



*For
Heaven on Earth
Through
Love for ourselves
Love for one another
Love for our planet*





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The Honeymoon Effect:
A state of bliss, passion, energy, and
health resulting from a huge love.
Your life is so beautiful that you can't
wait to get up to start a new day and
thank the Universe that you are alive.





INTRODUCTION

*A lifetime without Love is of no account
Love is the Water of Life
Drink it down with heart and soul*

—RUMI

When I was young, if anyone had ever told me I would be writing a book about relationships, I'd have told them they were out of their mind. I thought love was a myth dreamed up by poets and Hollywood producers to make people feel bad about what they could never have. Everlasting love? Happily Ever After? Forget about it.

Like everyone, I was programmed in a way that enabled some things in my life to come naturally. My programming emphasized the importance of education. To my parents, the value of an education was the difference between the life of a ditchdigger just getting by and a white-collar executive with soft hands and a soft life. They were clearly of the opinion that “You cannot amount to anything in this world without an education.”

Given their beliefs, unsurprisingly, my parents held nothing back when it came to expanding my educational horizons. I vividly recall coming home from Mrs. Novak's second-grade class thrilled by my first look into the amazing microscopic world of single-celled amoebas and beautiful unicellular algae like the fascinatingly named spirogyra. I burst into the house and begged my mother for a microscope of my own. Without any hesitation, she immediately drove me to the store and bought me my first microscope. This was clearly not the same response to the tantrum I had thrown over my desperate desire to get a Roy Rogers cowboy hat, six-shooter, and holster!

Despite my Roy Rogers phase, it was Albert Einstein who became the iconic

hero of my youth: my Mickey Mantle, Cary Grant, and Elvis Presley all rolled into one giant personality. I always loved the photo that showed him sticking out his tongue, his head covered with an exploding shock of white hair. I also loved seeing Einstein on the tiny screen of the (newly invented) television in our living room where he appeared as a loving, wise, and playful grandparent.

Most of all, I took great pride in the fact that Einstein, a Jewish immigrant like my father, overcame prejudice through his scientific brilliance. At times while growing up in Westchester County, New York, I felt like an outcast; there were parents in our town who refused to allow me to play with their kids lest I spread “Bolshevism” to them. It gave me a feeling of pride and security to know that Einstein, far from being an outcast, was a Jewish man who was respected and honored around the world.

Good teachers, my education-is-all family, and my passion for spending hours at my microscope led to a Ph.D. in cell biology and a tenured position at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. Ironically, it was only when I left my position there to explore the “new science,” including studies on quantum mechanics, that I began to understand the profound nature of my boyhood hero Einstein’s contributions to our world.

While I flourished academically, in other areas I was a poster child for dysfunction, especially in the realm of relationships. I married in my 20s when I was too young and too emotionally immature to be ready for a meaningful relationship. When after ten years of marriage I told my father I was getting divorced, he adamantly argued against it and told me, “Marriage is a business.”

In hindsight, my father’s response made sense for someone who emigrated in 1919 from a Russia engulfed in famine, pogroms, and revolution—life for my father and his family was unimaginably hard, and survival was always in question. Consequently, my father’s definition of a relationship was a working partnership in which marriage was a means of survival, similar to the recruitment of mail-order brides by hardscrabble pioneers who homesteaded the Wild West in the 1800s.

My parents’ marriage echoed my father’s “business first” attitude even though my mother, who was born in America, did not share his philosophy. My mother and father worked together six days a week in a successful family business, but none of their children can recall seeing them share a kiss or a romantic moment. As I entered my early teens, the dissolution of their marriage became apparent when my mother’s anger over a loveless relationship exacerbated my father’s drinking. My younger brother and sister and I hid in our closets as frequent verbally abusive arguments shattered our formerly peaceful home. When my father and mother finally decided to live in separate bedrooms, an uneasy truce

prevailed.

As many conventionally unhappy parents did in the 1950s, my parents stayed together for the sake of the children—they divorced after my youngest brother left home for college. I only wish they had known that modeling their dysfunctional relationship was far more damaging to their children than their separation would have been.

At the time, I blamed my father for our dysfunctional family life. But with maturity I came to realize that both of my parents were equally responsible for the disaster that sabotaged their relationship and our family harmony. More important, I began to see how their behavior, programmed into my subconscious mind, influenced and undermined my efforts to create loving relationships with the women in my life.

In the meantime I experienced years of pain. The dissolution of my own marriage was emotionally devastating, especially because my two wonderful daughters, now loving and accomplished women, were just little girls. It was so devastating that I vowed never to marry again. Convinced that true love was a myth—at least for me—every day for 17 years I repeated this mantra when I shaved: “I won’t get married again. I won’t get married again.”

