler be in love? I felt like she didn't know enough about the world to make such a bold statement. I expressed this to her but she brushed me off repeating that she was still in love. I wondered if he was in love with her too. Well, they can't have loved each other that much because they aren't together anymore. Did they ever love each other? Does love even exist? or is it something we say to convince ourselves. Everything so far in the romance department has been a let down for me. My first kiss wasn't wildly romantic nor was it even that fun. I don't know whether I am willing to put my faith in love or disregard it as something that only happens in movies.

~~~~~  
"I love you, not for what you are, but for what I am when I am with you." ~ Roy Croft

For Students: Languages of Love

By Marté J. Matthews, MFT

In my work with families and teens who love each other very much, but often have serious misunderstandings, I have particularly enjoyed introducing them to the concept of the “Five Love Languages.” Love goes far beyond romantic love, and you’ll read plenty of clichés in Hallmark cards this Valentine’s Day. This article is about finding ways to express the love you feel for the many important people in your life.

The five languages are outlined by Gary Chapman, Ph.D. in his collection of books, which were written primarily for people who are engaged, married, or for parents of children and teens. Because his message is so powerful, I wanted to share some highlights with the Verdadera student audience. I believe everyone at any age can improve their understanding others and prevent misunderstandings by learning more about which of the five love languages each of us speaks and becoming just a little bit multi-lingual.

Dr. Chapman describes the Love Languages as Words of Affirmation, Quality Time, Gifts, Physical Touch and Acts of Service. Each of these can communicate love, affection, kinship or desire to deepen a relationship.

Words of Affirmation

Think about what you appreciate about your best friend, your dad or even your lab partner. Share your thoughts with them and watch them light up.

- I missed you yesterday when you were gone!
- I enjoy it when I get to see you after Chemistry.
- I was really impressed by that presentation you did in Lit.
- I love the way you encourage people. You are such a kind person.

Gifts

Far from being a materialistic, empty gesture, giving gifts is “visible, tangible evidence of emotional love,” according to Chapman. Thoughtful gift-giving is an art.

- Give a special pendant necklace to a friend or your sister
- Share fresh-baked cookies from a family recipe with a friend or a new neighbor
- If you are fortunate enough to have more than you need, share these things with others.

Reality check: Sharing gifts *instead* of quality time or words of affirmation can ring hollow. Shared together with these other love languages, they develop an even deeper meaning.

Quality Time

This phrase has become a cliché, but quality time is fundamental to any relationship. Relationships take time to nourish, develop and grow, whether it be with friends, a boyfriend, or your family. Long-time friends will feel neglected if you favor a new romantic relationship over them; after all they have devoted time to you and hope the original relationship will continue. Going shopping, having lunch, heading to the game...it’s only quality time if it’s about *being together*.

- Maintain comfortable eye contact
- Avoid distractions, even if someone else is walking by. They can see you’re having a heart-to-heart with a friend.
- Listen to what your friend is saying. Listen to the feelings being expressed, not just thoughts.
- Ask questions that are curious or reflective, not judging of others.
- Express understanding. Using a phrase like “So what you’re saying is...” can clarify things and make sure you understand *before* you react.

Physical touch

Physical touch need not be sexual or affectionate touch, but a physical connection between people

- A slap or pat on the back, or a high five
- Arm wrestling a friend or your dad
- Stroking hair out of a friend's face
- Sharing a big hug or a quick squeeze

A reality check: You can choose who, what, when, where, why and how when it comes to physical touch. You never have to put up with someone being inappropriate or abusive. Step away and speak up. Say clearly "I don't like that. Stop." If it's a problem, consult a friend and get the support you need to ask a teacher, counselor or parent for help.

Acts of service

Parents do so many acts of service for their kids, it's easy to take it for granted, but doing the laundry every week, buying and preparing three meals every day and occasionally dropping everything to go pick up project supplies and drive you to a friend's house for a study group isn't "no big deal." Many parents do it, and a little appreciation from their teenager goes a long way. The key to the love language of acts of service is that it is a service freely given.

