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Marital Bonds as an Experience of Love in the Christian Perspective

ABSTRACT

Living love is the most human and universal experience. Love is a complex, multi-faceted, psychological, and spiritual reality. It is a universal and timeless value. It is associated with the greatest human need to be loved and the desire to love. Therefore, in the integral development of a person, love is the most important factor that shapes and integrates his/her personality. The essence of love is unchangeable, but the ways of experiencing and expressing it are very different. The development of conjugal love requires the growth of a marital bond. Thanks to this it is possible for two people to be united in love. A marital bond constitutes an essential element which integrates and shapes the multifaceted area of a marital relationship, interaction and communication.

Nowadays, in an era of consumerism and a lifestyle based more on civil partnerships, it can be seen that love and marriage are not treated as values, they are often even spoken of with shame. Therefore, the aim of this article is to present theoretical issues related to the experience of love in a Christian perspective, especially from the perspective of a marital bond. Taking into account the complexity of this issue, only selected aspects will be shown. The various contexts of love and the experience of marital love will be discussed. The essence and value of the marital bond will be shown, as well as the aspect of developing the ability to love in the process of human education.

KEYWORDS

love, marital love,
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Introduction

Today, in the era of computerization, technologization, the consumerist lifestyle, and a crisis of values, we are witnessing axionormative chaos, whereupon love is identified with falling in love and with meeting one's psychosexual needs. Love is a concept that is used or even abused very often. Different people and even entire groups invest this notion with different meanings. According to Waldemar Furmanek, a pervasive "illiteracy of love" is spreading today, because its anthropological meaning has been blurred and reduced through erroneous notions, which means that love is a lost value (Furmanek, 2011, p. 251).

Love is a complex, multi-faceted, psychological, and spiritual reality. However, it always remains associated with the greatest human need to be loved and the desire to love. Therefore, in integral human development, love is the most important factor that shapes and cements our personality.

In the personal dimension, true love is a happiness-generating factor, it is often a part of life, it allows one to overcome the feeling of loneliness, becomes the motor force of all actions and, as such, it is undoubtedly the greatest value. To love and to be loved is to feel needed, to enjoy a greater sense of security, to be happy. (Gajda, 2004, p. 305)

At present, in the era when the partnership lifestyle is becoming more common, it can be seen that love and marriage are not values: they are often even referred to as embarrassing.

Young people are not always properly prepared to experience love; they treat it as pleasure; they cannot give up their own egoism; they are unable to do something selflessly for others. They lack patience, are unable to work together for mutual development. (Wolny, 2008, p. 118)

In this regard, the purpose of this article is to present the Christian perspective on theoretical issues related to experiencing love, especially within marriage. Given the complexity of this problem, I will show only selected aspects. I am going to discuss various contexts of love and of experiencing marital love. I will talk about the essence and value of the marital bond, as well as developing the capacity for love in the process of raising a human being.

Different contexts of love

Love is embedded in human nature. It is born, it exists and develops thanks to a human being, it has different faces and occurs in various forms—as a feeling, attitude, value, and goal that we want to pursue. From the affective point of view, love is

a deep affection for another person, usually combined with a strong desire to be in constant contact with them and the desire to make them happy, which is accompanied by physical attraction to the person. (Dunaj, 1996, p. 524)

It is described as a strong and deep empathic feeling that makes a person think and feel in unison with the loved one (Gajda, 2004, p. 305). It should be noted that the concept of love also describes qualitatively different emotional processes. Thus, one can speak of both erotic love, which contributes to a change in the perception of the world and enables full communion with another person, and love born out of the need for community, devoid of sexual elements—as well as of familial and abstract love (Imieliński, 1980, p. 48). Love cannot refer only to the realm of feelings and human experiences. It is a universal and timeless value. The attitude of love is very important, as it is a constant disposition, which involves knowing, loving, and acting towards the object of love. That is why love conceived of as an attitude contains three important elements: intellectual, emotional, and action-based. The intellectual component refers to knowledge about the loved one, the emotional component refers to positive feelings and wanting what is best for that person, and the action-based component is expressed in taking specific action for their benefit.