Needless to say, I wasn’t committed-relationship material! But despite my morning ritual, I couldn’t ignore what is a biological imperative for all organisms, from single cells to our 50-trillion-celled bodies—the drive to connect with another organism.

The first Big Love I experienced was a cliché: an older man with a bad case of arrested emotional development falls in love with a younger woman and experiences an intense, hormone-driven, teenage-style affair. For a year I floated happily through life high on “love potions,” the neurochemicals and hormones coursing through my blood that you’ll read about in [Chapter 3](#). When my teenage-style love affair inevitably crashed and burned (saying she needed “space,” she rode her bicycle a very short space away into the arms of a cardiovascular surgeon), I spent a year in my big, empty house wallowing in pain and pining for the woman who had left me. Cold turkey is horrible, not just for heroin addicts but also for those whose biochemistry reverts to everyday hormones and neurochemicals in the wake of a failed love affair.

One cold Wisconsin winter day I was sitting alone (as usual), ruminating again about the woman who had left me. I suddenly thought, *Goddammit, leave me alone!* A wise voice that occasionally appears at pivotal times of my life responded, “Bruce, isn’t that exactly what she did?” I burst out laughing and that broke the spell. From then on, any time I started obsessing, I would laugh. Finally, I had gotten past withdrawal through laughter, though I still had a long

way to go to get my act together!

How far I was from getting my act together became crystal clear to me when I moved to the Caribbean to teach at an offshore medical school. I was living in the most beautiful place on Earth in a villa by the ocean with gorgeous, sweet-smelling flowers; the villa even came with a gardener and a cook. I wanted to share my new life with someone (though of course not get married—I was still fixated on my morning mantra). I wanted more than a sexual partner. I wanted someone I could share my new life with in the most beautiful place on Earth. But the harder I looked, the less I found, even though I had what I thought was the world's best pickup line: "If you're not doing anything, how about hanging out with me at my Caribbean villa?"

One night I tried what should have been my surefire pickup line on a woman who had just arrived on Grenada, the picture-perfect island I had come to love. We went to the yacht club bar and chatted. I thought she was interesting, so I asked her to stay for a while instead of going back to her job working on a yacht. She looked me in the eye and said, "No, I could never be with you. You're too needy." The bullet hit—I was blown back into my chair in silence. After a long, stunned moment, I recovered my speech and managed to say, "Thank you. I needed to hear that." Not only did I know she was right; I knew that I needed to get my own life together before I could have the truly loving relationship I so desperately wanted.

Then a funny thing happened: as soon as I let go of my desperate quest for a relationship, women who wanted a relationship with me started to appear in my life. Finally, the true inspiration for this book, my beloved Margaret, entered my life and we started living our lives like those portrayed in the romantic comedies I once dismissed as fantasy.

But that's getting ahead of the story. First I had to learn that I was not "fated" to be alone, that I was not "fated" to have to settle for a series of failed relationships. I had to learn that not only had I *created* every failed relationship in my life, I could *create* the wonderful relationship I wanted!

The first step began in the Caribbean when I experienced the scientific epiphany I described in my first book, *The Biology of Belief*. While mulling over my research on cells, I realized that cells are not controlled by genes and neither are we. That eureka instant was the beginning of my transition, as I chronicled in that book, from an agnostic scientist into a Rumi-quoting scientist who believes that we all have the capacity to create our own Heaven on Earth and that eternal life transcends the body.

That instant was also the beginning of my transition from a marriage-phobic skeptic into an adult who finally took responsibility for every failed relationship

in his life and realized he could create the relationship of his dreams. In this book, I'll chronicle that transition using some of the same science outlined in *The Biology of Belief* (and more). I'll explain why it is not your hormones, your neurochemicals, your genes, or your less-than-ideal upbringing that prevents you from creating the relationships you say you want. Your *beliefs* are preventing you from experiencing those elusive, loving relationships. Change your beliefs, change your relationships.

Of course, it's more complicated than that, because in relationships between two people there are actually four minds at work. Unless you understand how those four minds can work against one another, even with the best of intentions, you'll be "looking for love in all the wrong places." That's why self-help books and therapy so often foster insight but not actual change—they only deal with two of the four minds at work in relationships!

Think back to the most spectacular love affair of your life—the Big One that toppled you head over heels. You made love for days on end, didn't need food, barely needed water, and had endless energy: it was the Honeymoon Effect that was to last forever. So often, though, the honeymoon devolves into daily bickering, maybe divorce, or just tolerance. The good news is that it doesn't have to end that way.