- When you get a warm drink, bring an extra to a friend at brunch break
- Teach someone how to do something they don't know yet
- Tutor a friend getting ready for a test
- Help out at home before you're asked to do something

As you reflect upon the five love languages described, here are some things to think about: Which language do you speak most naturally? Do you have a second favorite? Do you and your best friend speak the same language? You and your mother? Your mother and grandmother? Could understanding and speaking a bit of their "language" lead you to understand one another better?

Each of these love languages can deepen and enrich your friendships, family ties and other relationships as you reach out to people in ways you both find rewarding and meaningful.

Upcoming Issues and Submission Deadlines

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
Disability and Disorders	6pm, Saturday April 2nd
Parental Relations	6pm, Saturday April 30th

Ways to Submit

1. Visit us at www.verdadera.org. You can submit stories here, learn more about Verdadera, and meet staff members.
2. Stories can be turned in to **any staff member** – hardcopies or emails, anything is welcomed. Staff members are also there to help answer your questions about issues, topics, anything.
3. Email it to verdadera.entries@gmail.com

For Parents: Loving (and Parenting) Your 21st Century Teenager

Parenting during infancy and childhood is often a charmed period in a family's life. We as parents love our children intensely. His first smile and giggle warm your heart. Watch her master the milestones and walk at age one, talk at age two, read at age 5 and parental pride and love soars above other experiences in our lives.

Then the teen years come around and the picture changes dramatically. The love is still there, the intensity too, but challenges of handling the teen years catch many parents off-guard. It can be a painful time, because we do indeed love our children so much. The key is to love your teenagers for who they are, not their potential or their achievements, to help the whole family face the challenges of adolescence together.

Separation & Individuation: Understanding the central task of adolescence

The essential developmental task of the adolescent is to separate from the parents and begin to become the independent individual he or she will be as a young adult. The values they experiment with, the technology and social media they use, the manner of dress and presentation of self, the goals they hold for themselves...these will all undergo shifts and phases. This process is not always a pretty one, and can be emotionally hard on everybody, even in a loving, tight-knit family.

In his book, *Uncommon Sense for Parents of Teenagers*, Dr. Michael Riera, national speaker and author, compares parenting a teenager to making a shift from being their manager to being their consultant. He advises parents that "parenting a teenager means thinking and acting more in terms of *influence* than *control*-easy to say, tough to do."

Melody M. Lowman, M.A. in her work with families for the past forty years in practice, often quips that "adolescence is the stage of development that prepares parents to send them off to college more easily...even gratefully!"

Parents must navigate these difficult years as a loving consultant, carefully exercising their positive influence to help a teen child to get to that launching point. It can be quite a balancing act! Love your child for their uniqueness and positive qualities they demonstrate and keep a sense of humor about the rest.

Loving Leadership in the Family: Finding a Middle Ground

Generally, parenting styles can be divided into three main categories: authoritarian, permissive and authoritative parenting. Leading research has demonstrated that one is more likely to help children and youth to become confident, competent young adults: loving leadership, also known as *authoritative* parenting.

Parenting in an authoritarian, controlling style can be effective for some young persons; however, two different problems may arise. First, a young person may react with anger, rebellion, even hostility. For example, Christina (not her real name), whose parents were quick to criticize and correct every error in school and at home in hopes of preparing her for a successful future. Christina struggled as her parents tried harder to control her, eventually developing explosive rage, destroying items, fighting with peers. In high school she argued with teachers who didn't give her the grades she felt she deserved. Entering college, she struggled academically and socially, feeling more anger than love toward her family, clearly not what her parents hoped for.

On the other hand, another young person may react to authoritarian parenting by becoming docile and highly compliant. How is this a problem? Wouldn't they be cooperative without question? Yes, this is exactly the problem. Young people who are overly compliant become vulnerable to negative influences from peers and powerful others, sometimes leading to problems with drugs, alcohol, or undesired sexual activity can be frightening outcomes, also not what any parent hopes for their child.