Love is also defined as a strong attachment to another person, a state of readiness to selflessly surrender and serve someone (Dunaj, 1996, p. 524) and an overriding attitude that guides a person's choices, in terms of both acting and responding to those they care about (Gray, 2010, p. 238). It is connected with responsibility for oneself and another person, because “the more the sense of responsibility for a person, the more true the love” (Wojtyła, 1986, p. 117). Love respects the dignity of the other person, it is linked with ethos and conscience (Kowalczyk, 2002, p. 106).

In view of interpersonal relationships, love is understood as a process that occurs between two people in a relationship (Wojciszke, 2003, p. 8). It plays an important role in the selection of partners for marriage and encourages spouses to accept the destination that is marriage, and it is also the basis for creating a hierarchy of attitudes, roles, goals, or tasks resulting from the marriage contract (Rostowski, 1987, pp. 10–11).

Love is a great mystery of life, one which contains risk because by directing it towards the other person, one does so in the hope that it will be received and reciprocated (Hill, 1994, p. 247). In addition, it is, to a large extent, an existential enigma, an insufficiently explained mystery, which involves overcoming a sense of loneliness and giving one's life a special meaning (Imieliński, 1980, p. 271). Undoubtedly, "love extends to all human relationships: with oneself, with nature, with other people, with God, and it comes in very different forms" (Kuźma & Łuczyński, 2004, p. 312). As a broadly understood concept, phenomenon, or state, it is also characterized by an inherent dynamism, which in turn determines its variability in time and intensity. Love is the most important event between the birth and death of every human being, which constantly undergoes change (Wojciszke, 2003, p. 5).

In the perspective of Christian education, love is a fundamental principle of morality. John Paul II characterized it as a principle, an idea to which people subordinate their behavior, which is connected with the ability to love, meaning readiness to consciously seek the good with others or for others. The area—or the most important area—where love becomes fulfilled is marriage (Wojtyła, 1986).

Because the concept of love has different meanings, in order to outline its role or meaning in the functioning of a marriage, it is necessary to take into account this diversity; this will guarantee a greater likelihood of obtaining a more appropriate image of the marriage itself, and the role of love in it (Rostowski, 1987, pp. 64–65).

In summary, the scope and meaning of the concept of love is broad, ambiguous, and subjective. Love has always been, and will probably always be, an inspiration for many artists, writers, and people of culture because due to its many meanings and varieties, it still demands new angles and strategies of representation. Nevertheless, it is difficult to define, because it can mean something different to

each person. Undoubtedly, “the human being cannot live without love” (John Paul II, 1979, p. 10); that is why it is so important to experience it in everyday life. It should be noted that the essence of love remains unchanged, while the ways of experiencing and expressing it are very different, because they depend on many factors, such as personal characteristics of the individual, their system of values, culture, place, and time.

Experiencing marital love

The experience of love is the most human and universal experience. One of the basic human needs is “the need for love, loving and being loved, and therefore the need to build relationships with other people” (Imieliński, 1980, p. 54). This need governs a person’s development, and experiencing love is necessary for a person to achieve personal maturity. “A human being, when surrendering to love, gathers edifying experiences. They learn goodness, kindness, and empathy; they open up to others and try to understand them better” (Gajda, 2004, p. 305). It should be noted that it is because of the need for emotional contact and life attitudes towards other people that a person feels the desire to build a community. The desire for a sense of responsibility for a person, acceptance, understanding, and tolerance, and the focus on satisfying all their needs all boil down to the goal of maintaining a lasting and lifelong relationship based on love (Imieliński, 1980, pp. 54–55).

The foundation of marriage is conjugal love, which “is one of the most difficult, but—in its toil—one of the most beautiful types of love that can bring two people together” (Kuźma & Łuczyński, 2004, p. 315). There are three planes to this love: sensual, emotional, and spiritual. They are integrated and connected with each other. Sensual love (sex) concerns the biological and sensual meaning; it satisfies and releases sexual tension and leads to the experience of pleasure. In turn, emotional love (*eros*) is changeable, transient, and does not provide permanence. However, a mature and deep love is the love experienced on a spiritual and personal level (*caritas* or *agape*), manifesting itself in a selfless and mutual gift of oneself (Błasiak, 2012, pp. 15–16; Tchorzewski, 2015, p. 32).

In the Christian perspective, marital love between a woman and a man is shown mainly as a choice. It is an act of decision, choice, and recognition of another person as someone who “belongs to me.” Its important element is a sense of belonging, which is evidenced by the fact that the terms “mine,” whose meaning is very deep, is used to describe a wife or husband. The term does not describe shared feelings, but primarily belonging (Tischner, Zańko, & Gowin, 2000, pp. 168–169).

