Many Faces of Love

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FOREWORD

After having analyzed the phenomenon of love not only from the perspective of a romantic relationship but also in education, work, and the course of life, we decided to put together our work and create a scientific analysis of the many faces of love. This book is based on our scientific articles on love that have been published in peer-reviewed, international research journals in English.The purpose of the book is to provide a comprehensive analysis of love in various areas of human life—romantic love and its ups and downs, love in education, work, and various phases of life—and in relation to other phenomena, such as friendship, play, and creativity. This book is meant for everyone interested in love but also for professionals in various fields, such as psychologists, educators, and couple and family counselors.

WHY STUDY LOVE?

Research on love and emotions has been greeted with suspicion although people live in a network of relationships from birth to death, and the ability to build and maintain relationships is an important strength—many people find the meaning of their life through other people. In psychology, negative emotions and experiences such as anger or fear have been studied much more than love. It is the case regardless of the fact that the word "love" is one of the most popular words in the English language.

Additionally, love has many definitions. It is perhaps impossible to define comprehensively what love is and is not. It is a complex phenomenon, too. Francis Bacon stated in the 16th century that "it is impossible to be in love and be wise." Scott Peck (1978) argued that when studying love, we play with a mystery that is too extensive or profound to be explained by words. On the other hand, German phenomenologist Max Scheler (1974–1928) stated that, fundamentally, people are not only thinking or willing creatures but also especially loving beings. Love influences the direction of people's actions as well as the intensity, and therefore, love arouses intellectual and logical thinking.

THE CONTENT: FROM THE FASCINATION OF FALLING IN LOVE TO THE AGONY OF LOVE

The book covers four themes that discuss the multi-faceted theme from a different perspective. The first chapter analyzes love along the course of life, starting from youngsters' first taste of the sweet poison of love through the partner selection and various phases of a romantic relationship to the notion that love does not retire, not even in senior age.

Many young people find love and falling in love interesting and touching: love fascinates, confuses, and hurts. Yet everyone dreams of it. For a young person,

falling in love can mean an extremely powerful emotional experience that enraptures and hurts. Creating and upholding human relationships is not easy, and social skills develop along with life experiences. Even falling in love is a learning experience.

We argue that the ability to love requires that one accept oneself and one's uniqueness. Learning to appreciate the self can be the way to cherish human relationships. To be able to love another, one has to love oneself as well. But how can people learn to accept themselves and learn to respect themselves without asking for evidence from others? Instead of saddling others with one's own responsibility of satisfaction and happiness, one should be able to see one's own share and responsibility in love.

In this chapter, we discuss the different phases of a romantic relationship from the very first experience of falling in love to the process of selecting a partner and beyond. Selecting a partner requires various skills but is still partly unconscious. The manner of selecting a partner does not seem to explain the stability of the relationship as such, but partner selection makes the start of a relationship possible.

There are countless classifications of the phases of love. Indeed, love is nuanced, *A Many-Splendoured Thing*, as Han Suyin (1952) calls it. We will introduce our analysis of the role of interaction in romantic relationships and seven stepping-stones of lasting love based on research among long-married Finnish couples. We argue that, along with age, conceptions of the value of love become deeper. Love does not retire!

The second chapter discusses love from the point of view of the science of education: themes of parental love, teachers' pedagogical love, and the possibility of learning the ability to love are brought out. In education and parenting, love appears as guidance toward disciplined work, but also as patience, trust, and forgiveness. The purpose is to create a setting for learning and growth where children can use and develop toward the maximum of their abilities. The logic of love elicits hidden skills and opportunities. Furthermore, love can be seen as a virtue or strength representing human kindness, compassion, and affection (e.g. Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005). We claim that love is something learnable, available for all, and can be fostered and taught.

"Love is the victory of the imagination over the brain" (May, 1969, p. 74) and "creativity is the kingdom of imagination" (Krippner & Dillard, 1988, p. 125). In the third chapter, love is discussed in relation to other human phenomena. The purpose is to analyze the multiformity of love. The selected perspectives are friendship and creativity. In addition, we dissect love from the point of view of having a positive and optimistic attitude toward work—downright love—through the experiences of work satisfaction, joy of work, and work drive. Love of work can be directly translated into engagement, productivity, better performance at work, and willingness to help other people at work.

In the 17th century, Robert Burton (1963/1651) declared that love is not just lunacy but also "sickness, fever, agony." The fourth chapter introduces the negative side of love: skewed and crumbled love. Although love provides an increased sense

of well-being, energy, and stronger self-esteem, this feature can become the chains of love. How do people describe the bruising side of love, pathological forms of love, fixations, and addictions? We will present an analysis of morbid love and the role self-esteem plays in the scale of healthy and unhealthy love. Then, we will discuss a special form of love, narcissism: it can be considered the ultimate manifestation of self-love—or, merely, it is a skewed version of love affecting a romantic relationship. It is necessary to realize that love can fail, regardless of all good intentions. Sometimes, in a romantic relationship, a divorce or a break-up is the only reasonable solution but not the end of the world. We will introduce divorcees' perceptions of the divorce process and life after a divorce. To understand the holistic nature of love, these themes must be discussed, and much can be learned from them.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LOVE

Whether love is directed in a life companion, children, fellow humans, or various forms of work and doing, arts, ideas, or solving the problems of existence, it is crucial that people preserve sufficiently powerful passions and dreams, maybe even illusions that inspire and make them feel alive. Love can act as an impetus for goals that give meaning to life (Schnitker, 2007). Love, at its best, is manifested by the endeavor to make things develop, grow, and come forward, whether love falls on other people, art, science, ideas, or nature.

Positive emotions—joy, strength, and the feeling of being capable—lead mental energy toward desired goals. Love as emotion and action creates hope and boldness. Close and happy human relationships provide protection against stress.Thus, love, in its various forms, makes the best health insurance!

Therefore, love is worth cherishing and practicing. Other people's experiences may be helpful, and information about the nature of love can relieve the pain. Nevertheless, research on love does not take the shine off love and its importance in every human being's life.

At the University of Lapland in Rovaniemi, 20 December 2012
Kaarina Määttä and Satu Uusiautti

CHAPTER 1

LOVE ALONG THE COURSE OF LIFE

THE SWEET POISON OF LOVE IN ADOLESCENCE AND EARLY ADULTHOOD

Love in youth is often fascinating, captivating, and total. It can be like this already when an elementary school student falls for a classmate who sits at the next desk tugging at his or her heartstrings or when a pubescent directs his or her passionate admiration and secret dreams at a public figure. Love is true for many youngsters also in these experiences. Falling in love becomes particularly touching on the threshold of adulthood during the first steps of dating. It can be like grace, anxiety, and fascination simultaneously (Bauminger et. al., 2008; Person, 2007).

When in love, emotional experiences and behavior get their peculiar form. Still, falling in love and the way one shows it are learned to a great extent and respond to those social and societal expectations leveled at people. As far as is known, Francois de la Rochwfoucauld has said: "There are people who would never have fallen in love if they never heard of love" (Grant, 1976, p. 12).

All things considered, people preconceive love based on the models, stories, rules, and rituals that are transmitted to them from generation and society to another. Show business provides us with its own points of comparison. We are being taught what love is. We learn to interpret and show love in a certain way. Additionally, we learn about love and our experiences of love by ourselves (Fonagy et al., 2002).

In this article, a pioneering research on love is dissected as a basis of empirical research. In this research, the focus is on the experiences of love in adolescence and early adulthood: What do the youth tell about their feelings of falling in love: how touching it is and how to handle the crises it creates?

WHAT DOES FALLING IN LOVE INVOLVE?

"Falling in love is madness," many famous authors have stated. Robert Burton (1651/1963) noted in the 17th century, that not only love is madness but also "disease, spree, agony" and described in great detail the shaking and negative influence of love both on individuals and the whole society. This is how he also showed his respect for Francis Bacon who stated quite resolutely at the end of the 16th century that "it is impossible to be in love and be wise" (Bacon, 1557/1955, p. 28). Bacon's thoughts are greatly supported in Shakespeare's pieces as well.

Later on, the definitions of the nature of falling in love have been presented more and more. Alberoni (1979) describes falling in love as assimilation; Tennov (1979) refers to limerence; Girard (1972) talks about losing oneself and Fromm (1956) about the disappearance of individuality; Askew (1965) refers to neurosis, Kilpatrick (1974) to anti-social behavior, and Stendahl (in 1830/1957) to crystallizing.

On the contrary, love can be understood as a divine phenomenon, a manifestation of immortality among mortal people, and a way and accession to holiness (Irigaray, 1982).

Erich Fromm (1956) considers love as an active power that connects people with each other. It makes isolation and loneliness to disappear providing the feeling of unity and security.

The we-experience that two people in love share can be quite world-shaking by its depth: Francesco Alberoni (1979) felicitously regards falling in love as the derivation of twopeople mass movement.

All this and much more are written in the myths, fairytales, and stories of humankind already centuries ago in the same way as today. Falling in love is really "a many-splendored thing" as was the name of Han Suyi's novel from 1952. This also in line with John Lee's (1973) famous love typology; he used this typology to analyze the conceptions and essence of love through the analogy of colors and the colors of a rainbow.

Lee distinguishes six ways of falling in love of which three (eros, ludu, and storge) are the primary and three (mania, pragma, and agape) secondary ways of falling in love. Several various combinations are located between these dimensions.

Because of the numerous definitions for love the whole verbal illustration of love can be questioned: the words seem to be too platitudinous and ordinary by the side of flamboyant and omnipotent love. Nor is the language the only one being insufficient; consciousness and intelligence have their limits also when trying to comprehend what happens in love.

FROM "FALLING IN LOVE" TO "BEING IN LOVE"

Loving is different than falling in love. Usually, love begins with falling in love. It is a gate to love; yet, faraway from love (e.g., Riela et al., 2010).

Falling in love can be a powerful emotional whirlwind that outruns everyday life. It can be magic of joy and happiness, excitement and pleasure, corroded by insecurity and the fear of losing love. For some, love develops little by little based on friendship without any hot whirlpool of passion. Another tends to fall in love by deliberate pondering about the mutual compatibility and the progress of love affair (Määttä, 2005a, 2006; Pines, 1999).

Answers to the question of what happens when one falls in love are manifold. The opinions of personality theorists can be divided into two schools. Some consider falling in love as a valuable experience: it enhances the development of the integration of an individual's identity and personality (Erikson, 1968; Jung, 1925/1959; Kernberg, 1977).

However, some other theorists (Casler, 1973; De Rougemont, 1956; Schaeffer, 1987; Tennov, 1979) emphasize the negative consequences of falling in love: it strengthens irrationality and dependency.

Similar numerous phase descriptions about the origin of love and its stages have been drawn up. Braiker and Kelley (1979) noted that a love affair develops by four

phases (casual dating, serious dating, engagement, and marriage) each of which includes four different dimensions: love, conflict, maintenance, and ambivalence.

Goldstine et al. (1977) have identified three phases of a love affair. The first phase is the period of falling in love where the partners feel passion, tension, insecurity, and vulnerability. This phase is the time for high self-respect and reciprocity as well as idealization. The second phase is the period of disappointment and alienation. A couple find themselves extremely different from each other; blaming the other and disappointments are typical in this phase. The probability of breaking up is at its highest. If a couple gets through this phase, they will move on to the third one where the expectations to each other become more realistic. On the one hand, in a relationship, the partners experience powerful appreciation to individuality and, on the other hand, security as well. In Goldstine et al.'s theory, love turns from romantic, passionate love into realistic, "companionable" (Walster & Walster, 1978), "mature", or "right kind of" love (Hatfield, 1988), if the partners manage to overcome the period of unwelcome emotions.

Tzeng (1992) has specified the development of love by eight stages (Octagonal Stage Model), Coleman (1997) have introduced a five-step model, and Levinger (1983) ABCDEmodel (Acquaintance, Buildup, Continuation, Deterioration, Ending model). Alberoni (1979) considers the process of falling in love as a sort of series of tests. With these tests, one seeks security and answers, for example, to the questions of whether the other loves enough, whether this love is real, whether he or she is able to break away from the other, and so on. If a couple gets through these phases, falling in love will proceed into a deeper phase that could be called "loving".

The abovementioned general descriptions of the process of falling in love tend to repeat almost the same features. Romantic love is seen as a linear process: a couple falls in love, loves each other, and either loses love or deepens it. In this perspective, the very first love is quite special by its emotional and learning experience; and, usually, takes place in adolescence. This article concentrates on the phenomenon of falling in love in adolescence and early adulthood.

Regardless of age and various theories, the event of falling in love however is one-of-a-kind for everyone; nor does it progress by any general model. Everyone loves by their own way and the experience of falling in love is individual, unique, and subjective. (Dion & Dion, 1973; Hatfield, Schmitz, Cornelius, & Rapson, 1988; Hegi & Bergner, 2010; Määttä, 2005a; 2006; Sternberg, 1988).

THE AIM OF THIS STUDY

Prof. Määttä started a research project in Finland which aimed at analyzing the content and meaning of love scheme as a part of young adults' life span and identity formation. This study was divided into several separate parts. The purpose of this article is to dissect the experience of falling in love and to illustrate the phases and progress of the process of falling in love through the young adults' descriptions.

This article aims at describing, classifying, and analyzing how people experience falling in love after meeting their partners or significant others. What happens when people fall in love? What kind of feelings and thoughts falling in love arouses among them and how does it reflect in their behavior? According to the participants, what kind of changes does falling in love cause in them? What phases can be found in falling in love among young adults? What kind of differences can be found between different people during the process of falling in love? These questions can be crystallized into the form of the following research question: How do the young adults describe their experiences of falling in love?

METHODS

The research data were collected in two phases. The research participants were under 25-year-old students of the University of Lapland, Finland. A sample of one hundred students was selected from the student record with a systematic random sample. These students were invited with an invitation letter to an interview. Everntually, 42 students of the sample agreed to be interviewed and arranged time for interview. However, seven of them did not arrive at the interview. Therefore, the eventual number of interviewees was 35 (22 women and 13 men). They represented equally various marital status; both unmarried and married or co-habiting couples. For some, the first love in adolescence had developed into a permanent relationship; the others had had several experiences of falling in love and break-ups.

The purpose was to turn the interview situation as an open conversation situation pursuing genuineness and confidentiality. In addition, most of the students who participated in the research appeared talkative and sincere. They told about their willingness to participate because the theme was "so wonderful" and because "it is nice that for once this kind of issue is studied and not just always some spending for instance". Part of those who had a positive attitude were experiencing "the happy first flush of love" at that moment or wanted to participate because "falling in love is a thing that I haven't ever known…" The interview situation seemed to have offered them a chance to analyze their course of life and identity formation.

The theme for the research and interview seemed to clearly divide the students into two groups: either the issue was considered too intimate and sensitive, or they were immediately delighted with the humane and different theme. The fact that to what extent those who refused to participate would have contributed to the present research results remains unknown. This information that the participants gave introduced the vast spectrum of this theme. Altogether, the research data thus proved to be relatively plentiful: this is worth remembering as the sufficiency of research data is one criterion for the outer validity.

Lincoln and Cuba (1985) suggest that the criteria for the reliability of qualitative research could be the member checks on the information distribution and how apt its interpretations and conclusion are. Love as a research subject is sensitive and delicate; thus, it is not easy to be sure how openly and honestly the students were

able to analyze their conceptions and experiences. However, we wanted to discover the truthfulness of their answers. In other words, the aim was to estimate how much the students had left untold, how much they have consciously or unconsciously wanted to repress or forget things, whether the answers would have changed if the other partner had also been telling about his or her side of the story, etcetera. These matters were deciphered by asking the research participants' conceptions of the functionality of the interview and their own openness and sincerity directly. The answers the students gave support the idea of the reliability of the research data:

> This was exciting… I didn't have any reason to lie. I find it very interesting to find out what the others have told; maybe I'd learn something… My experiences are so minimal… I have described them in the way I experience them. I told everything as they are… maybe by being shy and on the face of it a little bit; I'm not used to discuss these things. That recording made me nervous at first but… maybe I described one guy in a little bit too a rough manner but you won't reveal the names anywhere.

The interviews lasted between one and two hours, were recorded, and transcribed carefully.

Next, the interview data were expanded with essays. A group of teacher students in the Faculty of Education at the University of Lapland wrote an essay about "At that time, I was in love" as an assignment in a Finnish lesson. This data consisted of 20 essays, from two to five sheets long.

These two sets of data were analyzed simultaneously in the empirical analyses. Thus, the analysis is based on the experiences of 55 people.

The analysis proceeded hermeneutically from theory to empirical perspectives and vice versa. The method is heuristic and exploring by nature: on the one hand, it tests and adapts the previous research results and theory, and on the other hand, it looks for a new outline (Silverman, 2006).

The data analysis was inductive and qualitative as the aim was to discover generalizations, consistencies, and categories from the interview data and essays to create a digestible description of the extremely multi-dimensional and comprehensive phenomenon of falling in love. The data were described, analyzed, categorized, and compared in order to be able to form as extensive answer to the research question as possible.

RESULTS

Where Does Love Start?

Where does love start or how invented love are questions deliberated by poets and composers all over again. This is of great interest. Hardly anyone finds it easy to explain how their personal love began or what made them fall in love. "It is hard to

tell," "It just started," "The other just happened to be there," and "It started in the spring" appear to be felicitous remarks (see also Young, 1997).

When analyzing the participants' experiences, it seems that the beginning of love was not by any means "written in the stars" or "determined by destiny or amour" but a result of even rational action as well (see also Barelds & Barelds-Dijikstra, 2007).

Falling in love is possible if one is willing or wants to fall in love (see Masters & Johnson, 1986). Then, falling in love is considered positive, important, and desirable. The wish to fall in love also embodies lovelorn or the hunger of love (see Grant, 1976) or is a consequence of the desire to be loved.

My emotional life needed refreshment and then I met him.

For the young, the model of juvenile culture may provide the impetus for the readiness to fall in love. Young people find it important to lean on others of the same age, act in the same way, and thus, pursue strengthening their own position. Indeed, the reason for falling in love can be the pressure from a peer group: it seems important to date because everybody else is dating (e.g., Regan & Dreyer, 1999). This is how the young want to show their friends and parents that they are able to correspond to the expectations of young people having a boyfriend or a girlfriend.

At that time, it would elevate your status if you had a boyfriend.

You were supposed to date with someone… the boy kind of aided in that.

The readiness to fall in love can also represent people's willingness to change. If life is tangled, soul is wounded, or the landmarks of one's own development and future are lost, love can be used as a magical mirror through which the circumstances appear in a better way. People may believe that love offers the first aid and way out from the agonized life situation. (O'Sullivan, 2008.)

Young people can find falling in love as a means to cut loose from childhood home. Finding someone to date with seems attractive as such; it opens the entrance to adulthood. Then, selecting partner can exemplify a way to rebel against authorities; the young can find their way to such a person who is the perfect opposite of the parents' wishes.

That boy was a horrible hooligan, my parents did not approve me hanging out with him at all… that was kind of rebellion against my parents.

Young people can show that they are on their own and it is about their personal choices.

I didn't care who he was as as long as he/she loved me back… it was connected with maturing; I found it necessary to do like adults did.

What Happens When You Fall in Love?

Falling in love ignites imagination. When putting one's heart and soul into love, one does not look with the eyes but with the mind (see Freud, 1914/1957: May,

1969; Hartman & Basile, 2003). With fantasies, people can see love in the way they want.

> Soon he just started to seem like the man of my dreams… I thought that he was the one for me.

Reality and the whole existence become ennobled in a manner of speaking.

> I found myself enjoying all the small things.

Life is good and the whole existence reflects the bright gloss of newness.

> I was so energetic and active and filled with powerful feelings.

Experiences of symbiosis and regression take place at the initial stage of falling in love (Mahler, 1974). The one in love starts behaving like a little child. Falling in love serves the aspiration to revive the experiences of happiness and pleasure from early childhood.

> It was so good and easy to be with her from the beginning: she really understood me and we didn't have to say everything out loud.

Similarly, the need for intimacy and affection, as well as sexuality, strengthens (e.g., Eisenman, 2001). Lovers want to be with together and long for each other's proximity.

> We just sat in each other's arms, enjoyed each other's proximity.

The other one's company is like balsam. Togetherness is enjoyable and along with it mutual trust, tenderness, and sexuality are strengthened.

> I missed his endearments and wanted to give those to him/her as well. You would give everything, wouldn't you?

Togetherness and isolation appear more powerful (e.g., Arditti & Kauffman, 2003). Togetherness is so intensive, that the moments apart rend.

> I thought that I would die if the other wasn't there.

Togetherness is the only thing that matters. The surrounding world disappears. Lovers see only each other and are happy together.

> As if you weren't in this world, that you just hope that you could be and let yourself float.

Sense of time disappears: here and now. Lovebirds even apprehend time in a different way than others. They took the time they need and set aside everything else they can in order to be together (Fenchel, 2005.) They would prefer time to stop when "the world gives its best".

Caring secures. Also mutual caring and tenderness increase. It seems as if the lovers had a sixth sense which they use to sense what the partner needs. Whether one desires more caring, independence, or safety, that is exactly what the other offers; and

no words are needed (e.g., Kito, 2005). It seems that lovers are capable of extremely skilled unconscious performances when adjusting to each other's expectations.

> You care so much about the other that you want to, you know, start taking care of the other in a way that it outstrips even your own needs.

When lovers nourish each other with spontaneous caring, togetherness becomes enjoyable and easy without saying anything. They become more and more certain that living together will go without problems: they both know what the other one needs (e.g., Feenye & Van Vleet, 2010).

> I thought that he was the one for me. I thought that he would be a good partner to live with and plan the future together.

Childish manner of speaking and playful behavior. Lovers' mutual manner of speaking resembles infants' language. They coddle and it seems that they have an endless amount of the terms of endearments for each other.

> We didn't lack of nicknames: honey, sugar honey pie, funny tummy, goldilocks.

They laugh at the same things and discover new reasons for joy spreading cheerfulness, joy, and energy around them. Lovers need for togetherness and touching each other may arise from their disbelief of what has happened to them (e.g., Gordon, 2008). They have to make themselves certain that this all is for real by touching each other. The language of touching helps to adjust without words.

> I couldn't believe what had happened… that this kind of amazing feeling of happiness, and then again, I was afraid or felt insecure if this will last.

When falling in love, also fears and insecurity start gnawing. Therefore, not only many previously experienced feelings of happiness from childhood revive but also confusion and fears: the fear of excessive intimacy, the fear of losing love (e.g., Mietzner & Lin, 2005.) Even the fact that one does not know the other very well yet is subject to cause insecurity (e.g., Bauminger et. al., 2008).

> What if one falls in love entirely and if the other one leaves; how you will handle that.

Love Blinds You: The Significant Other Dazzles

The one in love sees the other as ideal through the rosetinted spectacles. No wonder they say that love is blind.

> That girl was like an answer to all those wishes what I could ever have expected of a woman.

Looking with the eyes of love the pockmarks seem dimples, says a proverb. When falling in love, even the negative features are seen as a positive light or explained in

a positive manner (Murray, Holmes, & Griffin, 1996). This can result from the desire to ensure or stabilize the continuity of the romance. Sometimes one's image of the loved one is more real to him/her than the brute truth (e.g., Person 2007).

I clothed him with the colors of my yearning.

Love believes in good. Almost all the other one's features are seen as positive and lovable although they might be troublesome for the life together. At the phase of admiring, the target for love is thus regarded as one-of-a-kind, exceptional, and irreplaceable.

The personality of that person made me fall in love; the personality was so strong.

This is how the beneficial conditions for a successful relationship are created (e.g., Dindia & Emmers-Sommer, 2006).

She is everything to me… I love her and nothing on earth can change it.

The Magical Mirror of Falling in Love: One's Own Self
Becomes Stronger

Along with falling in love, an individual's image of himself or herself becomes stronger in many ways. One feels more skilled and capable than before, the expansion of the contents of self takes place, as well as self-esteem increases (see Aron, Paris, & Aron, 1995).

I noticed new things in myself; I laughed more, I was more social, I felt being filled with energy. That was a wonderful feeling.

When the partners try to reveal and specify the features in themselves, falling in love may also improve selfknowledge (Leary, 2001). When being endorsed, cared, and appreciated, the young become ensured that they are good and worth loving.