You might think that your Big Love was a coincidence at best or a delusion at worst, and that the collapse of your Big Love was bad luck. But in this book, I'll explain how you created the Honeymoon Effect in your life and its demise as well. Once you know how you created it and how you lost it, you can, like me, quit whining about your bad karma in relationships and create a happily-ever-after relationship that even a Hollywood producer would love.

After decades of failure, that's what I finally manifested! Because so many people have asked how we did it, Margaret and I will explain in the Epilogue how we've managed to create our happily-ever-after Honeymoon Effect for 17 years and counting. We want to share our story because love is the most potent growth factor for human beings, and love is contagious! As you'll find when you create the Honeymoon Effect in your own life, you'll attract similarly loving people to you—and the more the merrier. Let's take Rumi's eight-centuries-old advice and revel in our love for one another so this planet can finally evolve into a better place where all organisms can live their own Heaven on Earth. My hope is that this book will launch you on a journey, as that instant in the Caribbean launched me, to create the Honeymoon Effect each and every day of your life.



CHAPTER 1

Our Drive to Bond

It is beyond our imagination to conceive of a single form of life that exists alone and independent, unattached to other forms.

—LEWIS THOMAS

If you're a survivor of multiple failed relationships, you may wonder why you keep trying. I can assure you that you don't persist just for the (sometimes short-lived) good times. And you don't persist because of TV ads featuring loving couples on tropical islands. You persist, despite your track record and despite dismal divorce statistics, because you are designed to bond. Human beings are not meant to live alone.

There is a fundamental biological imperative that propels you and every organism on this planet to be in a community, to be in relationship with other organisms. Whether you're thinking about it consciously or not, your biology is pushing you to bond. In fact, the coming together of individuals in *community* (starting with two) is a principle force that drives biological evolution, a phenomenon I call *spontaneous evolution*, which I cover in depth in the book of the same name.¹

There are, of course, additional biological imperatives designed to ensure individual and species survival: the drive for food, for sex, for growth, for protection, and the ferocious, inexplicable drive to fight for life. We don't know where or how the will to live is programmed into cells, but it is a fact that no organism will readily give up its life. Try to kill the most primitive of organisms and that bacterium doesn't say, "Okay, I'll wait until you kill me." Instead, it will make every evasive maneuver in its power to sustain its survival.

When our biological drives are not being fulfilled, when our survival is threatened, we get a feeling in the pit of our stomach that something is wrong even before our conscious minds comprehend the danger. That gut feeling is being felt globally right now—many of us are feeling that pit in our stomach as we ponder the survivability of our environmentally damaged planet and of the human beings who have damaged it. Most of this book focuses on how individuals can create or rekindle wonderful relationships, but in the final chapter I'll explain how the energy created by "Heaven on Earth" relationships can heal the planet *and* save our species.

That's a tall order, I know, but we have at hand an extremely successful model for creating healing relationships that will ultimately lead to the healing of our planet. As the ancient mystics have said, "The answers lie within." The nature and power of harmonious relationships can be seen in the community of the trillions of cells that cooperate to form every human being. This might at first seem strange to you because when you look in the mirror, you might logically conclude that you are a single entity. But that is a major misperception! A human being is actually a community made up of 50 trillion sentient cells within a skin-covered petri dish, a surprising insight I'll explain further in [Chapter 3](#).

As a cell biologist, I spent many hours happily studying the behavior and fate of stem cells in plastic culture dishes. The trillions of cells within each skin-covered human body live far more harmoniously than feuding couples and strife-ridden human communities. This is one excellent reason why we can learn valuable insights from them: 50 *trillion* sentient cells, 50 *trillion* citizens living together peacefully in a remarkably complex community. All the cells have jobs. All the cells have health care, protection, and a viable economy (based on an exchange of ATP molecules, units of energy biologists often refer to as the "coin of the realm"). In comparison, humanity's job—figuring out the logistics of how a relatively measly seven *billion* humans can work together in harmony—looks easy. And compared to the 50-trillion-celled-cooperative human community, each couple's job—figuring out how *two* human beings can communicate and work together in harmony—seems like a piece of cake (though I know that at times it seems like the hardest challenge we face on Earth).

I grant you that single-celled organisms, which were the first life forms on this planet, spent a lot of time—almost three billion years—figuring out how to bond with one another. Even I didn't take that long! And when they did start coming together to create multicellular life forms, they initially organized as loose communities, or "colonies," of single-celled organisms. But the evolutionary advantage of living in a community (more awareness of the environment and a shared workload) soon led to highly structured organisms composed of millions,