Marital love plays a special role because it is a way of life: the aim is to go through life together. For Christians, this relationship is a sacrament. However, it is not homogeneous, because it changes and transforms many times during its development and its specific features set it apart from other types of love (Braun-Gałkowska, 1987, p. 15). Marital love has a set of features and components that draw attention to its value and it has a particular nature. Whether they can be found in a marriage and to what extent largely depends on their individual character and on the personal beliefs and personality of the partners.

The features of marital love include care, responsibility, respect, looking to the future, wishing to act together, stimulation of activity, hope for the future, fertility, the need for creativity and joint achievements, giving up one’s selfishness, and shared responsibility. In turn, the elements of marital love are coexistence, exclusivity, compassion, and mutual bestowal of each other with each other. In this subject matter, the value of the marital bond, of the components that build and strengthen it, is also very important.

Marital love manifests itself on many levels of married life; it develops and forms the basis of a marriage. It affects the quality and durability of the relationship; it is revealed in various activities of the spouses, which is reflected in its sacramental character. The conditions for the development of marital love, which enter into the Christian understanding of marriage, also presuppose the spouses’ pursuit of the sacred. This happens through all actions taken by the partners that express, strengthen, and deepen almost all the areas of married life which are based on love (Nosowski, 2004, p. 60). Marital love is a spiritual and physical value. In the spiritual dimension, it leads to marriage, while in the spiritual and physical dimensions it leads to parenthood. The love of the spouses, which is far from

being selfish, helps them accumulate strength and strengthens their spirit. The spouses need mutual closeness in order to find the sense of existence in themselves (Heilly, 1983, p. 67). Therefore, for a married couple, love is of fundamental importance, and its growth depends mainly on its connection with other values (Ryś, 1999, p. 64). For this reason, it is extremely important for spouses to understand love in a similar way and to display it in their views, ideas, expectations, and actions (Rostowski, 1987, p. 46).

Since marriage always functions in a specific community, it should also be noted that this community exerts an influence on every marriage through legal and religious norms, through societal moral norms, and through the pressure of public opinion, which is vital for the durability of marriage (Adamski, 1984, pp. 27–28). Therefore, it is crucial to choose the right partners and to be able to work out the concept of love that they share (Adamski, 1984, pp. 30–31).

It should be mentioned that marital love implies mutual respect and happiness, childrearing (parental love), care at the end of one's life which is embodied in caring love (charity). Love is associated with certain procreative, nurturing, and educational tasks that are carried out at various stages of human life, marriage, and family (Gos, 2014, p. 45). Love as a special kind of bond experienced in marriage is sacramental for believers, which is important for the marriage community. Therefore, the essence and value of this bond will be shown later.

The essence and value of the marriage bond

The development of marital love necessarily entails the development of a marriage bond. The concept of a bond means a relationship of closeness and intimacy, as well as a relationship, connection, and coherence (Dunaj, 1996, p. 1228). The term is explained in different ways and can be difficult to define. The metaphorical comparison of this bond to a bridge is interesting and inspiring. A bond is

a permanent means of realizing coexistence between indelibly separate and always given individuals. The bond does not remove the distance. It transgresses it, but also guarantees it. It is a bridge, and the bridge does not bring closer the banks of the river, it leaves each of them in its place, as it leaves the dividing space between them. (Delsol, 2011, p. 170)

A human being is not enough for themselves, they need to reach beyond themselves towards others, to establish and develop relationships. To live in a relationship, however, a person must remain themselves as a separate entity. “And this paradox of presence and absence determines the nature of the bond between people who are walking towards each other but who remain separate within themselves” (Delsol, 2011, p. 170).

There are different types of bonds, such as social, family, and marital. A social bond is the sum total of all relationships, connections, and interpersonal dependencies that connect people with other people, groups, and social institutions. It is not directly observable, but, nevertheless, it can be studied by describing its intensity and durability and by analyzing its progress in the context of changes (Izdebska, 2015, p. 120).

On the other hand, a family bond is a “complex of forces that attract its members to each other and bind them with each other” (Dyczewski, 2002, p. 11). It can be described as “a certain group of references and relationships between family members founded on the awareness of shared genealogy and genetic relationships, a set of shared values, norms, goals, and emotional experiences in the life of a given family” (Pająk, 2010, p. 14).