I enjoyed all the attention that this person gave me.

When in love, the young expect, or actually are out for, positive estimations from the target of their love.

When I knew that the other cared, I was able to get rid of my insecurity.

Sometimes the eagerness to fall in love can be so compulsive that the dividing line between love and deep gratefulness for positive feedback becomes unclear. At the time life being filledwith conflicts and crises, the need for finding a point of reference—a magical mirror, which reflects oneself as good and beautiful—is the most absolute. People in general tend to wish for praise and appreciation, rewards and recognition: "people have a passion for praise", as Swann, De LaRonde, and Hixon (1994) point out.

The young make the effort of giving a fascinating or favorable impression of themselves to the target of their admiration or love. If one's own self-esteem has been desolated, being praised and appreciated is outstandingly grand, primary, and flattering in love (Hancock & Toma, 2009; Haselton et al., 2005). Parents may even find a youngster's ways of strengthening self-esteem deplorable.

Some become addicted to falling in love (e.g., Capell-Sowder, 1994; Fenchel, 1998; Schaeffer, 1987). This addiction results in the spiral of love, love addiction, when an individual is enchanted of being enchanted, besotted with being besotted, and in love with falling in love. This can also be described as love dependence, an obsession, which makes people repeat the same behavioral pattern all over again. They hurry from a lap to another.

> Continuous zest for life, not willing to be tied to anyone as there is still so much to experience…

A young person's life can be filled with the chaos of love or sexuality (e.g., Beck-Gernsheim & Beck, 1995), where the pleasure and experiences are pursued non-stop by new relationships. Every new conquest is used for strengthening one's self-esteem. It is about a struggle with identity as well: the young want to test through other people what others think of themselves. They want to experience life as a great adventure or continuous experiment (Sperling, 1987).

So Much is Included in Love—The Crises and Disappointments as Well

According to a Finnish proverb, "love takes half of a mind from a wise, all from an insane." The enrapturing symbiotic phase of falling in love lasts between half to one year depending on how intensive the lovers are together and how long time the images can hold it up (Bergman, 1995; Gordon, 2008).

Despite it being enchanting, the early phase of falling in love is temporal and no one can avoid the crises or changes. The fabulous and appealing displays of falling in love inevitably end before long, no matter how happy or satisfying the relationship was by its basis (e.g., Canary & Dainton, 2006). The lovers are no longer satisfied with the hopeful anticipation and amorous illusion of their needs becoming fulfilled; little by little they will also start demanding these promises to come true.

When life becomes back to normal, the new kinds of expectations are aimed at the partner. At the early phase of falling in love, the young concentrate on taking care of the other and being accordant with a partner's expectations but when the relationship becomes stable satisfying one's own needs and selfish demands become more important. The wishes of the one in love can be illustrated in children's words: "I have been good long enough, now it's time for my salary. Now, give me what you promised." The lovers take a real step apart and expect that the dividends of togetherness will start to show profit.

The change can take place suddenly or step by step but at some point, the partners will notice that their relationship has cooled down. The expressions of love become more infrequent and so does cuddling. Lovers realize they disagree with several matters. The other is not a constant support or cover, nor does love offer just pure pleasure (e.g., Mietzner & Lin, 2005). Instead of being together, the young may start longing for space.

Maybe it was that we spend way too much time just together.

The phase of crises produces disappointments, helplessness, and insecurity. The difficulties the partners confront are the same with which they have to struggle in their intimate relationship all the time, from year to year and from decade to decade (e.g., Dindia & Emmers-Sommer, 2006; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007).

Losing Dreams Hurts

When lovers get to know each other better, they notice features in each other that they had not noticed before. The partner is not equivalent to their expectations. Disappointments hurt and some might become distressed. The fear of engaging with a wrong person preys on their mind. The new features in the partner may even be a threat to their own security.

And then I was annoyed by the partner's features to which I hadn't paid attention previously; that you started to search for faults… so that it started to make me a sort of anguished.

The bitterest loss for the one in love is losing the dreams. The future with the partner seemed to be filled with miracles and promises. The relationship was supposed to be the beginning for the great hopes full of love, of which all the pop songs and movies tell about, and which you have waited for and planned to build your life on. All these ideal dreams are collapsing and losing these dreams hurts.

I guess that I then noticed that after all, he isn't that wonderful than I thought.

After the disappointments, one's condition and the whole surrounding world may seem dark and cold. When feeling distressed, one may blame the partner for what has happened. When the partner seems distant and the atmosphere of togetherness cold, the young may find it difficult to come up with functional solutions for the problematic situation. They can choose desperate means of exercising power and try to make the partner be more loving (Foehrenbach & Lane, 1994). They can even hurt the other rather than tell about their worries.

I was bossing and demanding that the things have to be done like I wanted to. I nagged about almost every insignificant thing. He was also different than before; cold, unresponsive, distant. He asked for trouble, deliberately annoyed me.

The new reality may seem chaotic and full of threats. It is not easy for the young to see through the bad feeling: it is not easy to understand that the other did not really want to hurt you but was not capable of anything else either. No one can focus just on fulfilling others' needs. Accepting one's own inability and insufficiency as well as one's own limitedness is part of the development of human personality. Self-knowledge and strengthening the ego result from tolerating groping, insecurity, and the fear of becoming abandoned.

> Love is not easy because when you live with someone you have to compromise and even give up some of your dreams. Maybe you have to give over a piece of yourself but you will get back double its worth.

Together and Still Alone

Falling in love creates yearning for being together constantly and the wish for permanent symbiosis. A crisis erupts when one finds out that the other is not a constant support and cover after all (Person, 2007). The other is not a part of oneself. The young in love may find it intolerable that the partner is not interested in the same things, acts differently than they selves do, and wants to do things alone. Facing the other's dissimilarity causes the fear of being left outside and alone.

> I tried so hard to please the other; I tried even if I didn't want to. Then, little by little, I realized that it enchained way too much my life and freedom… demanded something that I was not capable of.

The difficulty in love is that it requires two people to become one but still remain two individuals. The toast of love can turn out to be sweet poison. Love does not necessarily appear as wanted; not by trying nor demanding. Love cannot be enhanced by intimidating and it involves the risk of losing and becoming abandoned: love does not guarantee requited love, trust can lead to disappointment, and confiding may hurt. Love is not always enough.

A proper balance between intimacy and distance should be found in a love affair (Dominigue & Mollen, 2009). Lovers may signal various paradoxical hopes for each other; such as "come near, go away" is one of them. On the one hand, they want their independency and freedom, and on the other hand, they want to conform to the other's expectations. The inconsistency of expectations mystifies (e.g., Pistole, Roberts, & Chapman, 2010). Both partners may think that either they did this or that the solution will not be satisfying.

> I had fun to be with her, but I had so much more to experience too. All the new plans came up and the other didn't want to let me go; eventually, the situation became too narrow.

Lovers may find it weird that regardless of appreciating proximity the other or both of them need their privacy from time to time.

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> Although I am dating, I need a lot of time for myself, kind of privacy; usually, the partner didn't understand it and thought that I don't care… But I am not me if I'm not allowed to bunch myself up every now and then.

Intimacy is essential in love. Many people find the experiences of symbiosis quite comfortable: you do not have to fight for the admiration of the opposite sex, worry about lonely nights or becoming turned down or blazing quarrels. Despite all this, an excessive intimacy also involves problems.

An excessive need for intimacy may cause convulsive entanglement or adhering to the other; then, one starts to avoid being responsible for oneself as an individual and does not want the other have life of his or her own (Meston & Frohlich, 2003). The world seems to end if the other does not agree in everything or he/she wants to be alone or with other people sometimes.

At its worst, togetherness may turn into an ownership or a subjugating relationship where the other thinks of having the right to shape the other to fit one's own hopes and needs. Then, the thirst for power, jealousy, and desire to own the other and treat him/her as an object are involved.

On the other hand, being too far away may also be damaging – affinity fails to develop. A proper way to combine both intimacy and individuality should be found; however, there is not any general pattern or model for finding this balance. The lovers just have to learn to know how much intimacy both of them can tolerate and how much distance they need. They have to have quite the ability to give space both for the other and themselves so that being apart does not make the intimacy disappear. In this way, they will not lean solely on each other nor anchor themselves to each other.

"I Need You"

For some, love can turn into a need and for others into entanglement or destructive addiction. Despite being so harrowing, sticking to someone means living in a relationship in which it is impossible to live but without it living is impossible as well. This kind of dependency can deceivingly feel like love. However, the determining feeling is fear—fear of becoming abandoned, left alone, and that you do not exist without the other.

> I think that I'm nothing without him.

The price for love can be high. The traditional conceptions may rule: you have to struggle and be able to carry on, but you are not allowed to quit. The doubt whether the relationship could even be something more is preying on mind. Young people can compare their own relationship with others' relationships in their thoughts and wonder if the others have it any better than they selves do. Should you be satisfied with the prevailing situation or could life alone be better? Those who live in a harrowing relationship remember from time to time the good moments together;

and again, there is something to deliberate: whether we should still try, whether the partner is able to change, and could the good time they had at the beginning come back.

> I waited all the time that the great time we used to have would come back, all the sweetness we experienced.

The one who treats the partner badly is also able to soothe and act in a way that the partner blindly believes that the other will change and be good.

All the unpleasant things in a relationship can be interpreted for the best and togetherness can be constructed by hoping positive changes. Caring about the partner even when he/she is quite troublesome can be understood as a salient and binding part of love.

> I think that I can't leave him, how can he handle it?

Belief in the magnificent power of love can make one tolerate mistreatment: the troublesome features are thought to be only temporary.

DISCUSSION

Young people of today may have unreasonable expectations toward love: love is seen as an answer and solution to almost all problems they have (e.g., Twenge & King, 2005). Love is considered as the most important source for personal coping and pleasure. The young learn to expect that love heals and makes things easier, removes all the obstacles to happiness, makes their own deficiencies and flaws disappear, and offers the perfect pleasure. The higher are expectations, the greater are disappointments. Dreams turn into a trap if they consist of hopes that cannot be fulfilled by any means. Instead of making life easier, love can actually hurt. How could we support the young when they try to create permanent intimate relationships? Falling in love is also a learning experience for the young people. When dating and falling in love they search, test, and assess themselves and others. They learn about their inner reality, those things that please them and hurt them. At the same time, they increase their awareness and understanding not only about the separateness between their own and others' feelings and expectations but also about the dissimilarity between them. Consequently, falling in love is often a climax in life, a certain turn of events, or border crossing where life and one's own self are formed in a new way.

Learning to appreciate the self can be the way to cherish human relationships. To be able to love the other, one has to love oneself as well. The ability to love requires that one accepts one's own self and uniqueness. In this sense, love is a space where the relationship with the other is not in priority but the relationship with the self is. If one is capable of appreciating oneself, one can appreciate one's decisions and defend them by respecting the other's dissimilarity and individuality. When loving oneself, one can accept one's own good and bad sides and find it easier to have

the same attitude toward the partner—and will not expect the partner to be perfect either.

But how can young people learn to accept themselves? How can one learn to respect oneself as is without asking for evidence from others? Self-appreciation is enhanced by learning to enjoy one's own success and achievements instead of clinging to others. Everyone has their own fields of expertise and competencies. Studying, work, friends, recreation, and relaxation in the midst of various hobbies, artistic and operational activities provide the youth with opportunities of success and content for life. When having many fields of know-how and sources for satisfaction, one understands better that love is not the answer to everything and one does not expect having non-stop proof or guarantees of love.

WHO IS THE ONE? THE DIFFICULTY IN SELECTING THE PARTNER

Partner selection and the arousal of love have interested poets, artists, and authors already for millenniums. The process of partner selection—"mate selection", "mate seeking", "spouse selection", or "marital choice"—has proven quite an interesting research target especially in the United States (Hatfield, Benson, & Rapson, 2012). Research has often been relatively narrow studies with small data but they have presented various theories to explain the start of a new relationship.

This study forms a part of a research project in the field of love psychology. The name of the project is "Love-based leadership—An interdisciplinary approach" and it was launched at the university of Lapland in 2011 (http://www.ulapland.fi/lovebasedleadership). The organization of the article differs from a so-called traditional research article because here the theories, models, and previous studies of partner selection are connected with the results of the interviews. Therefore, the empirical study and the theory are in dialogue. Furthermore, the theoretical overview covers quite a long time span. It simultaneously shows how the criteria of partner selection have been at the center of research for decades. Many studies from the 1970s have similar results than studies from 2012. Certainly, there are some differences as well.

The purpose of this article is to dissect Finnish people's perceptions on where love begins, what makes one fall in love and what kinds of characteristics are the most appealing; in other words, what is the core criterion of partner selection. Two research questions are discussed: (1) How do the previous studies and criteria explain partner selection? (2) What kind of connection does the present study has with the previous ones?

METHODS

The data in this research were collected through two methods and phases. The first set of data was collected among students at the University of Lapland. 35 students, aged between 20 and 45 years, were interviewed (22 women and 13 men). At the time of the study, 18 of them were either married or cohabited, 16 of them were singles, and one was divorced. Open interview was chosen as the interview method because it allowed the participants to freely describe what they think about love. The themes for interviews emerged from the participants' views, thoughts, and experiences of love. What happens when one falls in love, what does love give and demand, how could love be strengthened, and what kinds of phases and contents does love involve or could involve? The interviews lasted between one to two hours and were recorded and transcribed word by word.

In the next phase, the interview data was expanded by essays. Students of educational psychology (N=46) who studied at the University of Lapland wrote an

essay about "What kind of person did you fall in love with? What did you find attractive in him/her? What was he/she like? Why did you fall in love with him/her?" The data were collected during the course of love psychology in 2012. The data comprised anonymously written essays that were between one to four sheets long. 36 of the respondents were women and 10 were men. 38 of them lived in cohabitation with their partners, two were married, and six were dating.

The reason for collecting two sets of informal data—essays and open interviews—was that people can reveal what they really think and feel and thus, the many forms and shades of love would be unveiled. Some of the participants described their experiences of falling in love, the process of finding a partner, in versatile ways. Some of them could have several experiences of falling in love while some of the participants did not have much personal experience: they had found their partner from college or their first love relationship had just begun. What is common to these two sets of data is the rich narration.

The qualitative data analysis in this study followed three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawings (see Miles & Huber man, 1994). The aim was to create categories that describe the essence of partner selection. In order to be able to show their contents in practice, we have added plenty of quotations from the interviews and essays. In addition, the quotations function as the proofs for reliability.

Naturally, the generalizability, validity, and reliability of the results can be criticized. The stories are summaries of the course of events and in that form the data describe every participant's way of assessing their own life, the chains of events and emotions that mold it. Therefore, it is not salient whether the happenings are described comprehensively or truthfully but their interpretation of what happened is. Indeed, one of the interviewees told:

> It's more essential to know why I love my spouse than why or what I fell in love with him in the first place. (Woman, married)

Another found writing an essay as a good means of soul-searching:

> It really did good to contemplate these questions a bit. Now I remember better what a wonderful man is waiting for me at home. (Woman, cohabiting)

RESULTS: CRITERIA OF PARTNER SELECTION

Homogamy

Homogamy proved the most common description of the target of one's love. Therefore, the most common criterion of partner selection seemed to be based on affinity. People tend to find their way to the company of their ilk and then personality traits, hobbies, values, and attitudes or religious and political views may be similar.

> He was the same kind of athlete as I was. Perhaps, that was the connective factor… He sort of understood that we have to get to bed early in the evening

because we have to get early to exercise…so we had the same kind of rhythm of life. (Woman, 23, unmarried)

In addition to being my husband, he is my best friend… We have so many common hobbies. (Woman, 21, married)

He is a person in order of me because he has similar hopes and expectations. (Woman, 22, unmarried)

First, I fell in love with his looks, and after that I found out that we hit it off really well. (Woman, 21, cohabiting)

Homogamy, selecting the partner based on his or her similar characteristics is a dominating criterion according to several previous studies as well (e.g. Carter & Glick, 1976; DiMaggio & Mohr, 1985; Lutz-Zois et al., 2006; Montoya, Horton, & Kirschner, 2008; Whyte, 1990).

According to studies, homogamy or similarity has been noticed important when it comes to for example:

– age (Vera, Berardo, & Berardo, 1985)
– race and ethnic background (Heer, 1974; Labov & Jacobs, 1986; Lalonde et al., 2007; Peach, 1980; Tucker & Mitchell-Kernan, 1990; Yancey, 2007)
– religion (Bumpass, 1970; Chung, 2011; Glenn, 1982; Waller et al., 1990)
– level of education (Plomin et al., 1977; Rockwell, 1976; Schoen & Woolredge, 1989; Watkins & Meredith, 1981)
– beauty and physical attractiveness (Chambers, Christiansen, & Kunz, 2010; Levinger & Snoeck, 1972)
– professional / societal position (Fang, Sidanius, & Pratoo, 1998; Jackman & Jackman, 1983; Morgan, 1981; Rockwell, 1976)
– intelligence (Bouchard & McGue, 1981)
– geographical proximity (Becker et al., 2009; Morgan, 1981; Murstein, 1986)
– mental and physical health or disability (Wiersma et al., 2011).

Partner selection that is based on homogamy is explained by for example psycho-analytical theory and the so-called filter theory. Freud's psycho-analytical theory (Freud, 1914/1957) is considered from two perspectives: (1) studies that prove the connection between child-parent conflicts and the development of an intimate relationship, and (2) studies that show how the partner resembles the selector's parents of his or her physical and mental features. The inconsistency of results and vagueness of concepts give reason to doubt the reliability and generalizability of the studies.

Kerckhoff and Davis (1962) created the first filter theory. According to the theory, individuals get to know each other and start relationships first based on homogeneous cultural factors, then on the similarity of values, and—if the relationship still functions—on the fulfillment of the partners' mutual needs. Despite the wide body of studies, they still have not provided much support to the theory (e.g. Hill, Rubin, & Peplau, 1976; Levinger, Senn, & Jogensen, 1970; Tharp, 1963).

Personality traits. When reviewing the research on partner selection based on similar personality traits, it can be noted that almost every possible characteristic has been studied in relation to partner selection, including "stubbornness", "jealousy", "openness to influence", "sensitivity to criticism", "talkativeness", "sensational activity", etc. (Centers, 1975; Farley & Mueller, 1978; Murstein, 1972; Penton-Voak, Perrett, & Peirce, 1999; Price & Vandenberg, 1980; Sindberg & Roberts, 1972).

Hoyt and Hudson (1981) collected a ranking list of appreciated partner characteristics that appeared in studies in 1939–1977. According to the list, "reliability" and "emotional balance" had proven important since 1939. "Mutual attraction", "social character and "education-intelligence" were features that had become more and more appreciated. The same tendency occurred in men's list for the partner's "good looks". Instead, "decency" had become less significant both in men's and women's lists as had "good cooking and housekeeping skills" in men's appreciations.

The latest studies show that women consider important both men's participation in household work (e.g., Ahlander & Bahr, 1995; Shelton, 1990; Suitor, 1991; Yogev & Brett, 1985) and received support to their career development as women work outside home increasingly (Booth, Johnson, & Edwards, 1984; Greenstein, 1995; Heaton & Albrecht, 1991; Spitze & South, 1985).

In this research, the participants highlighted the importance of appearance but also "joyfulness", "sensitivity", "kindness", "confidence", "independency", "activity", "reliability", and "emotional balance" were brought out (see also Barelds & Barelds-Dijkstra, 2007). A similar political background which was introduced in previous studies (see Eastwick, Richerson, Son, & Finkel, 2009) seemed to be the least important.

As a summary of the research on personality traits, it can be stated that almost every characteristic correlates between the partners, at least to some extent. Buss (1984) noted that correlations varied from –.23 to +47, the mean being .15. None of the characteristics has constantly proven to be the factor that determines partner selection. Personality traits are not an easy research target whatever research method was selected.

Attitudes. It is easier to study attitudes than personality traits and therefore similarity between attitudes (value preferences and economic, aesthetic, social, political, and religious attitudes) have proven much more unambiguous factor combining partners than personality traits (e.g., Murstein & Williams, 1985; Nagoshi & Johnson, 1994).

> ... the basic values of life must be similar, and the partners have to be able to take care of the everyday matters because it is not about that ecstasy all the time. (Woman, 21, unmarried)

> I had a great affinity with him in all big issues and questions of life. We have common thoughts for example about how we should eat or live a good life (Woman, 25, dating)

The similarity at the level of attitudes and values has been found, for example, in the following fields: conservativeness (Martin et al., 1986), sexual interests (Murstein, 1974), pessimism—optimism and abstract versus concrete thinking (Sindberg & Roberts, 1972). Caspi, Herbener, and Ozer (1992) noted that attitude correlations vary from .20 to .58. In addition, similar values seem to be the most important among couples who represent the highest social class (Kerckhoff, 1972).

The similarity has to be noticed.   When contemplating the homogamy based partner selection, Berscheid and Walster (1974, 1978) presented two various hypotheses for the phenomenon:

1. People like their ilk.
2. People find themselves more similar with those who they like and less similar with those who they do not like—compared with what they are in reality.

These two hypotheses are based on the thought that finding the other attractive leads to the notion of similarity and vice versa: discovering similarity leads to attraction (Pinel & Long, 2012).

> I enjoyed the attention from that person…and that had been the same for him, too, because I had responded to that attention. (Woman, 23, unmarried)

Either way, in order to have similarity as the criterion of partner selection, the similarity has to be found out. This is possible only if the partners experience their similarity. Indeed, Saegert, Swap, and Zajonc (1973) considered based on their research the partners' openness and willingness to reveal themselves to others as an important activator of a relationship: they used the expression "exposure effect". Some studies have shown that women are more open at the beginning of dating and express their personal feelings earlier than men (Klaus, Hersen, & Bellack, 1977; McCabe & Collins, 1983; Reiter & Gee, 2008).

> Perhaps that was insecurity because even if I loved the other person I couldn't trust in myself and that [love] so much that I could have been able or dared to say what I was experiencing…that I could present some wishes like maybe we could do like this or that… I couldn't solve it any other way, at least not by talking anyway, but in a more ruthless way: by breaking up… First it was important to be together, then it was important to get more space for myself. I wish I had been able to develop the relationship in a different manner but I couldn't. (Man, 25, unmarried)

In his theory, Levinger (1983) illustrated how the experience of homogamy leads from zero contact to mutuality with certain conditions. Levinger calls the theory "ABCDE model" (Acquaintance, Bild-up, Continuation, Deterioration, Ending).

The first impression determines how the interaction continues. The development of a relationship depends on the partner's characteristics and the quality of interaction. Outer appearance is important at the beginning of the relationship. If the partners

have the experience of positive response, if interaction functions, and if the other's behavior and goals are predictable, the relationship will become more and more rewarding for both partners. It will lead more and more clearly toward the awareness and crystallization of the "we" identity, as Lewis (1972) stated in his illustration of the process of an intimate relationship.

> I fell in love with a person who first seemed as a mystery and did not let me close immediately but who later turned out a real nugget—I found it also attractive that he was not any "born-to-date" sort of type but could appreciate more what we have. (Woman, 25, dating)

> At first, I tried to be smarter than I was. Later on I relaxed and noticed that I didn't have to go out to buy her a dinner in order to make her care. (Man, 29, married)

As the interaction gets more intensive, knowing the other and being together may be a disappointment too. The first impression of the other's personality or attitude does not match with the reality after all.

> … then I noticed that he isn't as wonderful as he came across... so then it ran its course before it really started. (Woman, 21, married)

> …and then I grew exasperated with issues that I hadn't noticed earlier; so I started to look for flaws… That was how it started to feel anxious. (Woman, 21, unmarried)

Partner Selection Based on Completion

The selection that is based on similarity is often connected with completion as well:

> The other person's character: we matched in a certain way and had certain, appropriate tensions. (Man, 33, married)

> She had such a different circle of acquaintances. (Man, 30, married)

> I certainly had something to do with the other person's personality; she differed from me quite a lot. (Man, 21, unmarried)

> I fell in love with the rebel, a different kind of boy who didn't care for others' opinions. (Woman, 24, married)

Probably the oldest theory that describes the completion is Winch's (1958) theory of complementary needs. According to this theory, partner selection is based on the fulfillment of needs so that the partners' need complement each other (Winch, 1958). The idea of completion got stronger in the 1960s.