Permissive parenting, a "laissez faire" philosophy about children, is the opposite extreme of authoritarian parenting. As college students, young adults parented in this manner often seem like a boat lacking a rudder with not enough horsepower in their engines. Sadly, young people who have been parented in this style are the most likely to report feeling ignored and unloved by their parents, a sense that "they never cared enough to bother with what I was doing."

Parents who demonstrate strong, responsive, *loving leadership* in their families find a middle ground with flexibility and love for who their children are, not just what they do, not the ideal or their potential. This style of parenting will help them feel a strong foundation of love in the family and courage to face the world.

Parent Tips for Loving Leadership

- Ask about their opinions and then listen

Begin with curious questions, not directives. Actively listen to what your teen has to say. Active listening means to demonstrate you are listening through body language, avoiding distractions, and asking clarifying questions instead of critical ones. This kind of listening has the effect of helping a young person feel loved, a foundational sense that “I am important. What I think and feel matters.”

- Teach problem-solving.

Considering an outright ban on dating until age 21? Remember Romeo & Juliet? Bans don’t work. They lead to deception, not loving family interaction. Try a different approach: help your teen to think it through and act as consultant, as Dr. Riera recommends. This may help a young person ask for help earlier, make good decisions for himself, and express a strong internalized sense of values. For example, a young person who can talk openly with an adult about the pressures of balancing responsibilities at home, with academic demands, lunch time clubs and after school sports is more likely to postpone premature romantic relationships.

Be willing to hear about a problem and talk about the options. Ask what she thinks before jumping to the rescue. You may be pleasantly surprised by what she has already learned about relationships, decision-making and risk-taking.

- Avoid preaching and ranting.

Teens will tune you out. Avoid becoming overly emotional and express your concerns calmly. You are a more credible leader when you stay calm under pressure. In the family as in the business world, strong leadership leads to successful outcomes that micromanagement could not hope to attain.

Demonstrate your love, patience and approval for the person your child is, not just for their achievements, their potential or your ideal, but for the thoughts they express, the passions they embody. The foundations you lay down now will stay with them for years to come, and carry into their own families. Parenting in the 21st century, regardless of all the techno-frills that shape our lives, is about giving love, giving strength, to help the people we care about the most to become strong, successful young adults in college and beyond.

Marté J. Matthews, MFT is a family therapist in a San Jose practice working with children and families throughout Santa Clara County, with a focus on gifted kids and their families. Marté is a member of the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists on the county and state level and a member of both the California Association for the Gifted (CAG) and National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) and participates in the Advisory Board for Lyceum of Santa Clara Valley. (www.martejmatthewsmft.com)

Upcoming Issues and Submission Deadlines

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
Disability and Disorders	6pm, Saturday April 2nd
Parental Relations	6pm, Saturday April 30th

Ways to Submit

1. Visit us at www.verdadera.org. You can submit stories here, learn more about Verdadera, and meet staff members.
2. Stories can be turned in to **any staff member** – hardcopies or emails, anything is welcomed. Staff members are also there to help answer your questions about issues, topics, anything.
3. Email it to verdadera.entries@gmail.com



Love

February 2011

Verdadera is a publication created by and for Monta Vista students for the purpose of instigating communication concerning the reality of high school within the community. Each month, an issue on a topic relevant to the lives of our students is sent home for reading by both parents and students. While we do not edit submissions, we aim to publish personal experiences, not opinion articles. Please utilize all the resources present and feel free to email comments and feedback.

Staff: Christina Aguila, Thomas Barber, Jackie Barr, Kevin Chang, Kriti Garg, Puja Iyer, Amy Kahng, Karishma Mehrotra, Timur Mertol, Anushka Patil, Kevin Tsukii, Emily Wong

Advisors: Hung Wei, Carol Satterlee

Visit us or submit stories at www.verdadera.org