Finally, the marriage bond is a special interpersonal relationship—the strongest, the most intimate and remarkable one—which occurs between spouses. It is the basic element which cements marriage and encompasses the multifaceted area of marital interactions, i.e., both the psychological and the emotional bond (Ryś, 1999, p. 58). It is thanks to this bond that it is possible for two people to organically unite in love. It has roots in a common home, which is the source of all life goals, and includes the sphere of feelings, which is the basis of marriage. The marital bond is also understood as a process of mutual bestowal and self-giving of the spouses in an intellectual, emotional, and action-based context. For believers, it is also a way to build a relationship with Christ (McDowell, 1992, p. 146). The reality in which people can realize, create, and strengthen their marriage bond is first and foremost their own family home, which they build and perceive as a place to pass on life. The marriage bond is also expressed in their everyday lives, and in everything that gives it value and meaning (Heilly, 1983, p. 67).

Creating relationships between spouses requires certain principles to be established, adopted, and followed: mutual respect, a sense of responsibility for one's commitments, a principle of calm, a sense of security, respect for the rights, views, interests, and work of one's partner, mutual understanding, tolerance, mutual empathy, control over negative emotions, and avoiding conversations when angry. The process of creating and reinforcing a marriage bond is not only complicated and difficult to describe, but it also requires constant work and effort on the part of the partners throughout the marriage (McDowell, 1992, p. 265; Błasiak, 2012, p. 20). It should be pointed out that a healthy marriage bond consists in reciprocal giving and taking. By contrast, by mutual giving of spouses and joint submission to God's love—which is the principle and source of their love—the spouses find authentic unity. In this context, it is important to view marriage as a relationship rooted in the exchange of giving and receiving (McDowell, 1992, p. 21). The factors that contribute to the consolidation of the marriage bond include a mutual display of feelings by the spouses, a successful sexual relationship, emotional dependence on one's spouse, cultural similarity, common interests and goals, active participation in home life, faith and hope in the persistence of marriage, and mutual decision-making and rule-setting (Tyszką, 1979, p. 151).

In order for conjugal love to grow and not die down, the partners must take care of their bond, which should be expressed in continual conscious activity. From this point of view, mutual compassion, understanding, and cooperation between the spouses are of particular importance (Ryś, 1999, p. 60; Ostaszewski, 2008, p. 145). Mutual compassion means an emotional bond based on personal contact. It takes into account openness in expressing feelings, empathy, and those actions of the spouses which are aimed at satisfying the needs of the partner (Ryś, 1999, p. 61). At the same time, the following needs of the spouses are met: love, security, respect, tenderness, care, admiration, attachment, closeness, self-fulfillment, and religious needs (Zalewska, 2002, pp. 14–16). In turn, mutual understanding is primarily referred to as rapport between the spouses, which allows them to exchange insights, experiences, and thoughts, and to notice and solve problems. It is the result of proper communication between spouses, both in verbal and non-verbal. It also includes active mutual

listening and acceptance of the spouse's otherness, i.e., tolerance (Ryś, 1999, p. 61; Ostaszewski, 2008, p. 147; Błasiak, 2012, p. 19).

The presence and development of compassion and understanding in a marriage lay the groundwork for cooperation, which is manifested mainly in the concern for the existence and permanence of the family home. This also includes the division of roles and the pursuit of common interests and values (Ryś, 1999, p. 62). This cooperation can be fulfilled in marriage in three different ways, depending on the type of relationship (Godorowski, 1987, p. 205). The first type of cooperation is based on joint decision-making, mutual trust, respect, and tolerance. It applies to partnership-based marriages, whose aim is the shared good of the family and a sense of responsibility for it. In turn, the second type refers to marriages in which the major decisions and actions rest with one of the spouses. In such marriages, there is a dominant role of one partner and submission of the other. Finally, the last type of cooperation describes marriages in which one of the partners fights to gain dominance and advantage over the other (Godorowski, 1987, p. 205). This, unfortunately, can lead to disharmony between the spouses, which is why shared values and the goals they set for themselves are important. This deepens the closeness between them and contributes to more mutual satisfaction for the partners, which in turn strengthens the marriage (Ryś, 1999, pp. 62–63).