Levinger (1964) emphasized the significance of the partners' needs that complement each other by stating that "many of the most productive human relationships are complementary ones: male and female in the sex act, seller and buyer in the exchange,

and so forth" (Levinger, 1964, p. 164). Except for a few exceptions (e.g. Rychlak, 1965), the research prove that the similarity of features is more likely to explain the positive development of a relationship than their complementarity (Burgess & Locke, 1960; Markey & Markey, 2007).

Both homogamy and complementarity have been explained from the perspective of the so-called exchange theory. A representative of the theory, Edwards (1969), presented four interconnected arguments concerning the process of partner selection: 1) when building an intimate relationship, the partner is selected by the rewards he or she brings into the relationship, 2) individuals with equivalent resources are likely to maximize their rewards because they are likely to reject those with fewer resources, 3) individuals with equivalent resources are likely to have equivalent characteristics, and thus 4) the relationship is likely to become homogenous (see also Li et al., 2002).

> I have always been repulsed by such men who have a roving eye. He seemed to find me valuable. He showed special attention to only me and although I noticed that women were looking at him and trying to chitchat all this and that for example at a store, it was somehow nice that he implied that he is not interested in anyone else. (Woman, 29, married)

Berscheid and Walster (1974) introduced Lewin et al.'s Level-of-Aspiration theory from the year 1944 where the perception of oneself reflects in the partner selection in a way that supports the exchange theory. According to the level-of-aspiration theory, ideal choices affect partner selection: everyone has their own ideal partner who has all the ideal characteristics regardless of the possibility to find such a partner. On the other hand, the realistic level of characteristics includes both the features that the partner is expected to have and the awareness of the possibility to find that kind of a partner. The person's idea of his or her own characteristics affect the definition of the level of aspiration: the more positive idea the person has of his or her characteristics, the more demanding the level of aspiration will be.

Likewise, Walster (1965) regards that the exchange theory is connected with the partners' self-esteem. If the person has high self-esteem, thinks that he or she has a lot to give and considers himself or herself justified in having a partner that has plenty of good attributes. Goffman (1952) supports the same thought by his notion:

> A proposal of marriage in our society tends to be a way in which a man sums up his social attributes and suggests to a woman that hers are not so much better as to preclude a merger of partnership in these matters (p. 456).

In his exchange theory, Edwards (1969) says that people with equivalent resources does not have to be similar in all those features that are relevant in partner selection. The balance based on the exchange theory is built on the balance between positive and negative traits in various areas. Therefore, the exchange theory is close to the next model, the investment and equity model.

Partner selection may result in balance between the partners' various resources (e.g. Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). The Investment and Equity Model is based on the

idea that individuals try to create as a beneficial relationship as possible: profits are the rewards that they get from the relationship after subtracting the costs of the relationship. The cost can be emotional, financial, or physical, or consist of such factors or activities that one has to give up for the relationship. (Allen, Babin, & McEwan, 2012; Murstein, 1986.)

Walster, Walster, and Berscheid (1978) noted that the balance exists when the person (A) thinks that his or her input (I) in relation to the outcome (O) is equal to the partner's (B) situation:

$$O(A) - I(A) = O(B) - I(B)$$

Thibaut and Kelly (1959) referred to the comparison level (CL) that is the average value of all outcomes:

> If the outcomes in a given relationship surpass the CL, that relationship is regarded as a satisfactory one. And, to the degree the outcomes are supra-CL, the person may be said to be attracted to the relationship. If the outcomes endured are infra-CL, the person is dissatisfied and unhappy with the relationship. (p. 81)

In her study, Rusbult (1983) showed that the cost of a relationship is not as determining factor for the progress of the relationship than the rewards of it. Thibaut and Kelly (1959), for their part, considered that a person can stay in an unsatisfying relationship is the reward-cost relation is the best among the comparison level for alternatives (CL atl).

> I was fascinated by her being so modest and flexible. She was always ready to do what I suggested. But then it started to repulse me that she never had ideas but just expected me to figure out what to do or where to go. Then, I became tired of pulling her with me; I started to feel that she didn't give anything to me. (Man, 36, unmarried)

Especially, Hatfield and her work group (1985) applied the balance model in analyzing a relationship. She presented five sequential arguments about the development of an intimate relationship: 1) if the relationship is balanced (vs. imbalanced) for both partners, it leads more easily to stronger intimacy; 2) the partners are more satisfied and less stressed in a balanced relationship; 3) when imbalance occurs, partners try to restore balance or end up breaking up the relationship; 4) as the imbalance continues, the couple tries to restore the balance or end up breaking up the relationship; and 5) a balanced relationship predicts stability and permanence of the relationship.

> I really tried to please the other; even unintentionally I tried to make him care for me. Then, little by little, I noticed that my life and freedom were shackled by him too much… I can't turn into something that he thinks a woman should be. He was awfully selfish. (Woman, 22, unmarried)

Altman and Taylor (1973) consider the reward-cost dynamics as a process where the partners evaluate the cost-reward configuration of the relationship in various

interaction situations. The evaluation in question is versatile and is connected with continuous decision making and anticipatory evaluation.

Several studies show that women and men emphasize different features in the cost-reward configuration and even when it comes to the exchange theory (Schoen & Weinick, 1993). Early studies proved that women appreciate the partner's socio-economic factors while men appreciated women's social factors—that illustrates the time when men's role was to support the family and women were wives and mothers (e.g. Nock & Rossi, 1978; Weitzman, 1974). There is evidence that the above-mentioned results are still valid (e.g. Dillow, Afifi, & Matsunaga, 2012; Kenrick & Keefe, 1992; Kenrick et al., 1993; Schoen & Wooldredge, 1989). This viewpoint differs from the homogamy theory as here the relationship is expected to be as rewarding as possible.

Centers's (1975) instrumental theory is also based on the assumption that men and women have various needs that that the needs can complement each other. An individual selects a partner with whom the relationship involves plenty of rewards with low "costs".

> I am doing much better now: I have another person to support me… When I have my partner as a support, I'm able to give support to others. I feel much stronger…I can reach higher, believe in more, and trust in myself more. (Woman, 20, unmarried)

> …you care about the other so much that you want to start look after him in a way that it rises above your own needs. (Woman, 21, unmarried)

When analyzing the significance of the above-mentioned theories and research results, it is worth noticing that there are certain characteristics that seem to be important both to women and men. Both sexes appreciate a partner who has a good sense of humor and good social skills, and who is reliable and honest, etcetera.

The evolution model grounds on the assumption, that when selecting partners people try to maximize the genetic suitability of their ancestors. Individuals look for partners who have a) suitable genes and b) such other features that foster the survival of their descendants (Buss, 1989; Buss & Barnes, 1986; Kenrick & Trost, 1987; Taylor et al., 2011.) In his book, Mellen (1981) analyzed the development of love during thousands of years and noted how natural selection and sexual selection enabled the survival and adjustment of the human species. Buss (1988), on the other hand, claimed how love actually is a category of natural love acts and a result of evolutionary genotype.

From the evolutionary point of view, partner selection is not cognitively-focused action (Kenrick et al., 1993). Instead, it has to be regarded as an attempt to influence on the positive development of the next generation. Because of reproduction, men appreciate women's youth, health, and good physical shape whereas women value features that affect the development of the next generation more indirectly, such as

men's social, educational, and financial status (Buss, 1989; Haufe, 2008; Kenrick et al., 1993).

Kenrick et al. (1993) refer to numerous, even inter-culturally similar research results—among others, that older men tend to marry relatively younger women regardless of the cultural background or economic status (see also Kenrick & Keefe, 1992). They end up noting that this kind of partner selection cannot be explained only from the point of view of social norms and financial models.

Ideal Self and Seeing the Partner in Self

A person may also look for a partner who complements, fulfills the unfulfilled dreams, or corresponds to the person's ideal self. Murstein (1986) calls this way of perceiving the partner "trinity of desiderata".

> The personality of that person made me fall in love: he was so strong, he seemed much stronger than me… I was charmed because he was mentally stronger than me. (Woman, 23, unmarried)

> I felt that the person corresponds to my contemporary needs; in other words, he was strong, independent. Then he "trained" me so that I found an echo to my persistence. He didn't submit that way. (Woman, 31, married)

The way a person perceived himself or herself affects the way he or she perceives the partner. That evaluation also involves one's self-conception, ideal self, and the high or low degree of self-acceptance (Murstein, 1986).

According to Reik (1957), partner selection that is based on the ideal self, the motive of love is the individual's discontent with himself or herself, his or her own insecurity and feeling of not being capable of fulfilling demands that arise from the inside. Love seems to fulfill these needs by expanding the individual's self and internalizing the other's self, the self of the target of one's love. In this case, the individual has found his or her "true" self in the physical and mental being of the target of his or her love.

Martinson (1955) claimed that an intimate relationship compensates a person's feelings of insufficiency and people whose self-image is inadequate need the relationship the most: "Other things being equal, persons who marry demonstrate greater feeling of ego deficiency than do persons who remain single" (Martinson, 1955, p. 162). Later on, several studies have shown that single men are more imbalanced by their personality than married men: they are more neurotic, isolated, depressed, passive, anti-social, and so on. When it comes to women, the situation was proven the opposite. (See Knupfer, Clark, & Room, 1966.) Many issues make the interpretation of the results difficult. For example, it is not possible to evaluate whether the personality traits are the reasons or results of living as a single or in a relationship (see also VanderDrift & Agnew, 2012).

Aron et al. (1991) stated that in a relationship, an individual can start to treat the other as he or she was included in the self or was a part of the self. Several other

theorists have noted the same phenomenon. Greenwald and Pratkanis (1984) talked about the "collective" aspect in self and Ickes et al. (1988) about "inter-subjectivity". Obviously, Hatfield's (1982) concept "a sense of we-ness" refers to the same. In addition, McCall (1974, p. 219) pointed out how an intimate relationship forms "an incorporation of… (the other's) actions and reactions… into the content of one's various conceptions of the self".

The basis of the phenomenon described with the above-mentioned concepts is that in a relationship an individual behaves as if the partner's all or some characteristics were the individual's own. According to Aron et al. (1991), this phenomenon occurs as rapprochement in three areas:

1. Resources

   Clark and Mills (1979) talked about the communal nature of the relationship and Wegner (1980, p. 133) about an empathetic model by noting that "empathy may stem in part from a basic confusion between ourselves and others".

2. Thoughts and opinions

   have proven to reflect the most versatile things, for example ways of thinking (Greenwald & Pratkanis, 1984) and even the partners' memory processes (Wegner, Erber, & Raymond, 1991)

3. Characteristics and features

   The above-mentioned collective aspect in a relationship is also supported by McAdams's (1988, p. 18) way of defining the content of an intimate relationship: "converge on the central idea of sharing that which is inmost with others". Bataille (1962) expressed it quite dramatically: "Between one being and another there is a gulf, a discontinuity" (Bataille, 1962, p. 12). "What we desire is to bring into a world founded on discontinuity all the continuity such a world can sustain" (Bataille, 1962, p. 19). According to Reik (1957), falling in love can indeed be described—referring to the mentioned selection by the ideal self—as the desire to own the other person!

Physical Attractiveness

Fetishism partly affects partner selection as well: some body parts or features of physical appearance and personality may have a special meaning or appear especially attractive. There are also negative fetishes, characteristics and traits that fill with repugnance.

I like blue eyes a lot. That boy had handsome blue eyes. (Woman, 22, unmarried)

Things in his looks made me fall in love, especially his high forehead. (Woman, 26, married)

She had beautiful hair, nice smile. (Man, 24, unmarried)

He had wonderful, long, curly hair. (Woman, 37, married)

According to previous studies, physically attractive features are among others

– the face (Zebrowitz, Olson, & Hoffman, 1993),
– especially eyes (Cunningham, 1986; Frost, 2006; Hess, 1965),
– hair (Johnston, 2010; Little, Penton-Voak, Burt, & Perrett, 2003),
– the body (Singh, 1993; Swami et al., 2010),
– clothing (Bull, 1974; Gibbins, 1969; Grammar, Renninger, & Fischer, 2004), and
– height (Elman, 1977; Feingold, 1982; Graziano, Brother, & Berscheid, 1978; Lindeman & Sundvik, 1994).

Some stereotyped beliefs are connected with people's height (Mullen & Johnson, 1990): one's height is often associated with other positive features (Dion, Berscheid, & Walster, 1972), such as intelligence (Nagoshi & Johnson, 1987), independency and target-orientation (Goodson & Jamison, 1987).

Men and women perceive the importance of looks markedly differently when it comes to partner selection (Buss, 1989; Garcia et al., 1991; Graziano et al., 1993). According to several studies, especially men appreciate women's physical attractiveness (Singh, 1993) and thus physical appearance is a more important criterion for men than for women (Brown, 1994). "Good looks" seems to be greatly valued by men (e.g. Buss 1987; Feingold, 1990; Townsend 1989), and the phenomenon is also intercultural which was proven by Buss's (1989, see also Buss et al., 1990) 37 samples from 33 different countries and five continents (see also Waynforth, 2007).

All in all, there are plenty of studies on physical attractiveness: Already in 1981, Cash had counted about 500 of them. The research field is interdisciplinary and even if the research questions seem to vary methodologically, the points of interest can be categorized into three main questions (Eagly et al., 1991):

1. Do people find physically attractive people differently than the unattractive?
2. Are physically attractive people treated differently than the unattractive?
3. Do physically attractive people differ from the unattractive by, for example, their personality traits, abilities, etc.?

All the above-mentioned questions can be answered "yes" according to the existing studies (see also Barelds, Dijkstra, Koudenburg, & Swami, 2011). Differences in how people are treated are found already from childhood—among others, Clifford and Walster (1973) showed how teachers treat pupils who are physically attractive differently—and the phenomenon occurs even in verdicts given to criminals (Downs & Lyons, 1991). Numerous studies prove that women's physical attractiveness is the reason for the interest expressed by the opposite sex more often than among men (e.g. Bercheid et al., 1971; Krebs & Adinolfi, 1975; Lerner & Karabenick, 1974; Mathes & Kahn, 1975; Walster et al., 1966). Physically attractive people are perceived sexier, warmer, more sensitive, friendlier, and more capable than the less attractive (Adams, 1982; Alley & Hildebrandt, 1988; Dion, Bercheid, & Walster, 1972). Hatfield and Sprecher (1986, p. xix) wrote that "people believe good-looking

people possess almost all virtues known to humankind". The stereotype of "what is beautiful is good", and the reasons and consequences of the phenomenon are analyzed by numerous researchers (e.g. Adams, 1982; Alley & Hildebrandt, 1988; Eagly et al., 1991; Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986; Patzer, 1985).

What is significant is that the stereotype of beauty can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. As a pleasing looks brings about positive treatment and expectations, it reflects in, for example, balanced personality development (Langlois, 1986), happiness (Umberson & Hughes, 1987), and subjective well-being and satisfaction with life (Diener, Wolsic, & Fujita, 1995).

Yet, it is also important to realize that beauty is relative—a matter of taste. It might be that subjective perceptions on physical attractiveness may have only a little connection with more objective measures. Berscheid and Walster (1974) showed in their summary of beauty research how any feature can be perceived beautiful. Also Murstein's (1976, 1986) studies supported the finding.

Graziano et al. (1993) showed in their research how men's and women's way of assessing the physical attractiveness of the opposite sex differed (see also Birnbaum, 2010). Women's evaluations were more complicated and indirect: social skills were also connected with the beauty assessment. In addition, the information women get from peers affected their evaluation whereas men did not use the "consensus-information" when evaluating women's physical attractiveness (see also Olson, Ellis, & Zanna, 1983). It has been noted that especially the information about the negative features is significant: even one negative trait may nullify a bunch of positive features (Feingold, 1992; Graziano et al., 1980).

Eventually, the fact how often a partner is selected based on his or her physical appearance is difficult to figure out. However, looks is often the factor that ignites the initial interest (cf. Dion, Berscheid, & Walster, 1972; Masters & Johnson, 1986; Walster et al., 1966), as do the following interview citations show, too:

Her looks did matter but wasn't of primary importance. (Man, 25, unmarried)

Well, of course, the looks, the first that you see in the person is the looks… (Woman, 21, unmarried)

She was so beautiful. It started from me falling in love physically. (Man, 21, unmarried)

Furthermore, for example McFarland and Ross (1987) noted that the criteria of partner selection a person gives can vary based on the phase of the intimate relationship. Different factors are emphasized at the beginning of the relationship than at a later phase:

Well, sometimes when I was 17, I went for handsome men but it passed quickly. Nowadays, I have started to look for security—it doesn't necessarily show outward who can be trusted in. (Woman, 22, unmarried)

> You know, she was a sort of girl…her looks didn't do it but her being and attitude toward life, sort of abstract things, there wasn't any framework of beauty… but just this person herself. (Man, 33, married)

The experience of the partner's outer beauty can also be the outcome of the relationship and not just the reason for starting one. A gallop study reviewed by Murstein (1986) showed how spouses evaluate that each other's physical attractiveness had either remained the same (47%) or improved (37%) as the relationship had become deeper. In the long run, the partner's physical attractiveness is merely connected with the quality of the relationship.

The findings from the interview data and previous studies can be explained by Murstein's (1986) Stimulus–Value–Role Theory (SVR). According to the theory, an intimate relationship develops through three processes: 1) the stimulus phase, 2) the phase of value comparisons, and 3) the role phase. Couples can move from a phase to another in pair but individually as well.

The first phase is the stimulus phase when the other's outer features (physical attractiveness, status, posture, voice, etc.) are important. The stimulus phase may differ based on whether the situation of meeting each other is open or closed. When the man and woman do not know each other beforehand or are nodding acquaintances and their possibility to get to know each other depends on their own initiative, the situation is open. Initiative is needed for example when wishing to make the acquaintance in a large group of classmates at the beginning of a semester or at a restaurant. The situations are open because the individuals can decide whether they pursue contacts or refrain from them. In a close situation, individuals are obliged to be in contact with each other and receive some information about each other. Situations like these are for example tutorial study groups, seminar sessions, meetings related to hobbies or association activities. An open situation is disadvantageous to those whose outer features, especially the ones of their physical appearance, are unflattering. Instead in a close situation, the impression given does not totally depend on senses because one can have information about the other's opinions, vocational goals, among others.

The stimulus phase is followed by the phase of value comparison. The transition, if it is to happen, may take hours or weeks, depending on the level of interaction. At the value phase, the partners assess each other in many ways: what their religious and political viewpoints are, attitudes toward various issues, hobbies, etcetera. As the relationship progresses, they expand the scope of the attitude or opinions evaluations. They evaluate each other's way of thinking and feeling. If the relationship functions well, open self-expression becomes reciprocal and the couple can find out being unanimous in many questions.

The second phase precedes the role phase. Moving on to the role phase necessitates that the previous phases are passed successfully and the partners share the wish to commit to a deeper and more stable relationship. The ability to adjust one's own role with the other's role in the relationship as well as the ability to foresee the other's

wishes and feelings (see also Määttä & Uusiautti, 2012e; Uusiautti & Määttä, 2012). Learning these skills takes plenty of time.

Resounding as the Goal

Sometimes, it seems that the partner selection is only based on the wish to resound. A person selects a partner who improves the person's status both in his or her own eyes and others'. Partner selection based on resounding refers to a more or less powerful objectifying of the other person.

> I might have been that it didn't matter who the target was as long as she loved me back. It was the sort of need to get close to another human-being… It had something to do with maturing; I needed to do like adults did. (Man, 33, married)

> At that time, your status would be better if you had a boyfriend. (Woman, 23, engaged)

This kind of partner selection resembles sometimes the opposite selection if, for example, a youngster selects a partner who is a perfect opposite of his or her mother or father. It is often a demonstration and an attempt to get loose from parents (Dubbs & Buunk, 2010).

> The boys was a horrible hooligan, my parents did not approve it at all when I hung around with him… It was a sort of uprising against my parents—anyway, I had to date with someone… The boy was just a means there. (Woman, 23, unmarried)

On the other hand, unsuccessful dating experiences can be a lesson:

> I fell in love with him because of my previous relationship that had just ended very suddenly, when he left me all of a sudden. Therefore, I was charmed by this person because I thought that I could trust in this man. Previously, I had fallen in love with a rascal. At that time, I found it fascinating but not anymore. (Woman, 27, dating)

As a Result of Becoming Selected

Some people fall in love because of the other's activity, resulting from becoming selected but the other. In this research, the participants reported being either targets of positive attention or targets of more negatively perceived "hunt".

> I wouldn't have cared for him at all at first. The boy was very eager and wanted to date. And then I got enthusiastic… I'm a bit slow in my movements. So, the boy made the first move actually. (Woman, 20, cohabiting)

> I had seen him in a restaurant. At first, I had just yelled him that "Go away, I'm not interested in you at all". But then I started to think that what if there is

> something in it… I started to look at him unconsciously, like where hi is and whether he's here. (Woman, 24, engaged)

> The other was enthusiastic. An encounter in a big restaurant. She came to talk with me and started to call at my office. (Man, 42, married)

> I've always been so shy that I have never suggested any so-called first date… Well, these girls send me greetings. And then it started. (Man, 26, unmarried)

The interview data showed that unlike the traditional gender stereotype suggests, the initiator was often a woman. Without such initiative action, it would not have been possible to get to know the other.

Machlowitz (1982) tried to figure out which sex proves the most active when creating a relationship: Students were given the name of a peer student who represented the opposite sex. Each student was asked to call the partner within a week highlighting that only one of them should make the call. In 90% of the cases, the initiator was a man. However, Kelley, Pilchowicz, & Byrne (1981) had the opposite result. According to the study, 87% of male students reported that a female student had made the first move, and 86% of them had responded to the initiative. (See also MacGregor & Cavallo, 2011.)

Muehlenhard and McFall (1981), for their part, studied men's opinions on whether it should be a man or a woman who makes the first move: Of 106 participants, 53 thought that women's initiative was better, 52 required that women should approach men carefully for example through implying positively, and only one thought that a woman should wait for a man's initiative passively (see also Harrison & Shorfall, 2011).

One of the traits that are typical in everyday life is that people tend to desire something that they cannot get. People may find a person who is "hard to get" interesting. This kind of hard-to-get phenomenon is studied by Walster, Walster, Piliavin, and Schmidt (1973). They lean on the dissonance theory: if one has to put oneself out to achieve the goal, one will usually appreciate the achievement.

> I found that girl interesting because other boys were trying to make a play for her. (Man, 30, married)

According to Walster et al.'s (1973) research, the fascination of a hard-to-get woman seemed to be furthered by the belief that being with such a woman would increase the man's appreciation among other men. In addition, it seemed that men were not fascinated by those who were hard-to-get in general but those women who were "impossible-to-get" to others but relatively conquerable to themselves. However, considerable problems concern the interpretation of the results and the definition of the phenomenon (cf. Stenberg, 1986).

A psychological reactance theory (Brehm & Brehm, 1981) tries to explain why people want what is hard for them to get. The reason for the phenomenon

is considered the desire to fantasize and fulfill one's dreams regardless of the reality.

> You always have to have something to pursue, a challenge. Fast and easy cases are not interesting, at all. More often than not it was that there were people who met certain "criteria" but for the above-mentioned reason, I was not interested in dating. Being hard to get was interesting. (Man, 22, married)

A Matter of Coincidence

The above-mentioned types may not necessarily purely occur as such but are often perhaps unconscious and intertwined. Often, an actual coincidence is a central motive. Two people who meet coincidentally may fall in love if they possess certain characteristics, if they fulfill each other's needs, and are able to reveal something of themselves to each other that makes a deeper contact possible. The process in question may also proceed little by little or by osmosis:

> I wasn't that interested in her at first but in the course of time I learned to love her. It wasn't any love at the first sight. (Man, 24, unmarried)

> We sort of suddenly noticed that we were always together, went everywhere together and… It started, you know, little by little. (Woman, 20, unmarried)

The interest of the other partner described in the previous data excerpts requires communication and especially crucial is the level of openness of that communication (Houser, Horan, & Furler, 2008). Openness, self-disclosure, is important for the development of the relationship. It refers to action that is either verbal or non-verbal through which the individual becomes noticed (Jourard, 1971) or to intentional verbal self-disclosing material aimed at the other (Cozby, 1973). The arousal of a relationship and becoming interested in the other requires information about the other; this information will be evaluated and connected with one's own situation (see also Cole, 2001).

