

# When Loving Someone Is Not Enough

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Let's drop the fairy tales and rip up the Hallmark cards. Love is not enough. Love is the easy bit. It's the fireworks at the start. It's the dopamine rush. It's the hashtag couples goals. But love is cheap if it's not backed by the harder stuff—respect.

Back in 2003, I met the so-called oracle of relationships in New York, Dr John Gottman. He could watch a couple for three minutes and tell you if they'd last. Not based on who was more "in love"—but who rolled their eyes first. That's right—eye-rolling. Sarcasm. That little sneer when your partner speaks. That's the rot.

Gottman called it contempt. I call it relationship cancer. It starts small—mocking, dismissing, interruptions—but it metastasises. I've coached Olympians who would rather lose medals than respect their coaches. CEOs who love their companies but treat staff like dirt. Husbands who sob about how much they love their wives—and then talk over them in therapy.

Love doesn't fix that.

Love is emotional. Respect is behavioural.  
Love says *I feel something*.  
Respect says *I act like it matters*.

You can love someone and still treat them like a doormat. Still weaponise silence. Still bulldoze their opinions like you're the only adult in the room. You can love someone and still kill the relationship with a thousand paper cuts of indifference. The truth? Respect is not sexy. It doesn't trend. You won't see Instagram reels about quietly shutting up and letting someone finish their bloody sentence. But that's what lasts.

*"Respect is not romance.  
It's the daily decision not  
to be a dick."*



If you're sitting in the ruins of something that once felt magical, don't ask "*Do I still love them?*" Ask:

**Are we listening—or waiting to speak?  
Are we disagreeing—or trying to win?  
Are we building—or slowly, spitefully,  
tearing it down?**

Because once respect leaves the room, love follows. It packs its bags, shuts the door, and all you're left with is a hollow, bitter performance of what used to be.

Love is what starts the story. But respect is the only thing that gives it a decent ending. Without it, you're just two actors in a slow-burn tragedy.