Therefore, it is essential to show a list of positive and negative attitudes of the spouses, which are interpreted as elements of an intimate, healthy, and rich personal bond in marriage. The positive attitudes of the spouses include patience, seeking the best for the other, giving, selflessness, truthfulness, humility, kindness, trust, lack of jealousy, a realistic image of oneself, responsibility, caring, forgiveness, self-examination, satisfaction, gratitude, self-control and composure, diligence, keeping a secret, gentleness, compassion, sensitivity, courtesy, kindness, and faithfulness (McDowell, 1992, pp. 154–156). On the other hand, the spouses' negative attitudes are impatience, looking for one's own good, focusing only on receiving, self-interest, deceit, pride, distrust, jealousy, conceit, vanity, irresponsibility, thinking about one's own opinion, criticism, complaining, ingratitude, indulgence, lack of self-control, complacency, gossiping, coarseness, rudeness, and infidelity (McDowell, 1992, pp. 154–156).

These attributes of spouses' behavior differ from the attitudes and behaviors that should result from mature love. In the arsenal of features of mature love, one should also mention a sense of humor, which can bring balance to everyday life. Other particularly important elements are individual friendships made by spouses, which they should cherish during their marriage, commitment understood as focusing on common goals related to matters outside of marriage and the home, sexual experience as an expression of shared intimacy combined with love. In addition, it is also important to share thoughts and information, truthfulness expressed in credibility and reliability, conversation understood as open and honest communication, love involving mutual care, intimacy, trust, and devotion to the other person, adaptability understood as an affirmation of the uniqueness of the other person, and tolerance, i.e., acceptance of another person (McDowell, 1992, pp. 200–202).

These qualities can be viewed as components of personality and character traits of the spouses, which play an important role in the daily development of marital love. In this light, it is easy to see that the bond of love is multi-faceted, encompassing the integral personalities of both loving people, namely, the physical, social, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions. We should also remember that human nature calls for development in all these areas, which is important for the health and full development of the individual (McDowell, 1992, pp. 200–202). The basis and one of the main elements of a good marital bond is an understanding of love which leads to a deep conviction that happiness, safety, and development of another person become as important as one's own, and the goals and values become a priority for both spouses. In addition, readiness for self-sacrifice is important, as well as the need to give up selfishness and excessive concentration on one's desires and aspirations (McDowell, 1992, pp. 210, 214). The process by which marital love develops requires the spouses to take on an attitude of cooperation and self-sacrifice, and consciously strive for its continuous growth. In this context, the acceptance of the spouse is important, which becomes the beginning of mature love (Ryś, 1999, p. 69).

Mature marital love is characterized by the following features: the spouses' commitment to creating and strengthening their plans for the future, the desire for offspring, the ability to become one in

spiritual realms, and the spouses' joint responsibility for the family and married life. It is also characterized by kindness, sensitivity to the partner's needs, acceptance and understanding, and mutual assistance of the spouses in achieving their goals and desires (Ryś, 1999, p. 69). It also means peace, mutual trust, a sense of security, and working on the quality of personal relationships and self-sacrifice, understood as an altruistic attitude oriented towards reciprocal giving (Rostowski, 1987, pp. 33–41). However, the sign of mature love is a permanent commitment, because the Christian concept of marital love contains the belief that one should wait for the appearance of true love before deciding to marry. Love is then the foundation and the main reason for tying the marital knot. It is everlasting dedication and readiness to sacrifice and work on a personal bond that is the key to long, happy marriages (McDowell, 1992, pp. 254–256). At the same time, the unconditional love of the spouse—who accepts the other person as they are—leads to their growth in love and in efforts to develop the bond with their partner; trust leading to intimate, deep communication turns out to be a significant factor in this (McDowell, 1992, p. 260).

The factors discussed above which affect the formation, development, and strengthening of marital ties, as well as the features of mature marital love, require constant work and effort on the part of the partners throughout the marriage. That is why it is so important and necessary that a person should shape and develop their capacity for love.

Developing the capacity for love

The foundation for proper preparation for marriage is education about love. Therefore, it should “occupy a significant place in the broadly defined emotional education” (Kuźma & Łuczyński, 2004, p. 317). The emotional sphere plays an important role in human life because fulfilling one's calling in life largely depends on the person's emotional maturity. Emotionality develops mainly in interpersonal relationships. Hence, it is vital to educate young people, paying attention to their attitudes towards themselves and others. It is worth promoting such behavior as being helpful, acting for the sake of others, being empathetic and sensitive to the plight of others, and being

responsible. We should teach youths to see the value in another person, the internal and external beauty in them that attracts. Finally, we need to show love and marriage as central and significant values in everyone's life. Values are a chief element that creates didactic situations and has great importance, especially those values that are purposefully introduced in the process of education.