All in all, openness, self-disclosure, and making oneself clear as well as getting social confirmation about the state of the relationship are crucial to the emergence of a relationship. In many ways, mutual information, contacts, and communication are connected with the process of partner selection and the development of a relationship. (Morton & Douglas, 1981; Kubacka, Finkenauer, Rusbult, & Keijers, 2011.) Still, the question of what love is and what it needs to be ignited has been under research starting from the 1940s: since that, 33 different ways of measuring the essence of love have been created (Hatfield, Benson, & Rapson, 2012).

Arranged by Outsiders

Many of the interviewees were not able to clearly identify the beginning of the relationship. However, most relationships had started by becoming acquainted

with each other at the university, at work, in leisure activities, in a restaurant, etc. Sometimes, a friend has acted a mediator:

> I had noticed that woman once in the library but didn't know who she was and whether she was our student and such. Then once again when I saw her I mentioned that one of my friends and he did know her. Then, he introduced us saying something stupid like "this guy has adored you for a long time" or something like that. I was embarrassed; I didn't know really who she was. That was the beginning. (Man, 30, married)

A study of the encounter situation conducted among 350 American university students (Knox & Wilson, 1981) proved that 33% met their dating partner introduced by their friend, 17% in a party, 8% at work, and the rest otherwise. Duck and Cortex (Duck, 1991) stated that 57% of the relationships start by the arrangements of a third party—in Parks and Barnes's (1988) study the number was 80%.

A blind date arranged by friends is one of the ways of meeting. However, this arrangement rarely leads to an intimate relationship (Bell, 1975). Albrecht (1972) explained it by the fact that people who go to a blind date may find it difficult to create social relationships and tend to be shy and withdrawn.

The difficulty in finding a partner can be viewed through South's (1991) Marriage Market Theory. Marriage markets are based on the quantity and quality of potential partners. People who are in a good position, who possess plenty of characteristics of an ideal partner, are not likely to be motivated of a partner who lacks these characteristics, and vice versa. The latter end up living alone or lower their criteria at the marriage market. This is that price of unfavorable marriage market, says South (1991).

Lykken and Tellegen (1993) described the corresponding phenomenon with the concept of a Poverty Model, and Stets (1993) with a resource theory. The question is about a situation when one prefers certain characteristics in partners but does not receive positive respond from or does not find such a person (Reiss & Lee, 1988); and the reason might be even a geographical one (Morgan, 1981). Then, people select a person who they can get and the reality is far from the romantic partner selection, the idea of partners finding their "one and only".

None of the interviewees described having had any difficulty in finding a suitable partner. Neither had anyone used any commercial dating organizations to have an intimate relationship although this way of looking for a partner has taken root in our society increasingly. Likewise, research on dating services has snowballed (Ellison, Hancock, & Toma, 2012; Finkel et al., 2012; Gibbs, Ellison, & Lai, 2011; Heino, Ellison, & Gibbs, 2010).

Ahuvia and Adelman (1992) analyzed the functioning of marriage market and concluded that it involved three kinds of functions. They named their model as Searching-Matching-Interacting (SMI) Model. These three processes in question can function sequentially or simultaneously. One may look for a suitable partner with the help of commercial dating services (cf. the filter theory, Kerckhoff & Davis,

1962), and the information received in the arranged meeting affect the decision making whether or not the individual wants to start building a relationship or look for a new partner. According to Ahuvia and Adelman (1992), the model in question integrates interpersonal processes with environmental forces that have influence on the relationship. In addition, the SMI model pays attention to the social context and emphasizes the meaning of information received both from the partners in the relationship and from the outsiders.

It is worth noticing that the dating services may help people to meet each other but the emergence or progress of a relationship depends on the partners themselves. Their behaviors are important: what kind of impression do they give of themselves. Berg and Piner (1990) have proven how the first 30 seconds are crucial for the start of a relationship!

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

In this article, partner selection as one of the areas of love experiences was discussed. It is surprising that the relatively small sample among university students included such a wide gamut of experiences concerning partner selections. As the data were analyzed, it became also evident how partner selection has been of wide interest in the United States both sociologically and psychologically.

Partner selection is seen as the first step toward cohabiting or marriage. Therefore, the questions "whom to marry" and "who married whom" have resulted in an abundant scope of research material and theoretical deliberation. The existing literature has, however, quite often been restricted to just a few viewpoints. In this article, the purpose was to compile the previous studies. Thus, this study became a review of the knowledge and theory of partner selection. Naturally, the rich interview and essay data gave reason to do that as well.

This research shows how young adults consider partner selection as a significant personal decision. The data revealed the depth of their contemplation. Decisions were seen important and difficult and previous relationship experiences and soul-searching reflected in some of the decisions. In any case, modern people are in a quite different situation concerning partner selection than previously. Now people are making their decisions independently and at their own risk which would have been quite strange still in the last century.

The History of Partner Selection

In Finland, at the time of natural economy, partner selection and getting married was a decision based on economic deliberation. Marriage agreements could even seem like contracts and they could include lists of partners' possessions and forthcoming duties (cf. the exchange theory or investment-balance model). What was crucial was the how the marriage would affect the partners' financial situation. Among the wealthy it was primarily the question of the wealth of the fiancé or fiancée candidate

whereas among the poor, decency, physical shape, and work ability were more appreciated. (Nieminen, 1993.)

According to Bernard (1982), partner selection in the United States developed from "parental mate selection" to "do-it-yourself mate selection". A good wife appreciated by parents was industrious, sober, devoted, and "economy in dress and thrifty way of living". (Bernard, 1982, pp. 115–116.) Fowler described in his marriage guide from 1855 the ideal husband as free from the following dark signs:

> idleness, intemperate use of intoxicating drinks, smoking, chewing, sniffing tobacco… taking… opium, licentiousness…gambling, swearing and keeping late hours at night (Murstein, 1986, p. 17).

The exchange and completion theories are supported by Fowler's direction from 1859:

> Wherein, and as far as you are what you ought to be, marry one like yourself; but wherein and as far as you have any marked excesses or defects, marry those unlike yourself in these objectional particulars (Murstein, 1986, p. 18).

In addition to personality characteristics, the need for work force was, especially in the Finnish agrarian society, the main reason for setting up marriages (Nieminen, 1993; Suolahti, 1925). Because the marriage was mainly based on economic deliberation, it was natural that objective consultants, marriage brokers, who knew the contemporary situation at marriage market, were consulted. Thus, partner selection and marriage were meaningful not only to the partners themselves but also to their relatives. These actions were also to protect, for example, young women from making irreversible mistakes (Nieminen, 1993).

Likewise, Lutherian church paid attention to parents' and young couple's rights. Parents were to protect their children but not to misuse their power as they were not allowed to forbid their children from getting married:

> Although parents have the right and power.. to forbid marriage – it does not follow that they have the power to compel their children to marry. It is more tolerable to obstruct and block the love which two persons have for each other. In the first case there is pain for a short time, while in the second it is to be feared that there will be an eternal hell and a lifetime of tragedy. (Luther, 1955, p. 264)

A marriage was not the couple's personal business but it was also a social and societal matter. Personal love did not matter much in the Finnish agrarian society, because for example a young and healthy man could marry a 60-year-old widow because of the inheritance: clothing, boots, tools, etc. On the other hand, a partner could be chosen at random. She or he could be a stranger or known only by hearsay. The engage couple could meet each other for the first time the day the proposal was made—and if the suitor got rejected, he could go and look for other households until finding a fiancée. So, love was not the reason to get married but the common understanding was that love will follow in due course (Nieminen, 1993). According to Suolahti

(1925), partner selection was in God's hands and He would guide people's destinies as was considered the best.

The history of partner selection can be partly explained by the same theoretical models than the modern partner selection: the filter theory, completion theory, exchange theory, investment and balance theory, evolution model and marriage market theory can all find their explanations from the history as well.

Back to This Research

The research at hand proves that partner selection is based on the most versatile criteria. The partner may be similar or different in a complementary manner either for his or her personality characteristics or attitude. An individual can look for his or her ideal self in the partner or try to resound by partner selection. The looks or physical attractiveness may be one of the criteria although considering it as a single criterion for partner selection appears lame. An intimate relationship may also start from a coincident or arranged encounter.

In this article, the criteria of partner selection described by the research participants were compared with the previous research and theoretical knowledge. The purpose was to introduce the factors that are relevant in partner selection as comprehensively as possible. In addition to the researcher's ability to describe and interpret the research phenomenon comprehensively enough, the reliability of the results also depends on the participants' honesty, and ability and willingness to tell about their own motives. And yet, partner selection is a process that requires a variety of skills but is still partly unconscious.

The manner of partner selection does not seem to explain the stability of the relationship as such. Most research participants had experienced various ways of finding a partner and any of them—or none of them—led to a stable intimate relationship. Some of them described how they had grown through experiences: they had become more conscious of observing their own behavior and their preferences in partner selection. Increase in criticism resulted from unsuccessful experiences:

> I have sort of passed the phase of believing in love in the first sight. So I have to really know the other. (Woman, 22, unmarried)

> For a while I was on tiptoes, sort of being alert and avoiding. I was careful not to fall in love with anyone…I became much more careful and learned to talk about things. (Woman, 20, unmarried)

> At this time, falling in love occurred differently. I had grown in the meanwhile. I did my own things quite normally. (Man, 30, married)

In any case, partner selection makes the dating, the emergence of a relationship and falling in love possible if partner selection proves successful. How the relationship proceeds and what kinds of experiences are connected with the progress of the relationship make their own, wide phenomenon to research.

SILENCE IS NOT GOLDEN: REVIEW OF STUDIES OF COUPLE INTERACTION

Silence is not golden when it comes to romantic relationships. Couple interaction and dialogue make up the most important pillars of a functional relationship (Gottman & Notarius, 2002), and the importance of interaction has been recognized (e.g., Ebling, & Levenson, 2003; Roberts, 2000). Yet, research of couple interaction still looks for answers to many questions, such as whether happy and unhappy couples differ in their way of interpreting each other's messages. Indeed, misunderstandings are common in communication: people can express and interpret messages in various ways and the intended meaning may differ from the interpretation. For example, the phrase "We have to talk about this" can be interpreted in different ways; while one person may think it is time to have a serious negotiation where ups and downs are discussed to find a solution, another may pass it off with a blunt remark expecting the problem to be solved in due course (cf., Baucon, Atkins, Eldridge, & Christensen, 2010; Määttä, 2005a; Määttä & Uusiautti, 2012c).

Indeed, daily talk and communication are crucial for the continuance of a relationship (Ramirez & Broneek, 2009). According to Duck (1994), daily talk represents a rhetoric vision that reflects the stat of the relationship and its chances of continuing. However, conflict and stressful situations are especially challenging for communication (Busby & Holman, 2009; Van Binsbergen, Graham, & Yang, 2010) as spouses' ability to communicate reciprocally is tested in these situations (Beach & Whisman, 2012; Braun et al., 2010; Sümer & Cozzarelli, 2004). According to numerous studies, the connection between communication problems and divorces is evident (Birditt, Brow, Orbuch, & McIlvane, 2010; Gottman, 1994; Gottman & Notarius, 2000).

In this article, couple interaction is discussed. In the light of the vast body of research all the way from the 1970s to 2010s, we analyzed the role of couple interaction in long-lasting relationships. The core question is how happy and unhappy couples differ from each other. The purpose is to discuss the factors of couple interaction and its cornerstones. How do happy and unhappy couples differ in their interaction? What are the core issues of couple interaction based on the most relevant studies in the field?

We were interested in discovering the similarities and differences between previous studies and whether there were some common themes to be found. Eventually, we categorized the themes that emerged from the literature into three views on couple interaction. As a conclusion, we decided to compile a general view of positive couple interaction that is based on our own empirical research (see e.g., Määttä, 2010, 2011bd; Määttä & Uusiautti, 2012bcf; Uusiautti & Määttä, 2012) and other researchers' studies.

METHOD

In this research, a selection of studies starting from the 1970s to the present date was reviewed. The studies reviewed were selected based on their relevance to couple interaction and the various sides illustrated as the purpose was to compile a rich description of the theme.

This kind of research approach can be defined in various ways: Qualitative meta-synthesis refers to the amalgamation of a group of qualitative studies with the aim of developing an explanatory theory or model that could explain the findings of a group of similar qualitative studies. Meta-analysis of quantitative studies aims to increase certainty in cause-and-effect conclusions in a particular area. Systematic review must also be distinguished as a form of a literature review focused on a research question that tries to identify, appraise, select and synthesize all high quality research evidence relevant to that question. (Barnett-Page & Thomas, 2009; Walsh & Downe, 2005.)

Even more detailed definitions can be given. Barnett-Page and Thomas (2009) distinguishes a thematic synthesis, which means that free codes of findings are organized into "descriptive" themes, which are then further interpreted to yield "analytical" themes comparable to "third-order interpretations."

In addition, there is systematic or immanent analysis (Jussila, Montonen, & Nurmi, 1989; see also Holma, 2009), which focuses on analyzing the contents of a theory, an ideology or a theorist's production. The purpose is to analyze the previous basis and create a new synthesis that is based on familiarity with the previous research. Thus, we place this study in the middle ground of systematic review and thematic synthesis (see also Jussila, Montonen, & Nurmi, 1989; Lucas et al., 2007). The studies selected in this review cover both qualitative and quantitative studies, and they are categorized into three themes that emerged from the data. Therefore, the themes are analytical or third-order interpretations.

According to Walsh and Downe (2005), an appropriate research question, purpose or aim frames this kind of study as well any other study. Framing is crucial because it determines the way the reviewed studies are selected. As mentioned above, the purpose of our review was to draw a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon based on representative studies. Thus, it is not a systematic review because it does not follow any computational aspects but has a more qualitative focus. The review proceeded so that we analyzed the select studies and discovered the core dimensions of couple interaction. These dimensions are considered the results of this study, and they were discussed from a wider perspective with the purpose of finding future directions for research on couple interaction.

THREE DIMENSIONS OF COUPLE INTERACTION

According to our review, three core dimensions of couple interaction appeared evident from the point of view of defining the core areas that are the most likely to

further or hinder the success of couples' happiness. These dimensions are the level of interaction, the content of interaction, and the accuracy of interaction.

The Level of Interaction

Level of interaction refers to the wealth of interaction (e.g., recurrence and length of contact), diversity of interaction methods and strategies, and the width of interaction (e.g., social networks). Wealth of interaction seems to have an influence on the quality of a romantic relationship (Guldner & Swensen, 1995) although the research results starting from the 1970s have been somewhat contradictory. While Hill, Rubin, and Peplau (1976) stated that seeing one's partner daily does not predict the stability of the relationship, other studies with comprehensive measurements of interaction (Femlee, Sprecher, & Bassin, 1990; Parks & Adelman, 1983; Surra & Longstreth, 1990) proved that the level of interaction does correlate with the continuance of a relationship. Furthermore, Vincent et al. (1979) noted that unhappy married couples differ from happy couples in the level of nonverbal messages (eye contacts, touching).

One of these studies was conducted by Parks and Adelman (1983). They observed 172 couples for three months. Their especial focus was to measure the length of time the couples engaged in face-to-face interaction and shared free-time activities. In another study, Surra and Longstreth (1990) studied the level of 59 couples' activities for over a year. Not only did they study the level and content of shared activities but also related conflicts and satisfaction. The study proved that in addition to the level of interaction, the diversity of interaction methods could explain the stability of a relationship. Some differences between men's and women's ways of assessing the importance of various interaction methods occurred.

Likewise, Berscheid, Snyder, and Omoto (1989) studied couple interaction with a 27-part measurement that included participants' evaluations of, for example, the frequency of weekly interaction, diversity of weekly interaction, and the perceived strength of impact. Interaction correlated with the feelings of intimacy and predicted the continuance of a relationship. Simpson (1987) and Orthner and Mancini (1990) had similar results.

Furthermore, Zuo (1992) noted that the regularity observed by Homans already in 1950 seemed valid; as the level of interaction increased, the strength of impact between two persons was likely to increase. Shared leisure time and the number of shared activities therefore explain the happiness of a relationship (Zuo, 1992; see also Reissman, Aron, & Bergen, 1993). This kind of interaction is a sign of a healthy family, Homan and Epperson (1984) concluded.

Thus, the level of interaction is unquestionably significant but so is the actual way of interacting as well. Dindia and Baxter (1987) showed the importance of various interaction strategies for the continuance of a relationship and for coping with relationship problems. Five strategies were proved crucial:

1. Communicative strategies, such as having time for talking about each other's day and sharing feelings and opinions on an open and honest manner.

2. Metacommunication, to discuss the way problems are solved and to pay attention not only to the problem itself but also to the way of handling it. The concept "talk about talk" refers to this strategy.

3. Anticipatory social strategies such as the endeavor to be nice, kind, and empathic toward the other and to avoid criticizing the other's personality.

4. Ceremonies and rituals created in a relationship that remind of the old times in a warm and firming way. Cherishing these rituals help partners to enjoy the development and existence of their relationship.

5. Sense of togetherness or spending time with shared hobbies and activities that bring joy just because they are shared (cf. Dindia et al., 2004).

In addition to the interaction strategy, the level of interaction can also be analyzed from the perspective of a social width of interaction. Some studies have focused on analyzing how the social network predicts the continuance of a relationship. Lewis (1973) measured the social factors by asking couples to assess how much their relatives and friends (a) invited them to various shared events and activities and (b) considered them as a couple. Parks and Adelman (1983) added to these social factors an evaluation of the level of interaction between a couple and the wider community. Stable relationships had stronger support of a social network than unstable couples (see also Surra 1985, 1987). More recently, Sprecher and Femlee (2000) proved that especially the support given by a woman's relatives and friends was more important to the stability of the relationship than the support from a man's corresponding network (see also Sprecher, 2011). On the other hand, lack of social integration affects social relationships in two ways. Social isolation or lack of integration diminishes the level of social support and control. Furthermore, these factors are likely to cause, for example aggressiveness (see Stets, 1991; Rehman, Holtzworth-Munroe, Herron, & Clements, 2009).

In all, the level of interaction consists of various factors. In addition to frequent contact with the spouse, the way that spouses interact and the support they get from their relatives and other acquaintances as a couple appeared to be significant contributors to the couple's happiness.

The Content of Interaction

The second core dimension is the content of interaction which refers to the quality and type of couple interaction including spouses' ability to interpret each other's messages correctly. The importance of communication in romantic relationships has been known for a while, as Noller stated in 1987 and referred to, for example Locke et al.'s study called "Correlates of Primary Communication and Empathy" from 1956. The latest studies have focused on a more careful analysis of couple communication and its various traits (Cornelius & Alessi, 2007; Gottman & Notarius, 2000; Schuler, 2009): whether happy and unhappy couples differ in their way of understanding each other's messages, whether they use various types of messages, whether

the messages differ in quality and number, etc. (Slatcher, Vazire, & Pennebaker, 2008).

Already in the early 1970s, Kahn (1970) developed the Marital Communication Scale, which covers a series of various messages depending on their purpose and related nonverbal behavior. One example of an equivocal message is the question "What are you doing?" One can express it neutrally, positively (in a pleasant or surprising manner) or negatively (in an angry or frustrated manner).

The problem was, however, that the research participants could not use their spoken language. They had to limit their speech into the communication that the scale offered to them. Thus, Gottman et al. (1976) developed a method that studied the differences in couple communication from two points of view: what the partners wanted to express (the purpose) and how the message was received (the influence) (see also Gottman & Notarius, 2000).

The method developed here was the so-called talk-table method. The research participants—couples—sat down, face to face, and discussed one marital problem. Each conversation situation was evaluated so that the one who expressed the message graded its purpose and the respondent of the message graded its influence with a five-part scale (dimensions between positive and negative). According to the results, couples who were categorized as unhappy experienced the influence of the message more negative than its purpose was. Among happy couples, such a difference between the purpose and influence did not exist (Gottman et al., 1976).

A salient result was that unsatisfied or unhappy couples used more negative expressions. This type of communication easily leads to a circle of negativity; because of one spouse's negative message, the other communicates in a negative manner too. Furthermore, the messages can be interpreted more negatively than the original intention had been. The history of a relationship and all shared experiences influence in the interaction situation as well (Noller, 1987).

Indeed, there are plenty of aspects in common in the way men and women communicate but there are differences, too. It seems that in serious problem situations, unhappy women are more negative than unhappy men. For example, Notarius, Benson, and Sloane (1989) observed that 63% of unhappy wives started to talk more negatively while the corresponding figure among men was 46%. A more careful illustration of the negativity of women in unhappy relationships was presented by Gottman and Krokoff (1989). According to their study, unhappy wives tended to be more stubborn, to humiliate others, to boss others around, and to complain.

The studies on the flow of interaction have analyzed partners' ability to omit or edit their negative answers when their message is likely to have a negative impact. Gottman et al.'s (1977) study showed that in addition to men and women who were categorized as unhappy, happy men had a tendency to use negative language when listening to a negative emotional expression. Happy women were more able to avoid negative language when in the likelihood of having long chains of negative exchange is high which is typical of communication in unhappy marriages (Baucom, Notarius, Burnett, & Haefner, 1990; Gottman, 1979; Margolin & Wampold, 1981; Schaap,

1984). By doing this, these women were either able to recognize the real reasons for the problem or they simply forgave and ate humble pie (Gordon, Baucom, & Snyder, 2000; Schuman, 2012).

Later on, Notarius, Benson, and Sloane (1989) reviewed the above-mentioned chain of negative exchange from another perspective and discovered new findings. They analyzed spouses' ability to behave positively after their partners' malevolent behavior for example, whether a spouse was able take the offensive expression with humor and forget about being hurt. Based on the findings, especially women who considered their relationship unhappy were less frequently able to behave positively than others. These women's ability to break the chain of unhappy exchange proved lower than others.

According to the aforementioned studies, the most evident differences occur between women who live in happy or unhappy relationships. The findings are consistent with the previous studies that had showed that women are the barometers of unhappy relationships (Baucom, Notarius, Burnett, & Haefner, 1990). Moreover, in conflict situations, women seem to take the active role while men stand back (Gottman, 1994; Julien & Dion, 2004). Actually, this is a long-known (Terman, 1938) and internationally common (Cristensen et al., 2006) phenomenon.

On the other hand, Weiss and Heyman's (1990) review pointed out that compared to men, women smile and laugh more, complain, criticize and disagree more, and use more positive nonverbal expressions. Men, on the other hand, use more excuses and negative nonverbal expressions and they avoid eye contact more often than women. In addition, men seem to express agreement more often than women. Spouses do not recognize the usual enemies: bad communication skills, destructive ideas about the reasons for disagreements and problems (e.g. Bradbury & Fincham, 1992), and lowered expectations toward the ability to solve disagreements (Baucom, Notarius, Burnett, & Haefner, 1990).

Altman and Taylor (1973) describe a relationship as a penetration phenomenon. Due to abundant negative communication and interaction, the relationship can have the nature of depenetration. Altman and Taylor (1973) describe the situation with these words:

Once it has begun, the process of alienation goes on remorselessly, as if it were Frankensteinian monster which the couple has created and now would gladly destroy. Everything that the two persons try to do in the situation seems only to make it worse. Because they have quarreled much, they quarrel more easily than before. Their continued strife produces in each an emotional instability, a lowering of the threshold for experiencing slights and of the emotional boiling point in reaching to them, and the strife which arises from this reacts upon their personality yet further... Yet as the process ensues, each member still continues to need and depend on one another. But part of this dependency is to return to the conflicts and exacerbate them, which results in a continued destruction of the relationship, partly for the price of building up an identifying self. (p. 178)

Negative communication has a corrosive influence on a relationship. No one wants to hear constantly how he or she has become a partner who just causes trouble to the other (cf. Määttä, 2005a; Blood & Wolfe, 1960).

In addition to the spoken content, nonverbal interaction can also be considered as a significant dimension of the content of interaction. For example, in the 1980s, Noller (1985, 1987) studied the content and differences of nonverbal communication in relationships. Some differences were found between women's and men's nonverbal communication: When expressing positive messages, women smile more whereas men express their feelings by moving their eye brows. In negative messages, women give more angry looks and expressions while again men raise or move their eyebrows. In general, women's nonverbal communication appeared more accurate, plentiful, and versatile. In all, both women and men who are dissatisfied with their relationship communicated in a more restricted manner than those who were happy.

In sum, the content of interaction consists of the type and quality of messages and their positivity or negativity. The content of interaction covers not only spoken messages but also nonverbal communication. The studies reviewed here showed that there were some apparent differences between women and men.

The Accuracy of Interaction

The accuracy of interaction refers to spouses' ability to express themselves clearly as well as their ability to interpret the other correctly. In his studies of the communication accuracy of couple interaction, Kahn (1970) divided couples' videotaped expressions into good communication (messages that more than two-thirds of evaluators could interpret accurately) and bad communication (messages that few than two-thirds of evaluators could interpret accurately). These badly communicated messages were categorized into encoding errors (messages that both spouses and outsiders found difficult to interpret) and decoding errors (messages that outsiders but not spouses could interpret accurately). There were a few messages that spouses but not outsiders could interpret accurately. These messages were categorized as idiosyncratic communications; in other words, messages that are part of spouses' mutual and private communication.

Kahn (1970) noted that happy couples communicated more accurately than unhappy couples, especially when women expressed the message and men were the receivers. Why is that? Another result gives an explanation: Kahn (1970) also found out that men whose marital satisfaction was high were more accurate than those who were unhappy, both when it came to expression and interpretation of messages. Such a difference did not occur in women. Therefore, the difference in the communication accuracy between happy and unhappy couples when the wife is the one who expresses the message seems to be connected, according to Kahn (1970), especially to the difference that occurs in men's communication: Happy men are better at interpreting messages than unhappy men (cf. Clements, Holtzworth-Munroe, Schweinle, & Ickes, 2007).

Among others, Gottman and Porterfield (1981) showed how men who were dissatisfied with their marriages also had inadequate communication skills. Likewise, Noller's several studies (1980, 1981, 1982, 1985) have showed that in romantic relationships, women usually make fewer mistakes in expressing their messages than men. Women's communicate well, especially positive messages. Men who are satisfied with their marriages express especially positive messages more accurately than men who are dissatisfied with their marriage.

Moreover, Noller (1982) noted that men's accuracy in particular, both expressing and interpreting messages is crucial for the happiness of relationship—especially when it comes to positive messages. Noller concluded that women who were dissatisfied with their marriage were specifically concerned about the lack of their husbands' positive communication: The women wished for more emotions, appreciation, gratitude, and general attention.

A crucial question in a couple's communication is also the spouses' ability to recognize problems in communication and interpretation and to ensure that the message becomes understood (cf. Stanley, Bradbury, & Markman, 2000). Although spouses are familiar with each other's communication, they are not necessarily able to interpret each other objectively and may be even too trusting that their way of interpreting each other is accurate (Sillars & Scott, 1983).When comparing happy couples with unhappy couples, it became evident that happy couples—and particularly happy women—could predict whether the spouse interpreted their messages correctly. In addition, unhappy men proved to be worse predictors than other men. Kahn (1970) found out that happy spouses interpret each other's nonverbal behavior better than spouses who are in an unhappy relationship (see also Hawkins, Carrére, & Gottman, 2002).

In addition to accurate expression, the ability to interpret the other's messages correctly seemed to have a central role in successful couple interaction. Of the contents of interaction, this concerns both verbal and nonverbal communication.

DISCUSSION

We presented three dimensions of couple interaction that are interconnected with each other. Successful couple interaction has various levels that are easy to understand through this three-dimensional analysis; spouses need to find success not only at the level of interaction but the content and accuracy also matters. It seems that there are also certain differences between men and women and their ways of interaction, expression, and interpretation.

The viewpoint we present here attempts to point out what the keys are to succeed in couple interaction and how to enhance it. There are, naturally, plenty of studies that focus on interaction problems. For example, Vangelisti (1992) studied couples' communication problems with diversified data. She categorized communication problems into three main categories, which were expressive problems (e.g. inability to express feelings, false or hasty assumptions, etc.), responsive problems (e.g. the

spouse does not respond to appeals or does not accept the other's point of view, etc.), and conflict problems (e.g. constant disagreement, blaming, or standing back, etc.). Vangelisti's list of problems is relatively comprehensive and gives good insight into the gamut of communication problems that may occur between partners. Furthermore, these findings are supported by other studies of communication problems (e.g. Domingue & Moller, 2009; Erbert, 2000).

In this study, we would like to have a more positive point of view and focus on what couples need to understand regarding couple interaction. Indeed, good interaction seems to be crucial for the stability of a romantic relationship (Baucom et al., 2010; Graham, 2011). Yet, long-lasting marriages have become more and more scarce (O'Leary, 2012) and therefore, it has become difficult to find comprehensive illustrations of how and of what positive communication comprises. For example, Altman and Taylor (1973) described the development of intimacy and penetration processes through significant communication contents and dimensions that result from the positive development of couple interaction. Based on Altman and Taylor's (1973) assertions, the following factors are the most important:

1. The richness and breath of communication followed by developing awareness of each other's personality.
2. The uniqueness of interaction that is strengthened by understanding the meaning of certain stresses, expression, and body movements.
3. The accuracy, speed, and efficiency of exchange. As a relationship develops, various nonverbal messages become more meaningful and make communication deeper. Sensitivity increases—not just to words but also nonverbal behavior.
4. The substitutability and equivalency of various communication methods. As a relationship develops, partners are able to use various expressions regardless of the complexity of interaction situations. For example, concern can be expressed with words, a look, meaningful hand movements, silence, or certain movements.
5. Synchronization and pacing of interaction. Altman and Taylor (1973) also talked about a working consensus where partners know their roles, characteristics, and limits, and develop a stable interaction model that pays attention to the other and surrounding factors. This is possible after a longer period of being together.
6. Permeability and openness. Openness and permeability are manifested in verbal and nonverbal communication. With openness, mutual familiarity and acceptance increases, partners' abilities and courage to move quickly and directly from one communication theme to another strengthens.
7. The voluntariness and spontaneity of exchange increase.
8. Mutual evaluation of communication increases. Partners become more willing and able to criticize and thank each other.

The above list is not all-encompassing but it does include important factors that occur in the various studies of couple interaction discussed in this article. Altman and Taylor's list covers the gamut of successful communication all the way from

non-verbal communication to mutual desire to understanding and interacting with each other in an authentic manner.

The three dimensions of couple interaction that emerged from our review illustrate the core of couple interaction. But what is the key element in all these three dimensions? According to our review, self-disclosure might be the answer. When communication is understood broadly, it can cover, for example, the ability to empathize, to respond to the other's needs, and to adjust one's own behavior. Self-disclosure seems to be of especial importance. (Barness et al., 2007; Roberts, 2000.)

Self-disclosure refers to a process where a human being makes him or herself familiar to the other. It may be either verbal or nonverbal action (Jourard, 1971) or "any information exchange that refers to the self, including personal states, dispositions, events in the past, and plans for the future" (Derlega, 1979, p. 152). According to Derlega (1979), self-disclosure has five functions that further the development of a relationship: self-expression, self-clarification, the chance of getting social reinforcement when comparing oneself to others, the way of expressing the development of the relationship, and the way of expressing the modes of control and impression related to the relationship.

In conclusion, the ability to express one's feelings and thoughts to the other is essential for the development and stability of a relationship. Openness is assumed to promote this development because of its rewarding nature: Openness leads to positive emotions and increases partners' mutual trust (Sprecher, 1987) and care and understanding (Mikulincer & Nachshon, 1991). Inability to maintain openness explains individuals' dissatisfaction with their social networks and loneliness (Mikulincer & Nachshon, 1991).

Indeed, self-disclosure as the basis of couple interaction might be considered a key factor of long-lasting relationships (Berg & McQuinn, 1986; Femlee, Sprecher, & Bassin, 1990; Hendrick et al., 1988; Surra & Longstreth, 1990; Sprecher, 1987). When dissecting these results, it is, however, worth noticing that openness is quite a multidimensional concept (Ben-Ari, 2012). As Mikulincer and Nachshon (1991) pointed out, it can be understood as a personality trait or a behavioral type, and it can vary by its level, intimacy, informational content, and objectives. One salient feature of openness in a relationship is flexibility, which means the ability to take the present situation into account and adjust one's disclosures according to the situation. The individual who is able to modulate his or her disclosures across a wider range of social situations in response to situational and interpersonal demands will function interpersonally more adequately, whereas a less flexible individual who has not learned the discriminant cues that signal whether disclosure is appropriate or inappropriate will not. (Mikulincer & Nachshon, 1991.)

In order to be a binding factor, self-disclosure necessitates reciprocity or the ability to respond the other's disclosures. Among other things, this reciprocity reflects in increasing trust and attentive behavior (Berg & McQuinn, 1986). On the other hand, self-disclosure alone does not guarantee functional interaction. Thoughtfulness,

consideration, and empathy are also important. Love shies away from duress and therefore, the necessity of openness and talking can become oppressive.

CONCLUSION

In sum, it is worth noticing the complexity of couple interaction. It is interaction where both the person expressing and the person receiving and interpreting the message influence each other. It is a process where misunderstandings occur both in expression and interpretation. In addition to verbal communication, nonverbal communication is important too. Especially, men who were dissatisfied with their romantic relationship had low nonverbal communication skills. On the other hand, the communication skills of spouses who live in an unhappy relationship are apparently better than they seem when communicating with each other; many of these spouses communicate more accurately and positively with outsiders (Birchler et al., 1975; Noller, 1987).

Even though spouses had the worst communication skills, their relationship still may not be doomed to failure. Based on our findings (Määttä, 2005a; Uusiautti & Määttä, 2012), those couples that made the effort to listen to each other and tried to find a common ground appeared eventually the happiest. As important as talking is, it does not guarantee any solutions to problems, as they are not necessary solved by talking. Quite often, problem solving takes time. Through talking, it is possible to clear the air and various points of view become recognized and yet, excessive rehashing may lead to a deadlock. Sometimes, "talk fasting" can be a surprisingly good solution—but naturally, with moderation.

Our review introduced an overview of the dimensions of couple interaction. The overview was based on various studies, most of them focusing on a carefully defined trait or dimension of couple interaction. We also argued that self-disclosure, when understood as an authentic ability to openness and reciprocal communication, might be the key that opens the doors of the three dimensions of couple interaction. This argument needs to be further studied—especially drawing from the contribution and concepts of positive psychology. Studies focusing on couples' positive interaction experiences in these three levels and their sublevels would be of great interest. They could provide new understanding and insight into questions such as "How do couples succeed in these dimensions of couple interaction?" "Are they learnable?" "Can self-disclosure be learned?" and "What is the role of self-disclosure in successful couple interaction."

SEVEN RULES ON HAVING MARRIAGE ALONG WITH WORK

A GLANCE AT THE INTERACTION BETWEEN WORK AND FAMILY

The combination of work and family life has increasingly been studied since women started to work outside the home (e.g., Aryee, Srinivas, & Hoon Tan, 2005; Barnett, 2004). Two different trends can be distinguished in research on the interaction between work and family (Barling, 1994; Kinnunen et al., 1995): The first emphasizes objective and structural factors whereas the second focuses on subjective and empirical factors.

When dissecting the relationship between family life and work, structural factors, such as work-time policies (e.g., Gornick, Heron, & Eisenbrey, 2007) and family policies (e.g., Heinämäki, 2008) are not the only definers of a well-balanced life. Instead, recent studies have also emphasized the significance of individuals' subjective experiences at work and in marriage. Interest has been focused on employees' conceptions of the content of their work, work processes, demands, management, and satisfaction (Uusiautti, 2008; see also Kinnunen et al., 1995; Sihvo, 2002). Marital satisfaction and happiness have also been self-evaluated (Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach, 2000) in order to examine marital adjustment (Glenn, 1990) as well as marital stability (Karney & Bradbury, 1995).

Work and family life can be considered separate and independent areas of life according to the segmentation perspective (Lambert, 1990; Sihvo, 2002). Home, children, and marriage are part of life outside work, and work issues are not connected to home at all (Alho, 1994). Work and family life are considered separate either because they are fundamentally independent of each other because of the time, space, and tasks that distinguish them or because employees actively tend to keep these areas of life separate in order to cope with work-related stress (Kinnunen et al., 1995; Lambert, 1990).

However, when it comes to the connection between work and family, it is important to notice the two-way interaction: how work affects family life and vice versa (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992; Gutek, Searle, & Klepa, 1991). Such concepts as permeability, flexibility, and blending can describe the border between work and family (Clark, 2000). In addition, the combination of these two areas of life can also be described, for example, as the family-work balance (Frone, 2003). Conflicts between work and family can be divided into three categories based on whether they are related to time, an individual's stress, or behavior (Sihvo, 2002). Indeed, the connection between work and family life has been studied mostly from the negative conflict perspective (Greenhaus, Bedeian, & Massholder, 1987), but it is obvious that the interplay between these two areas of life also has positive consequences (Leiter & Durup, 1996).

For instance, studies focusing on the expanding and positive outcomes of multiple roles (e.g., the roles of an employee, a spouse, and a parent) embody the positive perspective (Kinnunen et al., 1995). Multiple roles—or in other words the role accumulation that means managing a variety of roles at the same time—enhance an individual's self-respect (Gutek, Repetti, & Silver, 1988; Marks & MacDermid, 1996), diversify one's personality, and improve one's social skills (Gutek et al., 1988). In addition, role accumulation prevents depression and increases personal latitude, quality of life, and perceived well-being (Marks & MacDermid, 1996). Furthermore, the contrariness of the experiences in these areas of life can be emphasized (Kinnunen et al., 1995). This compensation theory suggests that an individual tries to compensate for an insufficiency in one area of life if the other, for example, work or marriage, fails to satisfy him or her (Lambert, 1990).

Generally, the concept of spillover has been used to describe the connection between work and family (Lambert, 1990). According to the concept, moods, attitudes, and behavior follow from the workplace to home and vice versa: work and family lives share similar experiences because positive and negative experiences and emotions tend to find their way from one area of life to another (Kinnunen et al., 1995). In general, spillover represents how one area of life burdens the others (Alho, 1994). This kind of spillover can be exemplified with a situation where an employee who has a monotonous job suffers from work-related stress that reflects on other family members. Positive spillover occurs, for example, when skills learned at work are useful at home as well.

Based on previous studies and theories concerning the difficulties achieving a balance between family and work, we wanted to define the factors that explain success in marriage and work. Thus, the fundamental assumption is that individuals and families can experience spillover and compensation effects simultaneously. Especially, if the aim is to specify the positive interactional and behavioral manners that are significant for the quality of marital life by those who put their shoulder to the wheel. This issue is described by Finns who work regularly and have been married for at least 10 years. They were considered experts and suitable for describing how it is possible to sustain a satisfying marriage along with a busy work life. How can success in marriage be enhanced even if one works long hours? How is it possible to have a marriage that helps with coping with demanding work and supports this area of life and does not fall apart under the strain of a challenging work life?

METHOD

The empirical data consists of voluntary, free-form statements written by married Finnish couples (N = 342 married couples) who have been married for more than 10 years. The couples were asked to describe the factors that explain the stability and happiness of their marriage and to describe and explain the secrets to their happiness and long-lasting marriage (Määttä, 2005a). The data were based on a writing competition organized by a Finnish magazine. A VIP weekend (a new honeymoon)

was raffled among participants. The winner was selected randomly and thus, the content of a couple's story did not affect to the selection of the winner.

The writing competition inspired Finnish couples, and eventually, 342 married couples participated with their own stories. The participants represented the gamut of Finnish married couples well: they represented different ages (their specific ages were not asked), most had been married between 10 and 15 years, they had one or two children, and worked outside the home or from home (domestic work was not considered work in this case). For many of the writers (N = 306), this was their first marriage, but there were also a few (N = 36) who had been married at least twice. The written stories varied in length between 5 and 28 pages. All in all, the data was evaluated as comprehensive and sufficient.

This study was qualitative as the aim was to find out the married couples' opinions on the secrets of successful combination of marriage and work. The couples were asked to describe and explain the secrets of their happiness and long-lasting marriage in their own words. Therefore, they could include in their stories the issues the couples considered the most important.

The stories were categorized into themes based on the common features that emerged from the couples' stories, such as how the couples had faced and overcome hardships, what kind of emphasis they had on their shared activities, and how they described their dedication. The stories did not describe only the lightness of marriage; there were some rough experiences and survival stories as well. Finally, the results were categorized according to the specific behaviors or the models of personal interaction that represented the characteristics that are essential for success in family life, and these categories represent the findings reported in this article.

RESULTS

According to the couples' stories, seven rules of personal behavior are introduced as the prerequisite for having a good marriage along with work.

The Ability to Turn Downs into Ups

No one is perfect nor does anyone manage to avoid relationship problems at work or at home. "The pitfalls of our relationship have turned into resources along with the difficulties," noted one couple. Hardships either bind or separate depending on whether they are solved or tolerated. How people handle indisputable problems and conflicts, tolerate them, and, if possible, are able to solve them are the most essential factors at work and home (see also Gottman et al., 1998).

The work drive can fade and the sparkle can go out if work conditions are unsupportive. In addition, in a work community, flexibility is needed as well as individualized options that comply with the individual's life situation (see also Hall & Lawler, 1970; Maslach & Leiter, 1999; Hakanen, 2002).

At the best, spouses are able to comfort, support, and encourage each other in the tumults of life. The relationship stays alive in times of trouble if partners are willing to slow down, soothe, stay by each other's side, introduce new views, encourage, and seek a better life arising from even the most intolerable situations (Carrére et al., 2000). Neither will work enthusiasm wilt because of failures or misfortunes. Work is allowed to be demanding if an employee has the resources needed (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2005). Support is crucial even when an employee's own belief in survival and success is shaken. At its best, an employee can trust in the work community's support during hardships as well. Supervisors' appreciation is important (e.g., Stoltenberg, 2005), but top workers are also capable of giving positive feedback to themselves and understand the value of their accomplishments (Deci & Moller, 2005). All things considered, a spiral of positive resources that feeds itself should be created in marriage as well as at work.

Still, difficulties cannot be avoided in any marriage, nor does coping with the difficulties tell the whole story. Equally important is creating situations that fill one with joy, for example, "a bottle of sparkling wine on the kitchen table without any particular reason" or "the annual concert journeys spark our relationship." "I feel good, familiar, and safe with my spouse. The extra edges have worn smooth along the way." In this way, the numerous moments spent in peace and harmony become significant at home and are reflected in work as well.

When a spouse supports and appreciates, acknowledges and backs up, family life becomes rewarding and inspiring: the spouses can lean and rely on each other in times of hardship. They can figure out shared and pleasing activities that cannot be done alone and that bind them to each other in a healthy manner: they feel important to each other and are happy together. Adversities do not seem overwhelming when a couple has more positives and connections than difficulties.

> We enjoy being together and appreciate the life we live. We have developed our own language over the years by which we sort out things; and outsiders would certainly not understand our intentions.

Activity, Creativity, and Imagination

Success is not obvious, either at work or in marriage. Even the phrase I will does not automatically guarantee marital happiness. A marriage requires sensitivity and effort to notice each other, to support, and to gratify; and so does a functional work community.

> Family is like starting a business! The troubles have to be predicted, and we do not go pell-mell into bankruptcy, although bankruptcy is sometimes the right decision.

> There is no free ride for anyone.

It is important to find pleasant shared activities—even rituals—in marriage. These rituals refer to the repetitious and rewarding activities that spouses do together and

that are impossible to do alone. Every couple creates their own universe or system of habits. They need each other to satisfy sexual needs, discuss everyday happenings, share recreation and leisure activities as well as being an intimate to whom one can reveal one's hopes and fears, worries, and jokes. A true resource in marriage is if one thinks not only that he or she is important to the other one but also that the spouse is important to oneself.

One can implement the same resource in the work community as well: Various educational and recreational days, informal happenings, as well as paying attention to employees' anniversaries freshen up and promote the drive to work together.

Tolerating the Dissimilarity and Change

It is important, but also hard to accept dissimilarities and changes in the other (see also Nock, 1981). One couple wrote:

> It is a hard school for the rest of your life. A human being has a constant desire
> to change the other in a direction he or she wants to.

It is impossible to predict the degree of changes. Only a few know in advance how they will react to changes in work tasks, the birth of a child, or moving, economic pressure, or ageing. Even the changes in oneself may surprise (Riehl-Emde et al., 2003). In addition, the spouses' careers can progress at different paces: one may enhance his or her career quickly while the other prefers other areas over work.

Because of the natural resistance to change at work (O'Connor, 1993; Lines, 2004) and in family life (e.g., Gottman, 1993), people try to mold their own lives and acquaintances according to their own wishes and needs. However, everyone knows that, for example, the changes in work life are constantly increasing (e.g., Hakanen, Perhoniemi, & Toppinen-Tanner, 2008). This kind of change has to be tolerated within the marriage as well and should not be considered a threat: regardless of all the changes, spouses can maintain their safe and stable family life.

A spouse cannot be owned or treated like an object. Family life will blossom in marriage if the partners are allowed to maintain their differences and independence. Furthermore, the differences and the inevitable changes in the other and oneself have to be tolerated. Family life consists of various risks and changes in the other and oneself that cannot be predicted.

Patience, Flexibility, and Humbleness

Accepting changes requires compromises, flexibility, and bargaining but not excessively (see also Uusiautti & Määttä, 2012). The things that are and are not negotiable should be made clear in the marriage. Being a martyr is not satisfying in the end. Maybe those who are able to overlook their partner's annoying characteristics, small faults, and soft spots enjoy their relationships the most. The ability to enjoy or

notice the other one's good qualities may lead to happiness and success in family life and at work (Femlee et al., 1990).

In everyday life, patience can be evinced in several ways. A good example is a sentence that one Finnish man considered the secret to marital satisfaction:

> Many times I have noticed that there is a more efficient phrase than "I love you"; it is "You are right".

Additionally, a sense of humor is just as important. Love and playfulness belong together. Humor helps solving and handling many work-related problems as well.

Acknowledging, Supporting, and Admiring

See, notice, hear the other but do not ignore.

A benign atmosphere results from caring and being interested in each other's well-being without ignoring oneself. Words such as thank you, you make me happy, or I appreciate what you have done are of great importance. There is no reason not to say these words nor do they lose their value even with considerable use (Määttä, 2005a; 2005b). There are as many ways to fill the spouse with joy and nourish love as there are couples.

> It is strange to notice how little our life depends on the big solutions and how much on the small ones that we have to do all the time.

According to the participants' stories, little, everyday things are meaningful:

> He gives me a pillow or a blanket when I seem tired.

> I am entitled to read the front page of the newspaper first.

Therefore, the smallest everyday happenings affect the atmosphere in family life. Cultivating the atmosphere is everybody's responsibility that cannot always be passed off to others. Thus, a positive atmosphere is significant, whereas continuous criticism, detraction, and nullification poison the atmosphere, and the spiral of malevolence accelerates (Gottman, 1993). No one is immune to naughtiness, nor tolerates negative fulmination and understatement endlessly—and the atmosphere at home can affect one's work and vice versa (see also Turner, Barling, & Zacharatos, 2002).

A loving spouse and family do not suppress but, at their best, make one feel good and accepted as one is and, at the same time, give space to renew and develop oneself in a direction that one desires (Pukkala, 2006). The positive feedback given by one's spouse inspires and supports. According to the Finnish couples' stories, it is worth asking: who would even be a better trend-setter for development than a life companion?

Commitment and Dedication

Without proper concentration, work does not go right. Neither will the love life satisfy if one's attitude toward one's partner is a cavalier, let us see-style. If one does

not devote oneself to the relationship sufficiently, it will not satisfy. Commitment means a willing and strong decision to stick to that particular job or relationship and not to give up easily (Pukkala, 2006).

Love and commitment to work are manifested through employees' determination and orderliness. An impulsive way of taking care of things or trusting that things will go right eventually hardly helps an individual succeed in human relationships either:

A couple should reflect on the condition of their marriage in the same way as their own physical shape. If keeping fit requires a half-an-hour of exercise three or four times a week, the couple should spare at least that much time taking care of their relationship.