An appropriate bond between spouses is the basic element that unites a marriage. Correct communication, conflict resolution, and a readiness to forgive play a special and important role in building this unity. That is why it is essential and necessary to learn good, honest, and open communication regarding the needs, feelings, experiences, life plans, and everything that relates to marriage and family relationships. Creating a bond is contingent upon the closeness of the spouses. Therefore, we should learn to build emotional, intellectual, and action-based closeness. The essence of closeness is credibility, trust, openness, and authenticity of feelings. It is a process, and it is subject to dynamic changes, so one needs to ensure its proper development. Emotional closeness can be fostered through empathy and authenticity in interpersonal relationships. On the other hand, intellectual closeness can be cultivated through mutual understanding resulting from proper communication, listening skills, and acceptance of the other person. In turn, closeness of action determines the type and direction of people's actions, builds and strengthens ties, and helps in achieving common goals (Ryś, Greszta, & Grabarczyk, 2019, pp. 245–246).

It should be stated that love experienced during adolescence already has the "makings" of marital love in a way, because in any love there can potentially be either marriage or parenthood. In turn, conjugal love is, in a sense, "two-stage": during the engagement period it is a binder preparing two people for marriage, and in marriage it is a guarantee of its happy duration. Therefore, in the educational and pedagogical aspect, "marital and parental love deserve special attention. There are many cause-and-effect relationships between these concepts, because successful marital love largely influences parental love for children and vice versa" (Kuźma & Łuczyński, 2004, p. 315). On the other hand, the perception of love and marriage as a principal element of human life can contribute to the creation of a society in which a person is the goal and value. In addition, it gives the

opportunity to start full and happy families who will live according to generally accepted moral, ethical, social, and religious principles. That is why love between spouses, which should be supported and fortified throughout their married life, is so fundamental. Elements such as upbringing, values, opinions, views, and principles are very important in developing the ability to love. It is similar in the case of mutual relationships and styles of childrearing, which also determine whether relationships become stronger or weaker (Olczak, 2010, pp. 40–41).

Undoubtedly,

the greatest human failure is everything that weakens the development of the ability to love someone, which destroys and impoverishes their mental life, deprives them of the joy of experiencing love in its various social contacts, renders them desperately lonely, and makes them an enemy of another person. (Kuźma & Łuczyński, 2004, p. 318)

In conclusion, it should be said that the ability to love is not given to the human being in a “ready” form. That is why a person should develop and shape it, because love “gives color to human existence, determines the fate of individuals, and is closely connected with the meaning of life” (Gajda, 2004, p. 305).

Conclusion

Today, it is concerning to observe that modern man very often prefers total relativism and nihilism of values as well as axiological, moral, religious, and ideological emptiness. The people of today choose an individualistic utopia of happiness, which, unfortunately, is detached from love, truth, responsibility, and interpersonal relationships. Yet, one can love someone who is close. To love somebody, one needs a real encounter. “Each encounter with another person contains both an opportunity and a threat to our development: each encounter gives or takes something from us, opens or closes us, enriches or impoverishes us” (Sujak, 1987, p. 159). Each meeting with another person gives one the opportunity to experience and develop true love. Therefore, it is worth undertaking a scholarly discussion on whether and how in the world of continuous and rapid progress, the advancement of the Internet, electronics, mass media, mobile phones, and all

kinds of apps, there is still room for love, for experiencing interpersonal relationships, and for developing bonds?

Undoubtedly, “experiencing yourself and the surrounding world, and learning about yourself and the surrounding world, therefore, has its own particular horizon and context: the presence of another human being” (Gara, 2017, p. 28). Although contemporary people are becoming more and more involved in professional work, it can be observed that they are becoming more and more lonely. That is why it is so important to take a deeper reflection on the issue of broadly defined love. It is worth talking, writing, recalling, and promoting both theoretical and empirical aspects of the issue of marital bonds as an experience of love. Because love will never end, one needs to learn it every day and must also teach it to others.

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