The priorities should also be manifested by the division of one's time.

When having got used to fixed schedules at work, the same practice can be carried out successfully in a marriage: to compare schedules and make agreements. A couple might and should make time for evenings at home and shared activities when it is easier to hold on to them.

Respecting Oneself

When a human being considers oneself, one's own strengths, and one's weaknesses in an understanding, kind, and human way, it is easier to transfer the same attitude to other people. One would not tend to demand perfection from the other to use time to control and look after all the time. Numerous psychological theories (e.g., Gable & Haidt, 2005) emphasize the meaning of healthy self-respect in creating and maintaining satisfying human relationships:

What one thinks of oneself determines one's destiny.

One cannot find the keys to success and happiness from some others' pockets, if one does not get along with oneself. Indeed, Roman novelist Ovidius's view launched more than 2000 years ago may turn into a ruinous attitude toward life: "I cannot live with you or without you." Compared to Ovidius's words, "I can live with myself, together with you" proves more promising.

One concrete way of knowing and respecting oneself is to cherish those things that one knows, finds pleasing, and appreciates. Love for work and success at work contribute to other areas of life and increase self-respect in an essential manner as does respecting and appreciating marriage. Yet, when work does not go well and intimate relationships have become tangled, one's love for oneself may provide the basis for survival.

DISCUSSION

According to this research, it seems that some common features explain how a couple can have a good marriage and success at work as well. Next, we will discuss the

limitations of the original research and then expand our analysis, the implications, and demands for follow-up studies that emerged from this research.

Limitations of the Study

Writing about one's love story or memories is not easy. Our research focused on extremely personal experiences: participants were supposed to reveal something special not just about their own lives but others' as well. Yet, everything cannot be written down nor do people even want to tell everything (cf. Kyrönlampi & Määttä, 2012).

The stories used as data in this research represented filtered narrations to some extent (Rosenthal, 1991). One can paper over some events and highlight some others. Memories or stories are always summaries of the courses of events and reconstructed afterwards by the tellers. Memory is also selective: sometimes memories grow sweeter with time. Some other times, reality is described as rougher than it actually was. Sigmund Freud (1992) has pointed out this in a clever way:

> All our memories are simultaneously curtains and screens where the past is reflected molded by the present (p. 322).

When it comes to the reliability, one salient question in this research is the selected group of participants. However, every side of a marriage—the fascination of love and its crises, daily routines and festive moments, dreams come true and heartbreaks, arguments and harmony, growing apart and reuniting—were brought up in the stories. In this research, every couple reported having argued at least sometimes. None of them claimed that they live in a perfect relationship, are totally happy, or enjoy their spouses all the time. Everyone admitted that they had become frustrated or sad every now and then. The life of the married couples who participated in this research appeared extremely manifold. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the participants represented the average married couples well: the only criterion was that their marriage had lasted for at least ten years.

Nevertheless, it is hard to estimate to what extent the picture in these stories is exaggerated or prettified. Instead, we wanted to focus on what the participants wanted to reveal and emphasize in their stories. It is significant as such (e.g. Passerini, 1989). From this point of view, the data was regarded as good and reliable.

In addition, especially in qualitative research, reliability also relates to the way the data is analyzed (e.g., Guba & Lincoln, 1994), in other words, the trustworthiness of the research. The correspondence between the results and reality is hard to evaluate since the stories already are the writers' interpretations of the actual events or issues. Yet, the researcher's task is to remain loyal to the data and make interpretations that are based on the information. Simultaneously, the data has to be categorized and organized in such a way that answers the research questions (Tuomi & Sarajärvi,

2002). In order to illustrate and support our interpretations, quotations from the data were added in the Results section.

Furthermore, we have paid attention to a researcher's ethical responsibilities. We wanted to take care that the participants would not feel misunderstood or hurt but appreciated and respected. We have also realized that qualitative research is always a personal experience that affects the researcher's own thoughts and feelings. When writing about someone else in qualitative research, the researcher writes about himself or herself as well (Ukkonen, 2002). Therefore, researchers have to reflect their position in relation to the research and aim at ethical responsibility and fair interpretations.

Implications

Today's relationships tend to lose strength and be shaken and at the same time human relationship nets have narrowed. As mentioned before, work life sets, for its part, increasing demands on employees' know-how and development. Having a family does not prevent one from having a successful career, too. It seems that it is more important is to be ready to make compromises and to take both spouses' hopes into consideration (e.g., Uusiautti & Määttä, 2010). Furthermore, research has shown (Pedersen Stevens et al., 2007) that in dual-earner couples, for men, relationship satisfaction was associated with positive family-to-work spillover, whereas satisfaction with the housework arrangement was related to women's positive spillover. With men and women engaging in more nontraditional gender roles in work and family domains, there is a great need to understand the impact of these roles in each domain (Perrone, Wright, & Jackson, 2009).

The pressures of competition and performance-centered society are reflected particularly in the expectations that we set for intimate relationships and love affairs. The modern friendship and romantic relationship represent the possibility of an uncompelled, real life. In a relationship, busy modern people can reveal their fragile and private sides that are not necessarily shown at work. "This is what I truly and basically am." Then, the intimacy and privacy of a relationship may provide emotional satisfaction that is priceless.

Within the turmoil of changes, many lean on the power of a nuclear family. A nuclear family and intimate relationship represent a haven and breeding ground. An individual's self-confidence and survival in the challenges of working life depend greatly on the quality of relationships and how things are at home. Acting efficiently at work necessitates satisfying emotional life and intimate relationships that fulfill the needs of intimacy, tenderness, love, and privacy. Indeed, efficient and busy work life strengthens the appeal of marriage and other close relationships.

However, a modern marriage has to have firm ground in order to hold together. Starting a family refers to an optimistic presumption that this union will give its best

to personal and mutual life, that one can be oneself and yet trust in one's spouse's support. A couple has to be emphatic, tolerant, and willing to make compromises if they want their modern relationship to work. Therefore, research that is focused on successful solutions deserves to be better known. The changes in modern working life and the increasing appreciation of family yearn for models that introduce successful strategies for combining these two important areas of life.

LOVE DOES NOT RETIRE—NOT EVEN AFTER A HALF CENTURY OF MARRIAGE

Even the 21st century people—and younger too—hope and dream of lasting love, permanent human relationships, and family. Love is appreciated and considered an important source of personal pleasure and support. High expectations are placed on an intimate relationship. It should give its best, function as a place to rest, hide, and grow and offer safety, adventures, and recreation. People, who demand plenty on their life, expect that love will heal, remove obstacles of happiness, their own deficiencies and bad sides and provide perfect pleasure.

The higher expectations, hopes, and demands are, the greater are disappointments. Yet, disappointments are inevitable. Dreams turn into traps when they involve hopes that cannot be fulfilled. Personal plans fail and relationships break down. Instead of relieving, love hurts. High divorce rates prove it. For example, 50% percent of first marriages, 67% of second and 74% of third marriages end in divorce in the USA (Baker, 2007). In Finland, 29,952 marriages were contracted and 13,619 dissolved in 2010 (Statistics Finland, 2010a). Nowadays, about half of Finnish marriages end after approximately 11 years of marriage (Valtavaara, 2007).

There are also marriages that last. The secret of their permanence has been studied although no definite answer has been found. The absolute group of experts on stable relationships consists of seniors who have experienced a long-lasting marriage; in other words, those people who have been able or are about to celebrate their 50th or golden wedding anniversary. The number of these people is low: no more than 3% of all marriages make it to the 50-year mark (Troll, 1975; see also Statistics Finland, 2010b) but they have valuable experiential knowledge about what a long marriage requires and gives in order to stay satisfactory.

Many kinds of prejudices are linked to seniors' life. People prefer considering their life as peaceful and filled with love that lends wings from the memories gathered along the decades. Surely, seniors are allowed to love and even hoped to receive love but some limits of appropriateness are set for it and these limits do not involve powerful emotional storms, break-ups, or falling in love (Määttä, 2011b; Watson, Bell, & Stelle, 2010). The relationship network that comprises children, grandchildren, siblings and other family members are considered natural and valuable for seniors. These people give content and support in seniors' life. However, people do not lose their ability to love romantically along aging (Lang & Fingerman, 2004). Although the physical appearance may change, emotional life stays strong and senses receptive. Feelings and social and mental abilities are not age-bound.

The basic need for love does not disappear along aging although these needs may be fulfilled differently than previously. Becoming accepted and the need to love and receive love are undeniable and natural regardless of age, health, or gender

(Reis & Rusbult, 2004). The feeling of being loved and the opportunity to show love are valuable both to the elderly and the young (Berscheid & Reis, 1998).

Previous studies have tried to analyze and illustrate typical relationship processes among the elderly (e.g., Antonucci, Akiyma, & Takahashi, 2004; Carstensen, Isaacowitz, & Charles, 1999; Field, 1981; Levitt, 2000). Likewise, the interest has been focused on the essence and meaning of friendship in later life (Adams & Blieszner, 1994; Gupta & Korte, 1994; Matt & Dean, 1993; Swain, 1991) as well as on relationships with grandchildren (Birren, 2001; Dolbin-MacNab, 2006; Hayslips & Goldberg-Glen, 2000; Shore & Hayslip, 1994; Somary & Stricker, 1998).

Furthermore, falling in love in later life has been studied (Määttä, 2011c); and long marriages have interested researchers already for decades (e.g., Parron & Troll, 1978; Levenson, Carstensen, & Gottman, 1993; Noël-Miller, 2011; Sporakowski & Axelson, 1984). Research has mostly leaned on self-assessment measures and/or included comparisons between various age cohorts.

The question of how the elderly talk about their long-lasting marriages has remained unexplored. The aim of this article is to describe what love really means and what it evokes in the thoughts, souls, and hearts of the Finnish elderly. The purpose of this research was to find answers how the spouses were able to keep up their marriages through their life spans for decades. What binds them, what kind of thoughts and experiences they have and what kind of practices they have created in their relationship to sustain it for decades? What factors explain long marriages in the light of couples' experiences?

The inspiration to write this article sprang from the thought we found in the participants' stories. Despite their high age, the elderly do not have to sit by and watch life—instead, they can fully participate. Many participants' belief to their abilities and desire to see more has been the reason to write and participate in this research. Furthermore, they have wanted to help and wished to set an example to others:

I wish a happy future for all young couples in their trying. (Mary, 91 years old)

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: HOW TO MAINTAIN AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP?

The greatest feeling, love, touches people with its whole scale—all the way from the extreme feelings of joy and raptness to the deepest forms of disappointment, anxiety, and self-destructive behavior. In all its glamour, love represents a fascinating, mysterious, and paradoxal world whose charm does not seem to dissolve in people's dreams, hopes, and behavior. Just like an addiction, love can also have an oppressive, clinging, obsessive, or repressive nature (Määttä, Uusiautti, & Määttä, 2012). At its greatest, love gives its target freedom and space to become more, to grow as a human and develop his or her talents into better and better.

John Lee's (1973) well-known typology of love compared the forms of falling in love with the colors of a rainbow. Lee distinguished six ways of falling

in love: the primary three forms are erotic, playful, and companionable love and the other, secondary forms are manic, considerate, and unselfish love. These types of love form numerous combinations that cannot be calculated; which is analogous with the number of colors. There are countless other classifications constructed from the phases or essence of love. Tzeng (1992) has created an octagon model, Shirley (1983) a vector model, Reiss (1960) a circle. Furthermore, there are, for example, a filter theory (Kerchhoff & Davis, 1962), ABCDE-model (Levinger, 1983), balance, exchange, and equilibrium theories (Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978).

Robert J. Sternberg (from Yale) has studied the essence of love for 25 years after having studied intellectuality. He has tried to explain why people find someone attractive but not others and why some intimate relationships endure even if facing hardships but others fail. The explanation has not been found in his theory about psychometric type of love created at the beginning of the 1980s, not in triangle theory (intimacy, passion, commitment) (Sternberg, 1986), nor in the illustration of love as a story ("Love Is A Story") (Sternberg, 1988). Sternberg distinguished 26 love stories which he categorized into fife different types of story. The final collection of stories or categorization is still missing.

All in all, there are studies, illustrations, and models about the factors that comprise love, how love changes, how an intimate relationship develops from falling in love into love, how an intimate relationship ends, and how to survive from a divorce. Yet, after presenting these attempts to define love, it is necessary to emphasize that love is a complex phenomenon (Bierhoff & Schmohr, 2003). Everyone loves in his or her own way regardless of age or gender.

At its best, love brings pleasure, happiness, and balance. Love is hoped to be the Holy Grail that removes displeasure and all the obstacles away from one's own happiness. The Holy Grail of love may, however, prove sweet poison. Love does not necessarily appear as wanted; not by trying nor demanding. Love cannot be advanced by intimidating and it always involves the risk of losing and becoming abandoned. Love does not guarantee requisite love, trust may lead to disappointment, and confiding can hurt. What special features love in later life has or how the elderly talk about love has not been studied much. Nor are there many comparisons about the differences in adolescent and senior love (Määttä, 2011c).

METHOD

This article is based on a research project in Finland which aimed at analyzing the content and meaning of love scheme in people's life span and identity formation. The research was divided into several separate parts and the purpose of this article is to dissect the experiences through seniors' descriptions (Määttä, 2005b).

Based on the results, the purpose is to support the positive dimension of old age: it can be the time of opportunities that involve enjoying life. Old age is an emotionally important phase in people's life span.

This article aims at describing, classifying, and analyzing how the elderly experience their long-lasting marriages. In this article, we focus on the following research questions:

1. How do the elderly describe their experiences of a long-lasting marriage?
2. How have they managed to maintain their marriage or what factors do they consider, according to their experiences and perceptions, important to make the marriage endure?
3. What does a decades-long marriage give and demand? What is the significance of a long marriage?

The Finnish elderly were asked to write their own love story. This wish was transmitted via Finnish periodicals. To help their writing about love experiences, participants were given an instructional leaflet with the heading "I would give my all to you; I would carry you on my arms". Some specifying questions were posed in order to guide their answers but however, it was emphasized that the most important thing was to describe their own love story through those experiences that they find important to themselves.

The data were purposefully collected in the form of informal letters because in that way people could reveal what they really think and feel. The assumption was that through the letters, the many forms and shades of seniors' love would be revealed in the best way. In addition, the purpose was to give the participants the chance to deliberate and outline their answers freely in peace. Therefore, these letters were written in people's everyday life without the researcher's intervention. The writers had defined what to include in their stories and what was left untold.

What the stories had in common was their vivid and rich narration about the experiences of love. In addition, the participants could self determine the answers to the questions about who senior citizens are or when senior age begins. The writers were aged between 50 and 91 and their average age was 70 years. Age could not be defined distinctively from all stories. However, those who were selected in this research had been married for around 50 years.

The data comprised altogether 117 letters or love stories. 72 of the writers were women and 38 of them were men. There were seven stories that were signed together. The lengths of the letters varied between a few sheets and over one hundred pages of detailed biographies. The expressions varied between powerfully catching flow in some narratives to touching, simplified phrasing. Most of the writers described the joy and happiness of their love but among the responses there were some rough stories of disappointments as well.

Although the writers could have sent the letters anonymously, many of them gave their contact information and expressed their willingness of giving supplementary information if necessary. In this article, all are treated anonymously. Instead, the writers are referred here with actual ages but fictitious names that reveal, however, their gender. The letters were read several times. Based on them, an overall description of the emotional experience of love was created. The content analysis

proceeded in steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawings (see Miles & Huberman, 1994). The aim was to create the categories that describe the seniors' experiences of love. In order to be able to show the contents in practice, plenty of quotations from the respondents' letters are added within the results section of this article. In addition, the quotations function as the proofs for reliability. At the end, conclusions are drawn, which means "beginning to decide what things mean, noting regularities, patterns, explanations, causal flows, and proportions" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 22).

The Reliability of the Research

Certainly the generalizability, validity, and reliability of the results can be criticized. How filtered the stories in these letters were? One can paper over the events, highlight one's own experiences, or protect the close ones. Memories or stories are always summaries of the courses of events reconstructed afterwards by the tellers. Nor is one able to write everything one has experienced. Memory is also selective: sometimes memories grow sweeter with time; some other time reality appears rougher than it actually was.

It is hard to estimate to what extent the picture in these stories is exaggerated or prettified. However, the letters give the idea that the writers wanted to give about of their life. Writing about life well or in a right way is as difficult as living such a life. What people define as their experience is especially important. It has its own significance as such; and indeed, the impression that a writer has got about the events directs in many ways his/her overall behavior in everyday life. Not only those days that are gone constitute life but also those that we remember. In that form, the letters describe every writer's way of assessing their own life, the chains of events, and emotions that mold it. At the end, it is not salient whether the writers describe the happenings comprehensively or truthfully but their interpretation of what actually happened.

The motives for writing the letters were diverse. Many wanted to share their experience of a successful relationship although they did not hide the problems either. Despite of problems, the attitude toward life was bright among many of the participants:

I thank my spouse for every day. (Robin, aged 82)

For some participants, writing functioned as a way to understand one's self.

By writing, I see myself with the new eyes and sometimes wonder the opening views. Maybe, this all will guide others as well. (Carol, aged 74)

Many had experienced the therapeutic nature of writing. Some found writing delightful; however sometimes, it opened someone's old wounds. Some were surprised of the strength of their own feelings and wanted to transmit their experiences to others.

WHAT DO 50-YEAR-LONG MARRIAGES HAVE IN COMMON?

What is the Secret of a Long-Lasting Marriage?

Seniors' long marriages appeared in all colors of a rainbow (see Lee, 1973). Their love stories do not tell only about the glory or easiness of a marriage. There was not a single couple who had not confronted disappointments, become annoyed or frustrated with their spouse or relationship. The longer had the path together been the more special features the relationships had. Every marriage is a one-of-a-kind, special world created by two extraordinary people (Määttä, 2011b; Uusiautti & Määttä, 2012).

Many writers had their own explanation about what the happiness of their marriage or their dissatisfaction is based on. Still, many of them noted that there is not any universal explanation or universally applicable advice to give to others:

> Water carried into a well does not stay in there—everyone has their own personality and heels. (Ann, married for 53 years)

In addition, marriage can be successful without any advice as 85-year-old Emily and Kyle (married for 65 years) point out:

> There is no such advice that would suit everyone and you can live peacefully without advice as well. We do intend to celebrate our iron wedding anniversary [75th wedding anniversary]. It's no use divorcing any longer, but how can you know for sure.

There are not any guarantees that a marriage will last nor is it obvious even after being married for 65 years. Perhaps, the secret of long marriage is that very thing that the spouses do not consider it obvious but appreciate the staidness of their marriage (Hess & Pullen, 1994).

Some participants highlighted that the long marriage may be just coincident or benign fate:

> I don't consider my successful marriage as my own credit. It suits some people but does not for increasing number of people in the whirlwind of this modern world. We have had a benign fate—so far. (Martin, married for 50 years)

Some participants emphasized the meaning of mature age and life experience in successful marriage. Expectations are not that exaggerated or unrealistic than when younger (see also Levenson, Carstenson, & Gottman, 1994):

> We haven't faced burnout in our marriage because we haven't placed any high expectations at our marriage. Only that we feel good being together. (Lily, married for 42 years)

On the other hand, someone named the fact that they had been married when young as a binding factor. The mutual affinity was strengthened by numerous shared experiences, overcome hardships, and colorful memories:

> Education of life together and knowing each other began when we were quite young. We have a saying that one can regret everything else but not the one that one was married with when young. (Peter, married for 53 years)

The elderly emphasized the meaning of goodwill, flexibility, and patience the most. One cannot have everything but still it is not necessary to give up the hopes and doings that matter to one self (Ferring & Filipp, 1995; Kunzmann, Todd, & Smith, 2000). Shared basic values and mutual harmony seem to lay a stable foundation for a marriage (Levenson, Carstensen, & Gottman, 1993). The balance is achievable if one ponders the realities of life soundly:

> We have had a harmonious life together maybe because we had both adopted a thought that "because you are not perfect either". (Tim, married for 69 years)

> You cannot give up too easily—in life in general nor when living together with someone. You also have to appreciate your family. We have found our family more important than gathering lucre. You can be satisfied with less in economic sense also today and you don't have demand everything ready at once. (Walter and Elizabeth, married for 52 years)

Where Did Love Begin?

Many couples who were about to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary fell in love during the World War II, in the 1940s. Going to the War and being in active duty reflected in couples' lives in a way that is hard to understand by an outsider. Fear of death followed them as a shadow hunger, coldness, and tiredness in tow. War time was hard also for women and children at home who waited for their loved ones to come home and lived in constant fear. Women were obliged to be in the field and logging sites and do other work as well that were traditionally regarded as men's job.

They had to go short on everyday comfort and everyone lacked food and daily goods. Life was controlled in many ways: control cards and state regulations restricted life. War time made people serious and they were not able to enjoy adolescent amusements and dating. Among other things, the state ordained a ban on dancing, "indecent merry-making", which was considered immoral when people were killed in the fronts at the same time. Also dance floors were forbidden (as in Finland, people used to dance outside on a simple dance floor accompanied by live musicians).

Many seniors' love story reveals that dating remained minimal during the war. Still, they remembered all the details concerning it clearly. Although they could not meet too often, letters were written and send with a will. Because of them, love was ignited and flowered.

> We met for the first time before the Winter War [Finno-Russo War]: he, a high school student, had to—as his own school was put in military use—sit at the co-educational school and at my desk. We started to write letters to each other

but we did not meet for several years. During the War, he served as a fighter pilot and I was a lotta [served in a Finnish voluntary auxiliary paramilitary organization for women]. We were married after I had graduated in 1948. (Gertrude, married for 55 years until widowed)

Many seniors emphasized the meaning of their partner's appearance when telling about how they had met and all the fun phases and even incidents that led to that. Some outer feature or clothing took their notice and increased their interest in the other already 60 years ago—as people do in today's love stories as well:

I saw Toby for the first time at the co-operative store and remember that he wore different kinds of clothes than other boys in the village did… At the study club (in the 1930s), he used to take me playing, changed coupons for porridge in order to be able to eat porridge on the same plate… He was good-looking, smiled attractively. (Sylvia, married for 60 years)

Some kind of special or magical destiny featured some seniors' first encounter. At once, they were certain that they belong to together. This kind of powerful emotional experience has stayed clearly in many seniors' minds for decades:

That was love in the first sight when we met. As if an electric current had gone through my hand. He was a handsome, curly-haired man who had just returned from the War. (Totty, married for 55 years)

He would even ski for 40 kilometers [25 miles] … to meet me (in the 1930s). (Esther, married for 60 years until widowed)

The weddings were often arranged in quite modest circumstances. Couples' memories and experiences even about the wedding night are not very thrilling – on the contrary. Their descriptions about the austerity of their wedding night merely raise a laugh. The contrast to the images about wedding night and the harsh reality is big. Yet, their memories about less romantic wedding keep fresh all through their lives.

We agreed that we would have our wedding on Easter in 1941 and at the fiancé's home as Toby's father had wanted… I wonder how many times the fiancé whispered "if only I could get next to you", "only 20 hours to go", "only ten hours and then we could leave". We spent the night in a big room with about 20 other people. What a wedding night that was. My husband whispered "now, you are mine". I said "shut up, people will hear." (Sylvia, married for 60 years)

The Foundation Pillars of a Marriage

The elderly described the development and phases of their relationship with many expressions. The stories include funny details but serious deliberation about the

justification for the solutions made. The long past made them occasionally wonder whether they could have done something better and whether the road they had chosen had been the right one. Their stories contain joy, disappointments, pondering, and gratitude—many kinds of feelings. Many of them stress that in older age, security and intimacy are salient in mature love (Takahaski, Tamura, & Tokora, 1997).

Life experiences bring spouses closer. If life has been stormy and colored by hardships, the spouse's company provides a safe stronghold. Evenings at home, shared berry-picking excursions, going to the summer house, and gardening refresh many seniors' life. Little trouble is forgotten and they do not have to grow old alone. (cf. Dykstra, 2009; Schulz & Heckhausen, 1996).

After the War time or other trials, good life is perceived concretely. It consists of peace, security, stable subsistence, and health. The ability to enjoy peaceful life together embodies the everyday life in many long marriages. (Baltes & Baltes, 1990; Peters et al., 2007.)

> Now, when we are already over 80 years old, you find the other more and more important and loved. The other can't go out of sight. During the days, we take care of household work and enjoy the peace of our home. We can be grateful for life. (Elaine and Reynold, married for 55 years)

On the other hand, there were couples who take back the lost years and gather new kinds of experiences. The spouses go to gym or travel together, participate in charity work or haste to an ICT course; and even children are amazed by their activeness:

> Less hurry would do it, say our children, but we are okay with this course. We spend the cold season in Las Palmas and other times in Finland. (Sally, married for 52 years)

Hard duties behind. Life during the War required plenty of work and people had duties. Therefore, couples had to adjust love and marriage within the terms of the duties of that time. As a counterbalance to hard life and back-breaking work, long marriage is seen as enriching both physically and mentally, as a sort of platform or provider of new views after the stormy hardships of life.

> War-time experiences and the uncertainty of life affected us at the beginning of our marriage. Everything that we planned started with 'if'. That was also something new that first you had to be scared to death for four years and then start to build on torn land and build up your own and your young wife's dreams into such a form that you can live. (Levi, married for 59 years)

However, after the scarcity and insecurity during the War, mourning did not end for everyone. Still, the difficulties experienced together may have bonded the spouses and the love and support received for each other can turn into a foundation pillar of marriage. Stories about losing one's child are still harrowing.

> Life hasn't treated us gently with kid gloves. (Kirsten, married for 46 years until widowed)

Also, illnesses have tested many senior couples' relationship. Surviving from them proves their bond and power of love.

> Being ill, if any, puts both through the wringer. Then, it is about "for worse". I can gratefully say that my husband was the real support and safety for me when I was sick. At that time, if ever, you have to notice the solid base on which our life together has grounded through years. (Kirsten, married for 46 years until widowed)

Many seniors' marriages started in economically modest circumstances. Cherishing their own privacy and mutual relationship was almost impossible because of the confined living conditions. Taking care of relatives featured their everyday life as well. Being satisfied for less was typical of many couples' life. Instead, they appreciated the fact that they could live together after being separated during the war time.

> We didn't have high demands at that time. I decided when being homeless that even if my home was three-cornered, I wouldn't complaint about my apartment. The most important thing is that we could be together. That promise I have kept. (Sylvia, married for 60 years)

Overcoming the hardships together. After having survived from the war time or the pitfalls of otherwise hard life, the confidence in overcoming other difficulties becomes stronger. Along their aging, their experiences form the wisdom of life (Steverink & Lindenberg, 2006).

Marital duties and responsibility is considered as the spice of life and anchor. Having become hardened by experienced hardships, couples were able to proportion trouble. Many love stories revealed their desire and ability to solve also marital problems by talking.

> Our joint travel began with the wedding ceremony from which we returned home on a horse ride night sky above us. The shares that were distributed in exchange for food cards after the war were small and you had to be able to cook with less. We had short of everything else as well; clothes, shoes, etc. Love was the source for daily life. We overcame everything by talking together. (Tottie, married for 55 years)

Shared hobbies. Spouses' common hobbies and shared interests are also foundation pillars of a long marriage. With them, their life stays rich and active after children have grown up and they have more time to spend together (Ade-Ridder, 1985).

> After recovering from illnesses, we have participated in voluntary work actively, we write, paint… by encouraging each other. (Tottie, married for 55 years)

> We go dancing at least twice a week. We haven't missed a single day-time dances in fife years. (Karen and Paul, married for 50 years)

Many of the participants had understood that besides time together, it is necessary to have one's own time:

> I guess it's for good that we separate from each other at least when busying ourselves with hobbies; otherwise we would be together all the time. (Irwin, married for 43 years)

Having one's own space may, however, take a long time and spouses' are not always even aware of the need for separateness.

Shared activities form a fund of experiences which is like an emotional bank account. Along long life, seniors have gathered plenty of savings. The more positive years people have spent together, the richer and more valuable become the world built together. It also functions as a safe for a rainy day. It is easier to confront trouble if the couple has built strong confidence that difficulties can be solved (Hatch, & Bulcroft, 2004). The positive fund of experiences protects the marriage against problems and provides strength for finding favorable solutions (Hendrick & Hendrick, 2009; Maisel & Gable, 2009).

Caring. The core of all love is caring. Regardless of age, people find the feeling of getting support, comfort, and security important. Caring is manifested as the way spouses notice each other (Kulik, 2002). At their best, they care about how the other one is doing. Caring is shown in empathetic acts both in the little moments in everyday life and in the highlights.

> Love is like a long-distance run: not any spurt for the finishing line but long home straight. Together it is easier to bear the loads: together we are strong. (Peter, married for 53 years)

> The older you grow, the more necessary the spouses find each other. Two people cope better at home as well by helping each other. (Letitia, married for 50 years)

Seniors' love stories show the power of love as the answer to the basic question: what people are ready to do in the name of love? It seems that some couples' actions of love and caring do not have any upper limit.

Helping and supporting the spouse strictly in the dark turning points of life proves how untamed and heroic love can be.

> During the last few years of our marriage, my spouse's disease would just progress. A couple of times she told me: Wouldn't it be better that I died; it would be easier for you too. I assured her that I can take care of her just fine and told that because we had been together for such a long time, I hoped that we could still carry on our life together for a long time. I tried to take care

of my own shape. Indeed, I was in a fairly good shape and did not get ill much. Emilie did say to me: "How can you be so healthy and I'm like this?" I answered that I have to be so that I can take care of you. (Kyle, married for 57 years until widowed)

Although a spouse's conditions require plenty of work, 24/7 caring, and limits one's life strictly, the elderly told that they were glad to take care of their partners. With this act for love, people can strengthen their belief that they have lived in the right way and borne their responsibility.

Sense of humor. The ability to laugh, rejoice, and joke is vital for everyone. Playfulness and sense of humor protect against many harms. Some seniors said that they have their own inside thing because of which others do not always understand them. Sense of humor also helps tolerating or accepting unpleasant things such as the other's minor but irritating features or obstacles that hinder one's own activities.

Jovial character has certainly made our relationship easier. (Caroline, 62 years old, married for 40 years)

Shared basic values. In a long marriage, spouses resemble each other in many ways: they share similar values and attitudes as well as social background, education, and personal characteristics (e.g. Bruze, 2011). Mutual harmony and like-mindedness also increase the sense of belonging together.

Children and grandchildren bind many spouses. They have borne their responsibility for children and wanted to provide their children with proper living conditions (Reitzes & Mutran, 2004; Thiele & Whelan, 2008). They told about the consistency and mutually agreed rules in rearing:

In rearing, we have tried to stick to the forbiddance so that children did not have to ask the same thing from the other parent. Our relationship with children has remained good. Otherwise, it has been important in our life that we have tried to cherish our promises, including the wedding vow. (Levi, married for 59 years)

All the good given to children becomes rewarded in later life. Shared rearing responsibility and appreciating children bring joy even when old. Many couples found it binding that they could be proud of their children's lives and enjoy the care their children aim at them as well. Good relationships with children are important especially in the late phase of life span.

Grandchildren have a special place in seniors' hearts. Children and grandchildren bring content in life and create the sense of security as well—although Grandpa-Martin (married for 50 years) stated that "when you have many loved ones, you are more vulnerable too".

Naturally, there are those grandparents who do not like to meet their children and grandchildren actively. They prefer retiring or use their time with other interesting activities.

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Dissimilarity makes stronger and tests. Despite their similarity, many seniors described their dissimilarities as well. Mutual dissimilarity complements and brings richness to a relationship, but tensions as well (e.g. Lutz-Zois et al., 2006). Many participants told that they had learned to tolerate the spouse's dissimilarity although the tolerance had been tested every now and then. People would like to mold their spouse to fulfill their preferences, hopes, and needs (Uusiautti & Määttä, 2012).

Long life together includes many various phases that have shaken the relationship. Couples have gone through changes in life, related to having children and withdrawing from home, busy working life, retiring, illnesses, and financial pressures. Along with these changes, one's own changing and maturing may have been confusing—not to mention the insecurity caused by the spouse's changing. Still despite their dissimilarity or maybe because of it, they have been able to live together. Some of them have turned their dissimilarity into a resource.

> Convex and concave, was a proverb in our wedding present. I think it resembles the higher education of life: tolerating the other one's dissimilarity. (Gertrude 82 years old, married for 55 years until widowed)

Still after decades of being married, the spouse's characteristics and traits may seem like a mystery. According to the seniors, the assumption that one knows the other inside out is an illusion.

> We are the opposites. Paul is flexible but a solid road that goes by the corn field. I am like air, moody. He is charming, I am temperamental. (Pearl, married for 48 years)

Respecting the spouse. Seniors told about all that their spouses had accomplished, achieved, and handled during their life together in a respectful manner. Many of them still seemed amazed of the spouse's diligence and effectiveness.

> Afterwards, I can only marvel how she managed to do and handle everything. (Peter, married for 53 years)

> I marvel at her industriousness; she always busies with something. (Esmond, married for 54 years)

In a stable, long-lasting marriage, respect is also shown by letting the other be oneself. Spouses accept each other with their own characteristics and peculiarities. A satisfying intimate relationship provides space to act and think in one's own way (Uusiautti & Määttä, 2012). Then, one can seize new challenges and chances and fulfill one's dreams even in later life. A marriage where spouses cherish their mutual appreciation supports their growth and development regardless of age.

> And what has this all demanded? First of all, noticing and respecting the other, "appreciate the other, too". (Rachel, married for 48 years)

The participants had used the words of appreciation and admiration abundantly. However, there were love stories where people blame themselves for not giving enough credit to the other. Someone even mentioned that she had not thanked much but "never condemned him either" (Irene, married for 52 years until widowed).

The words of appreciation, respect, and thanking enhance self-esteem and coping. They are pleasing and inspiring. On the other hand, hardly anyone yearns for great superlative and one can cope without thanking if the relationship does not involve negative the stings of quashing, disregards, and understatement. They erode the relationship and no one is immune to naughtiness.

Accepting and appreciating aging. Along aging, people's outer presence changes and the elderly do not match with the beauty ideals that are admired in the contemporary society. Although, on one hand, people respect age and experience, aging is also considered burden. However, changes in body do not take the wind out of the sails of those seniors who have the experience of being appreciated and accepted as they are by their spouses:

> It is not any cliché that it feels good to grow old together. Although others would run away from our graying hair and increasing wrinkles, we are proud of them. This is how it should be and we have the same rhythm. (Heather, married for 48 years)

Many seniors find it pleasing that they can share their experience of aging with all its joys and sorrows with their partners (de Jong Gierveld et al., 2009). It is valuable to know that the spouse can appreciate aging as well and the life experience gathered. And spouses can joke about the changes that take place along aging:

> Her face and hair get new slight changes just before I have gotten bored of the previous ones. (Levi, married for 59 years)

Sexuality. Sex and eroticism as a part of seniors' love has conflicting associations. On the one hand, the theme has been unspoken and avoided (e.g. Loe, 2009). It has involved attitudes and prejudices about seniors' rights and possibilities. Sex has not been considered necessary or even possible for the elderly. On the other hand, louder addresses for senior sex have been given space recently (e.g. Weston, 2009). However, the elderly in this research pointed out that if sexuality is over-emphasized or if love is seen only as vivid sex life, the picture of love becomes narrower and the pressures on sexual life can become stressful. There is not just one way of being happy; every senior knows that. Some seniors' life experiences support their sexuality:

> Sex is better than ever. (Irwin, married for 43 years)

> Along with time, inhibitions have disappeared and skills developed. (Paula, married for 42 years)

Furthermore, many seniors emphasized the multiformity of the manifestation of their sexuality. They did not want to define sexuality only as sexual activity but based on becoming loved, admired, and appreciated and giving love as well. Thus, sexuality means joy, pleasure, voluptuousness, intimacy, and fascination—an intimate bond that makes two persons a couple in a special way that connects only them.

Eroticism may appear as a warm smile and look, tender hug, storing the other's cheek or head, warm hand shake, and becoming accepted as is—intimacy and presence. The forms of sexuality vary and change; but in some form sexuality is present in a happy couple's life all the time.

> Now, the fire of our love is in flames sometimes but mostly it smolders—yet burns all the time. (Matt, 74 years old, married for 52 years)

Some seniors' sex life is, however, burdened with diverging or differentiating expectations (see also Murstein & Tuerkheimer, 1998). Someone's sexual activity stays spry while some other may lose some or all of his or her sexual drive. Many elderly have to contemplate the questions about sexuality alone because talking about these issues has not been considered appropriate.

Many tricks for solving conflicts. Many kinds of trouble, hardships, and conflicts have occurred during seniors' long marriages. Some of them are acute and bound to a certain moment and situation, minor problems, while others, chronic ones, have been gnawing at the relationship for a long time. Ultimately, it is not about the number of problems but the way spouses tend to solve them (Fincham, Paleari, & Regalia, 2002)—and the seniors has more than one string to their bow.

Some seniors' solution was not let incubate things but to solve and settle the differences at once. They did not consider it worthwhile losing their sleep or refusing to speak. Along with time, small unsolved issues may become a heavy burden.

> Earlier, we did not sweep our disagreements under the carpet but they were thrashed out immediately. (Ann, married for 53 years until widowed)

On the other hand, patience, self-control, and ability to overlook the other's annoying traits may become a shortcut to happiness.

> If we argued, Palmer would came to me and say that we don't have time to argue because life is short. If one has some flaws, so does the other as well; there isn't such a thing than perfect human-being. (Esther married for 60 years until widowed)

Appreciating words and actions protect marriage. Then, life together leans on a positive basis and spouses do not have to avoid problems but have the courage to address them understanding that disagreements are a natural part of a long-term relationship.

Furthermore, one has to accept the fact that one cannot always be right or win debates. And even if one was right, it is good to eat humble pie and give up sometimes.

> When we have arguments, you have to look at the mirror. Nor is it necessary to nag about the other's weaknesses. You don't lose anything if you admit your own mistakes. It is just strength. (Letitia, married for 50 years)

Every relationship requires compromising and flexibility but it is not necessary to compromise everything. Seniors had been able to make clear what is bargainable and what is not.

> Hurting the other does not turn her into better. (Matt, married for 52 years)

Rubbing one's nose in old arguments and insults burdens the relationship. A good principle seems to be the ambition to forget the past and look at the future. Forgetting about becoming hurt is not, however, easy; nor is forgiving.

> We don't badger each other with "what did I say" sophistries or blackmail by saying for "the last time". (Graham, married for 55 years)

Self-respect. People's development does not end along aging but proceeds at new development phases. Erik Erikson emphasized in this famous theory (1994), that at the last phase of life people have to find harmony with their life, themselves, and other people who have belonged in their life. At the latest in senior age, people have to accept not only themselves but also people who matter to themselves as they are—spouses, children, and parents.

> The greatest surprise of life is to get to know yourself. How do you confront joys and sorrows, worries and waivers? Where do you find strength? Can you even learn to know yourself? Or are you constantly in the state of development and never complete? (Gertrude, married for 55 years)

Growing old may also mean finding oneself and understanding oneself in a new way (Lang & Carstensen, 2002). Then, people are bolder to take the space they need and will not knuckle under demands that downplay their self-respect:

> When I look back at my life, I am satisfied. Eventually, I have been me completely. I haven't tried to underline myself by subjugating others but haven't denied my value either. Maybe, I live the best time of my life right now. There is still something unknown coming ahead and my own maturity shows me the way. (Caroline, married for 42 years)

CONCLUSIONS

What are the typical traits of seniors' long marriages? Based on the results, it is possible to create a model of a long-lasting intimate relationship. It consists of three core features:

1. Seniors' lasting love involves several important psychological, physical, and social meanings. At its most genuine, mature love is manifested by active acts; in other words, giving, caring, the sense of responsibility, listening, and gratitude.

Two equals to more, even in old age. The seniors' stories show how significant love and intimacy are for their self-esteem. The fact that one is accepted and loved without conditions as oneself is of unquestionable value especially along age (see Prieto-Flores et al., 2011). This is how love reflects even in the well-being and quality of life of the elderly. Becoming accepted and loved as is, without any conditions, is invaluable especially in old age (Gordon & Chen, 2010). Thus, the model of good life is not standardized into one mold and the well-being of the most fragile individuals is guaranteed as well.

2. The lasting love of the elderly varies by spouses and couples and is a personal and comprehensive experience. It consists of those emotions and actions that people regard as manifestations of love. Different people also have various interpretations of love. Although it is not possible to distinguish any special rules of knowledge, emotions, or behavior that would be absolute or common to all intimate relationships among the elderly, some features and experiences are more common than others.

In happy love stories, seniors treat their spouses with care, tenderness, encouragement, and support. In mature love, spouses have many irreplaceable roles in cherishing good life. Their well-being is strengthened when they share the following three roles of love mutually:

a. A reliable and stable supporter, bedrock

Spouses can trust in each other's promises about staying together. They accept each other as they are and stand by each other's sides for better and for worse. What life brings cannot be predicted but the certainty that the other supports like bedrock in everyday life has become more and more important along aging. Whatever they will face, they can enter the future together with confident.

b. A self-esteem raiser

Spouses make each other think that they are good as themselves. They appreciate each other and give space and opportunities to become into something they want to. In addition, mutual criticism is supportive.

c. A nurturer

Spouses help each other but supporting each other's dreams, comforting, and encouraging. When one is able to share one's worries and lighten the burden in one's heart with someone who cares, helps, empathizes, and gives good advice, one gets strength against the hardships of life. Thus, love reflects in seniors' well-being and quality of life.

3. The development and nature of seniors' long-lasting intimate relationship is a relational phenomenon. It is defined in each situation through partners' unique characteristics at that moment. The opinions on love may change even among the elderly along age and forthcoming situations in life.

DISCUSSION

Ulrich Beck and Elissabeth Beck-Gernsheim (1995) talk about the chaos of love that is born of the conflict of interests between love, family, and an individual who

wants to fulfill his or her self-project and personal freedom. Both men and women seek compulsively for the right and satisfying way of living: they want much of their life, search love and the right partner, try dating, living together and marriages and pursue combining family and career, love and marriage, new kind of motherhood and fatherhood, friendship and companionship. Nor does this road have an end. The scope for action of a family that is build according to traditional gender roles is endangered. Its demands conflict with those expectations that people set for their personal lives.

It is not easy to cultivate long-term relationships. Traditions that previously controlled our life are crumbling and that alone introduces unexpected surprises (Giddens, 1992). The future is not certain; nor does it appear controllable. Working life and the today's turbulence of change have become so demanding that as a counterbalance to them, high expectations are placed on human relationships. Human relationships are hoped to represent the recreation area of life.

Along with aging, opinions on the value of love become deeper. Seniors' way of expressing themselves reaches sometimes such metaphors by their emotional power and articulation that only a few less experienced people can. Furthermore, the definition of love appears wide and comprehensive in seniors' stories. Love may also be friendship and it is important to cherish other forms of love besides romantic love.

> Our love became a diamond that just became ennobled until the end of our life. (Esther, married for 60 years until widowed)

In addition, spouses are each other's sympathizers, listeners, and helpers. They can enjoy and be happy about each other's presence:

> Knowing that sand flows in the hourglass gives the depth for the emotions as well as gratitude that one has been able to experience love as life-maintaining force. (Linda, aged 82)

The experience of life, freedom, and wisdom are valuable but they will not help much if people do not have goals and plans. Health is crucial for the quality of life but even more significant source of zest for life for many seniors is the knowledge that they are needed and they have a mission. According to the results, love can become an important power of life for the elderly (see also Freund & Riediger, 2003). Along with giving and receiving love, people feel themselves important and useful. Whether love is directed in a life companion, children, grandchildren, fellow humans, or various forms of working and doing, arts, ideas, or solving the problems of existence, it is crucial that people preserve sufficiently powerful passions and dreams, maybe even illusions that inspire and make them feel alive. Regardless of age, people's love can act as an impetus for goals that give meaning to life (Schnitker, 2007).

Intimate relationships, family, and love predict successful aging (Stock, Okun, & Benin, 1986). Close and happy human relationships make a good protection against stress and an excellent health insurance.

> The friends are the torches by the path of life; they cannot make your way shorter but they will make it brighter. (Mary, aged 80, found a new friend after widowed from a 52-year-long marriage)

Despite their high age, the elderly do not have to sit by or aside and watch their life—they can fully participate (Angner et al., 2009). The experiences of life only strengthen the grasp on life in a way that a Chinese proverb emphasizes beautifully by stating that "the flower of experiences carry the fruit of wisdom".

Happy marriages, reciprocal and positive family relationships and good friends seem to work are an efficient protection against stress. "Getting worries out of one's chest is good for health", says a Finnish proverb. In addition, Cicero has stated how friendship brightens the aura of success and lightens the burden of setbacks.

Eventually, one's own life has value as long as one appreciates others' life. Love and attachment to others and caring are reasons to commit to life. The experience of love and sharing love keep up belief in life and confirm the feeling of the meaningfulness of life—even when growing old.

CHAPTER 2

LOVE AND EDUCATION

PARENTAL LOVE—IRREPLACEABLE FOR CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

Child rearing has become more and more challenging during the past few decades and increasingly greater expectations are leveled at educators and parents. There has been a dramatic decrease in the traditional families while the proportion of single-parent families has increased (e.g. Sheridan & Burt, 2009). As the worldwide statistic show, number of working mothers of young children has risen over the past few decades, so has the use of child care (Ebbeck & Hoi Yin, 2009).

Not only the basic structure but also child care has changed dramatically. In developed countries such as Finland (the authors' home country), both parents of the vast majority of families with children under school age are in full-time employment. Most mothers of small children also work full-time. Under these circumstances, a reliable, safe and reasonably priced day-care system is of vital importance. (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2006.) Finland uses the Nordic Welfare state principles and methods which are based on the state's responsibility for its citizens. Thus, welfare services, such as Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC), are arranged and funded by central and local government. All children below school age are entitled to receive municipal day-care. (Heinämäki, 2008.) The above-mentioned services are important as female labor force participation in Finland is 72% of women (15–64 years), 18.2% of whom are in part-time employment. Furthermore, labor force participation rate of women with a child(ren) under 6 years was 49.6%, of whom 8% work part-time. (OECD, 2006.)

Along with the changes in working life, the role of day-care centers and schools in rearing has strengthened. The rearing task has become professionalized (Bimbi, 1992) and from the parents' point of view, parenthood can be considered shared with the public rearing institution (Björnberg, 1992).

Professionals define what is good child rearing and what kind of rearing should be implemented inside citizens' homes. Yet, parents have the main responsibility for rearing their children—even though today's common discourse reveal how parents seem to carry unreasonable load of guilt and consider themselves insufficient in their rearing and parenting task. In Finland, work was valued as the most important thing in life—over family life and free time— in the 1970s. After the middle of the 1980s, the appreciations have started to change considerably in the opposite direction (Maljojoki, 1989). The value of upbringing is unquestionable; actually, it seems that the modern children would need parental love and the safety provided at home maybe more than ever before. Still, it is worth remembering that as mothers work increasingly outside home (Aryee, Shirinivas, & Hoon Tan, 2005), men have started to use more and more time with home craft and childcare during the past decades (Barnett, 2004). These decisions concerning work-family balance are not just about making compromises (e.g. Uusiautti & Määttä, 2010) but, for example, positive

paternal involvement influences positively the multiple domains of children's lives from birth through adolescence (Hawkins, Brown, Osterle, Arthus, Abbot, & Catalano, 2008). All in all, children's well-being and health are developed within the context of the family (Ambert, 1994; Arendell, 1997; Sheridan & Burt, 2009).

The social nets around families have become scarcer. For example, migration from countryside to cities is one reason for the disappearance of support nets. Previously, grandparents and relatives gave the advice and instructions needed, and participated in rearing jointly and severally. Today, professional educators have replaced them. (Cutting, 1998.) Although professional educators do offer their support for parents, the transition of the responsibility of rearing partly outside home increases parents' insecurity every now and then: according to Bimbi (1992), parents seemingly consider themselves incompetent compared with professional educators.

According to Huttunen's (1984) perception, parents have knowledge about rearing but when applying it they experience insecurity and need support, backing up and understanding in their parenthood. Furthermore, Puroila (1996) points out that parents get plenty of information about their children and the factors related to their development. This information increases parents' awareness of their own rights. On the other hand, the received information may be inconsistent and cause uncertainty among parents. Dencik (1989) referred to doubletendency which is considered typical of modern parenthood. On the one hand, it means a strong engagement to children and on the other hand giving up the rearing task. Parents are more sensitive than before and more willing to realize children's needs. However, parents are uncertain of how they should fulfill their rearing task.

In the society of rapid change, the future of the next generation is likely to differ from the present. Thus, it may not be appropriate to demand a child to follow behavior models that lose their significance in future. Parents have to give up the rearing model they have gotten from their own parents and solve the challenges of rearing by themselves. (Björnberg, 1992.) The fast speed of change causes uncertainty about the norms and what kind of rearing is the best for children (Lahikainen & Strandell, 1987).

Nowadays, the science of education is studied more than ever and parents are increasingly aware of the significance of their rearing task. Still, they are more and more in doubt about it as the behavioral problems of the young increases. (Määttä, 2007.) Continuously increasing knowledge about the needs of child development and the importance of right rearing methods means simultaneously an increase in the parents' responsibility and tasks (Beck-Gernheim, 1992).

Related issues, such as economic aspects, time-management, the division of domestic labor, the professionalization of upbringing, have been discussed to a great extent (e.g. Clark, 2000; Frisco & Williams, 2003; Frone, 2003). Yet, the fundamental question—namely the one concerning parental love and the meaning of positive mental growing environment—is worth contemplating as well.

In this article, we concentrate on analy zing the core of good parenthood. What is the goal of upbringing and parents' task when the responsibility of rearing is shared

with many educational institutions and professionals? Parenthood is not a profession but based on parental love. What does parental love mean fundamentally? At their best, upbringing and parental love offer a positive environment that enhances children's strengths. According to Sheridan and Burt (2009), understanding the qualities of families and their environments that might explain why some children and families fare better than others is important. We will study the concept and purpose of parental love.

Our survey is based on the existing literature and the most recent studies as well as our extensive research on love and its various forms (Määttä, 2007; 2010; 2011bcd; Määttä & Uusiautti, 2011b; Määttä, Uusiautti, & Määttä, 2012; Uusiautti & Määttä, 2012, 2011a). As researchers, our own idea of human being is based on positive psychology: with a positive approach we put the focus on how to support the development of human strengths in early childhood. We also try to strengthen the role of parenthood and its primary importance for a growing human being. Parenthood cannot disappear from the core of children's life.

THE PURPOSE OF PARENTAL LOVE: HOW SHOULD BE CHILDREN RAISED?

We start by dissecting what h uman characteristics are the most important for children's well-being and favorable development. Healthy selfconfidence and self-esteem, balanced emotional life, judgment and responsibility, the ability to control one's own behavior, empathy as well as the ability to respect and appreciate other people could represent such features (Määttä, 2007). Therefore, those exact features could be the emphases of rearing.

According to broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2004), the positive emotions, such as joy, interest, contentment, and love, broadens an individual's thought-action repertoire: joy sparks the urge to play, interest sparks the urge to explore, contentment sparks the urge to savor and integrate, and love sparks a recurring cycle of each these urges within safe, close relationships. Positive emotions solve problems concerning personal growth and development.

Berscheid (2006) claims that understanding human behavior has suffered because of forgetting the fact that people live in a net of human relationships for their entire life and that most of the behavior takes place in the context of human relationships. When studying successful behavior, it is important to examine how the environmental factors and the people's mutual relationships affect the development of self-concept (Magnusson & Mahoney, 2006; Caprara & Cervone, 2006). Environmental factors also shape the repertoire of savoring responses that children acquire over time, through family dynamics, social and peer relations, and cultural influences (Bryant, Chadwick, & Kluwe, 2011).

Therefore, it seems that these abilities develop in interaction with other people. Children's bases and well-being thus are the responsibility of those people who live with and close to children, such as parents, other immediate caregivers, teachers, and friends (Ambert, 1994; Arendell, 1997). Children's development is greatly affected

by their growing surroundings (juvenile culture, media, as well as the societal values and ideals) as it has been noted that childhood may be the optimal time to promote healthy attitudes, behavior, adjustment, and prevention of problems by, for example, recognizing the children's strengths and building on those strengths (Brown Kirschman, Johnson, Bender, & Roberts, 2009).

Next, we will discuss two valuable and demanding contents of rearing that can be seen lying behind the previously mentioned features that enhance children's well-being and favorable development: setting up safe boundaries and constructing good self-esteem. Children need the experiences of success, appreciation and encouragement, but equally important is that they have distinct and safe limits. (e.g. Rantala & Määttä, 2011.)

THE METHODS OF PARENTAL LOVE: ENCOURAGEMENT AND LIMITATIONS

Family boundaries mean that the family provides consistent supervision for the child and maintains reasonable guidelines for behavior that the child can understand and achieve (see Search Institute, 2010). Beneficial development is secured by establishing boundaries that are preserved with love instead of discipline, ignorance, underestimation, mocking, or malignancy. What the rules are is entirely up to parents and other adults in the household; and furthermore, parents also have to make rules how themselves will behave—consistency is needed in maintenance of boundaries (Greenberg, 2003).

Caring and loving parents may find placing the protecting limits as well as finding the strengths to adhere to them is difficult. Nor is it pleasing to let a child down by telling that he or she will not get what he or she wants. If children could set the limits for themselves, rearing would be easy but growth is not that simple. Children ask and they ask by their actions. Adults' task is to give answers in order to guide and protect children. (e.g. Lawrence, 2001.)

When defining safety limits, parents have to have the courage to face children's anger which is a normal reaction. Children are displeased if not allowed to go as they will and carry out their wildest plans. However, this anger does not make it justified for parents to give up their responsibility for guiding the maturing people or mislead themselves into believing that it is right to give up caring. Children need protecting limits and caring adults who to defy and rebel against and who they can love regardless of setbacks because setting the limits creates the feeling of security and caring.

THE DEPTH AND STABILITY OF PARENTAL LOVE: CHILDREN NEED TO FEEL LOVED AND CARED EVEN WHEN BEHAVING INAPPROPRIATELY

At home, children have to find out that they are loved and valuable even when their actions are harmful or cause disappointments and shame for their parents because that is the only way of strengthening their feeling of being appreciated and wanted as

well as their feeling of security. They can count on parents to be there no matter what happened. (Määttä, 2007.) Still, children's inappropriate behavior cannot be accepted, it has to be intervened and the right direction has to be shown (e.g. Hoffman & Saltzen, 1967). However, since children are unready, still maturing human beings, they have to be able to trust that parents will not abandon them. Children are allowed to express their bad feelings and still parents' love holds on: children need love especially when they do not seem to deserve it. (e.g. Katz & Tello, 2003.)

Even the disappointments are important part of developing self-esteem and mental health (e.g. Desjardins, Zelenti, & Coplan, 2008). At home, children can learn in a safe environment those means which help to handle disappointments and failures. When necessary, parents can protect their children from the feelings of anxiety and guilt.

The magic word for building good self-esteem is appreciating a child. Parents' appreciative words are immemorial for many children's self-esteem: "Well done, I'm happy about you," "Thank you, you know how to do it," "It's magnificent how well you can do it." These acknowledging words should not be held back or regulated, quite the opposite: parents should look for new chances to give appreciation and positive feedback all the time. Recognition and thanks do not lose their power even when used abundantly. (see Aunola, Stattin, & Nurmi, 2000.)

Many parents would see their child as the best and most successful one bringing success and praise. However, this kind of rearing can turn against it: instead of merciless demands for performance and success, parents should emphasize humanity and goodwill in their rearing. "The best is the enemy of good" – the aspiration toward perfection prevents from noticing good results and tolerating the vices. Ultimately, the only right the parent has to the child is the right to love, the only task is to secure the provisions for free humanity, and the only glory is the children's love. (e.g. Aunola & Nurmi, 2005.)

The starting point and goal for rearing and parental love has to be growing child's own special value. Every human being has a special value that must not be sacrificed in the name of societal effectiveness or money. Every child is important, valuable, and unique regardless of how well he or she performs at school or what kind of effort he or she is likely to do for the society. A child's value cannot be deduced from his or her personal features.

Parental love gives more comprehensive support for children that the modern school or even day-care can offer (Zakeri, Jowkar, & Razmjoee, 2010). Educational work carried out at day-care and school has to be appreciated also by providing sufficient extrinsic circumstances to carry it out. Every child has their own strengths and parents can provide children with opportunities to succeed, thank them even for the smallest step forwards, and enhance the conception of "I am able, I can, I will survive." (Harralson & Lawler, 1992.)

Humanity is manifested in rearing by respecting each and every child. Children should be appreciated so that they will be understood and approved even when weak, maladjusted, or difficult—also when they do not meet those idealistic hopes

and expectations that parents, day-care, and school have set although with good intentions. There are fundamental questions also because the modern society keeps up the "I'll manage alone" – ideology, in other words, admires people who do not need others and cope by themselves. However, modern, almost narcissistic, society and people in it are extremely vulnerable. We do not seem to tolerate or handle failures and difficulties; admitting weaknesses and vulnerability are considered as giving up (Gauvain & Huard, 1999).

Children have to perceive that they are loved, cared, and accepted as they are—not just when they meet the expectations. Only then, children can mature and develop—become free and start thinking how they would like to change themselves to the directions that are possible for them.

PARENTS' VERSATILE ROLES

The multidimensional contents of parental love can be viewed also by all the various roles and tasks that parenthood involves. For example, Hoikkala (1993) divides parenthood into three categories permissive, responsible, and strong parenthood. Permissive parenthood emphasizes a child's individuality and its opposite is a strict, dominating, and punishing parenthood. Responsible parenthood considers parenthood obligation to create good growing environment for a child. The aim of this kind of parenthood is to bring up children healthy and responsible citizens who take care of themselves.

How to secure children's favorable growth (Wolfrad, Hempel, & Miles, 2003)? The roles of parenthood, according to Helminen-Iso-Heiniemi (1999) are The Teacher of Life, The Expert in Human Relationships, Love Giver, Limit Setter, Caregiver (see also Hubbs-Tait, 2008; Nijhof & Engels, 2007; Veríssimo et al., 2011). Parents and other adults model self-control, social skills, engagement in learning, and healthy lifestyles (see Search Institute, 2010).

On the other hand, children are our mirrors. Outstanding facilities or even the most advanced technology does not guarantee positive development nor can one raise a child like listed company according to the indexes or expectations of market economy. Every child develops at his or her own pace supported and encouraged by people he or she lives with. Nothing can replace human interaction. Lawrence notes that "love which only can exist in relationships is a social experience, does organize social experience, outstanding among these being commitments – commitments that bind a person to a course of action and connection (Lawrence, 2001, p. 61)."

Aspinwall and Staudinger (2006) point out that many of the human strengths are based on the person's relationships with others, in other words, they are relational or collective by nature: for example, possibility to understand and cope with various problematic life situations is better if one has a chance to discuss the problem at hand with a close friend, swap opinions, and reflect the issues from the new perspectives.

DISCUSSION: THERE ARE NO PERFECT PARENTS – OR CHILDREN

Parents who want to raise children well do not have to be perfect people and they cannot expect children to be or become perfect either. Hardly anyone can be flawless – on the contrary: pursuing perfection prevents from noticing all the good results. Alice Miller (1984) says: "Do not hope that a child would turn into something specific, just that he or she would develop. Enjoy the child and his or her developmental phases as he or she is. Enjoy your life together instead of being constantly worried about what your children will become or not in the future." This is how a healthy selfimage is created as well as self-confidence to confront difficulties and problems in life. Successful rearing does not aim at clearing the hardships and obstacles but helping children to learn to confront, tolerate, and conquering the inevitable difficulties (Mcree & Halpern, 2010). Parents, caregivers, and teachers encourage and have to support the child in behaving appropriately, undertakin challenging tasks, and performing activities to the best of her or his abilities (see also Search Institute, 2010).

When parents have faith in children's talents, it is easier for them to assure children of it as well. Certainly, just belief and trust will not be enough but rearing has to be focused action: good parents are present, give time, and make the effort to positive togetherness. They care, ask, discuss, listen, tell, explain, argue, fuss and busy themselves with children. Good parents are role models for children even in the most difficult life situations: they have to maintain the belief and pursue building better environment and more human world for children. At its best, rearing helps children to experience what life can offer. They have to be allowed to see what the better world could be and be assured that it is reachable.

Human relationships have become narrower. Even for this reason, family as a supporter of proximity and individuality within the complex modern life is significant both for children and adults. The ability to be happy of life and teaching it are important skills for a good parent. Being grateful for small mercies in everyday life is more and more important in the insecure modern life and can be the crucial factor for children when trying to handle difficulties. This kind of attitude has been described felicitously:

Within the prescriptive bounds of culture, families directly and indirectly encourage or discourage the active pursuit of positive experience in children through the ways in which they organize children's experiences. For example, whether or not parents celebrate milestones, birthdays, holidays, and accomplishments, take vacations, and pursue enjoyment at work and leisure—and the specific ways in which they do so—not only teaches children the value of appreciating and enjoying life, but also provides concrete models for savoring that children can imitate. (Bryant, Chadwick, & Kluwe, 2011, p. 118) Although the nature of the parent-child relationship changes from early childhood to adolescence, the presence of warmth and sensitivity as well as support for autonomy as parenting behaviors appears to be critical to child well-being (Sheridan & Burt, 2009). Positive caring of children has positive associations

with children's cognitive development and social competence during the preschool years (Peisner-Feinberg, 2004). And even furthermore: positive emotions in early life have even been claimed to be associated with longevity (Danner, Snowdon, & Frieser, 2001). This concerns everyone regardless of the background (Peisner-Feinberg, 2004).

Furthermore, this complex theme can be reflected from the point of view of positively acting people. Magnusson and Mahoney (2006) are interested whether the life spans of the positively functioning people differ from others and if they do, what are the unique structures that express the human strength and positive ways of action in their life spans, and how these structures can be recognized. The research on happiness has pointed out the tendency of same kind: in order to know why some people are happier than others, we have to understand what are the cognitive and motivational processes that maintain or even increase happiness and positive attitude (Lyubomirsky, 2001; Ojanen, 2001). Everything begins in infancy and childhood. According to Lawrence (2001), the earliest sense of a "true self" is for the infant a self "worthy of love". Through the abovementioned perception, a child finds the world interesting and enjoyable, and feels that he or she has a positive place in it.

PEDAGOGICAL LOVE AND GOOD TEACHERHOOD

GOOD TEACHERHOOD IS NOT JUST SUBSTANCE KNOWLEDGE

Good teacherhood has been characterized in several ways at different times (e.g., Lancaster, 1974; Freire, 1997; van Manen, 1991; van Manen & Li, 2002; Korthagen, 2004; Marcos, Sanchez, & Tillema, 2011). The foci have changed over the course of time; yet, there has been something permanent in the expectations as well (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Feiman-Nemser, 2003). In addition to teachers' personality and individual characteristics and collaboration and social skills, substance knowledge has been considered important as well (e.g., Elliott, Isaacs, & Chugani 2010; Jakku-Sihvonen, 2005; Wall & McAleer, 2000). However, the fact that a teacher is capable when it comes to the above-mentioned aspects does not guarantee positive learning outcomes (Parker, Ndoye, & Imig, 2009). Instead, the ability to help various learners to succeed and be inspired (whether the learners are children or adults) is crucial. A teacher's proficiency is manifested by the ability to look at the subject from a learner's point of view, to foresee the critical junctions in learning, and to design teaching to meet learners' information acquisition and collection processes (e.g., Zombylas, 2007). Thus, a teacher's professionalism results from versatile mastery of the content in teaching (Davis, 1993; Hansen, 2009). However, even this mastery does not seem to be enough.

For example, Uno Cygnaeus (1910) sublimely described good teacherhood in Finland by noting:

> Knowledge cannot alone be ennobling. Knowledge has to be molded into living conviction that would lead into inner noblemindedness. Teaching must be educative and marked by the spirit of diligence, not mugging up whatsoever but merely action that develops harmoniously soul and body. Every teacher has to blaze with the spirit of sacred love. Sacred love that does not seek its own, that does not look at the present but the future; love that can even punish when considered necessary. That kind of love toward pupils has to smolder in a teacher's heart. That kind of teacher's love affects the whole school in a protecting way. (p. 197)

Similarly, van Manen (1991) asks: "Is it possible to act as a real teacher if one is not oriented to children with loving care, trustful hope, and responsibility?" (p. 65). Furthermore, van Manen (1991) claims that as teachers embrace all children, regardless of their characteristics they become real educators, and thus, educators' pedagogical love becomes the precondition for pedagogical relations to grow (p. 66). Through hope—when considered merely as being present for a child than a kind of doing—the teacher shows a pupil that he or she believes and trusts in the pupil's possibilities (van Manen, 1991, pp. 67–68).

Indeed, teachers, if anyone, know that emotion-based attachments are bridges between people. Everyone should be able to feel love, caring, and attachment during their whole life, from birth to death (Fromm, 1956). Therefore, love cannot be ignored when reflecting good teacherhood—regardless of educational level.

In this article, we discuss what love in teaching means, how love is connected with teaching, and the significance of love in teaching and supporting pupils.

THE MANY FACES OF LOVE

Love has many definitions and many faces as well (see *Figure 1*). In addition to romantic love (Beck-Gernsheim & Beck, 1995; Fenchel, 2005; Hatfield, 1988; Hegi & Bergner, 2010; Määttä, 2005a; Määttä, 2006; Person, 2007; Sternberg, 1998), there is friendship (Alberoni, 1983; Blieszner & Adams, 1992; Fehr, 1996; Hartup, 1995; Miller & Perlman, 2009), love for fellow humans (Eriksson, 1989; Janako, 1993; Paldanius, 2002), mother's and father's love, love of one's country (Määttä, 2006), and pedagogical love (Haavio, 1948; Skinnari, 2004). All these forms of love have much in common and are threatened in the modern era of individualism and self-centered projects (Beck-Gernsheim & Beck, 1995; Giddens, 1992); but they all are engaged in good teaching as well. *Figure 1* illustrates the many forms of love and their interconnectedness.

Pedagogical Love and Good Teacherhood
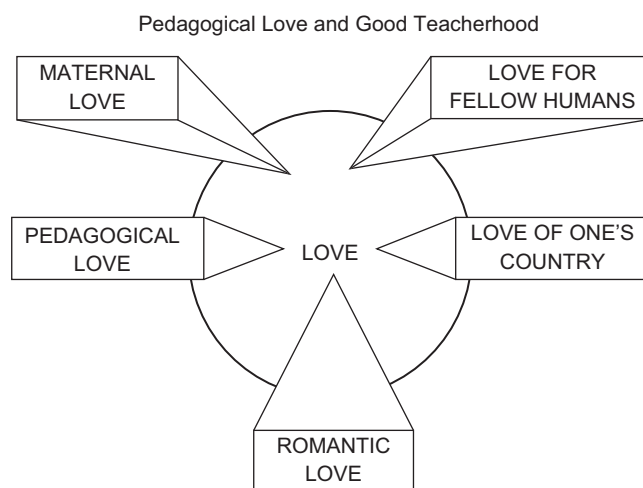
Figure 1. The many faces of love.

Love for fellow humans, agape, is defined by the metaphor of the Good Samaritan and manifested in practice in welfare work (e.g., Aristotle, 1981; see also Fromm, 1956). Individualistic features, position, nationality, gender, abilities, race, or language do not determine a human being's value. Those differences based on skills, intelligence,

or knowledge are insignificant compared with that basic human presence that is the same for all people: the right and need to be loved, accepted, and cared for as well as the right and need to grow and develop (Bradshaw, 1996; Lanara, 1981; Sprengel & Kelly, 1992).

In nursing, this kind of love is contemplated through the concept of caring. Also the concept refers to solicitude (Morse, Sohlberg, Neander, Bottorff, & Johnson, 1990; Paldanius, 2002) as the caritas idea of compassion. At the core of nursing (Eriksson, 1989) is a salient love for fellow humans.

In addition, the ethics of caring (or bothering) concerns teaching (Gilligan, 1982). In fact, caring has been argued to be the central aim and method of education (see Noddings, 1988; Burns & Rathbone, 2010). In this case, the emphasis is on the special value of empathy and concern for learners. A teacher's ethical caring means genuine caring, aspiring to understand and make an effort for pupils' protection, support, and development. Because of this pedagogical caring, the teacher especially pursues pupils' potential to develop and thus help them to find and use their own strengths.

Pedagogical love has been considered the core factor in the definition of good teacherhood for decades, though the characteristics of a good teacher have always included a variety of features. Features such as the ability to maintain discipline and order, set a demanding goal level, and the mastery of substance have been especially emphasized (e.g., Davis, 1993; Zombylas, 2007; Hansen, 2009). Consequently, even teacher education has focused more, for example, on teachers' didactic skills, as well as the ability to teach subjects and maintain social order (see e.g. Jakku-Sihvonen, 2005). Although love can be understood in different ways (as mentioned in the introduction), some may have considered it narrowly, without connecting it to teachers' work. Nonetheless, for instance, in Finland, Uno Cygnaeus wrote about pedagogical love in the 1860s and afterwards, a hundred years later, Martti Haavio (1948) and Urpo Harva (1955). Likewise, German phenomenologist Max Scheler (1874–1928, as cited in Solasaari, 2003) regarded values and love as the core of rearing.

A HUMAN BEING IS A LOVING CREATURE

According to Schelerian thinking (see Solasaari, 2003), a human being is fundamentally an emotional creature. A pupil's interest in his or her environment, its phenomena, object world, as well as within himself or herself, is primarily emotional by nature and only secondarily intellectual or willed. People concentrate on what pleases them and what they value. Scheler calls this outside-directed, intentional, interest love. Love arouses intellectual and logical thinking (Solasaari, 2003).

Thus, ordo amoris, ranking order created by love, develops. Ordo amoris determines people's action, choices, goals, and opportunities—even destiny. It originates from experiences, education, and teaching. People carry this love-based ranking order everywhere with them, but they also construct it in the different phases

of their lives. Even the earliest philosophers—for example, Augustine, who defined the order of love as the brief and true definition of virtual in the 4th century (see Fitzgerald, 1999), as well as Pascal in the 17th century among others—talked about the order, logic, and reasons of the heart that brains do not comprehend. Hence, the logic of the mind is not the only way of understanding. (Solasaari, 2003; see also Barkow, Cosmides, & Tooby, 1995; Collins, 2007).

Fundamentally, people are not only thinking or willing creatures, but also loving beings (cf. Kant, 1788/2000). Love influences the direction of people's action as well as its intensity. Positive emotions, joy, strength, and the feeling of being capable lead mental energy toward the desired goal (Rantala & Määttä, 2011). Negative emotions, grief, fear, and anger cause entropy, an inner imbalance that burns off energy, brands the target with negative status, and pursues nullifying and undervaluing (e.g., Isen, 2001). Love as emotion and action creates hope and boldness (see, e.g., Määttä, 2010). Love, at its best, is manifested by the endeavour to make things develop, grow, and come forward, whether love falls on other people, art, science, ideas, or nature.

WHAT CAN BE DONE WITH REARING?

It was noted in classical Greece that "a human being is not ready but something prospective that has to be built through rearing" (Aristotle, trans. 1981). People's actions are not just passive reacting, nor is their development determined only by these reactions; people function directed by their inner strengths and according to what kind of support, confirmation, and encouragement they receive. For example, a teacher's task is not just to praise pupils in order to strengthen their self-esteem, but also to provide them with informative learning-oriented, feed-forward comments that help low-achieving students to empower them as self-regulated learners (Engelsen & Smith, 2010).

Max Scheler's philosophy of love emphasizes how important it is for people's development and learning that they learn to direct their interest and love, in addition to temporary pleasures, toward higher mental values and goals. The educator's task is to provide pupils with such stimuli and environment where students are guided to limit their instincts by controlling enjoyment and vital-based values, in order to be able to achieve higher values and skills (Solasaari, 2003).

High-grade capability requires daring, perseverance, and boldness to create one's own special field of interest. The courage to act according to one's own talents and be different from others, the ability to put off temporal impulses, to self-discipline, are prerequisites of love and action that focus on higher mental values. Anything great cannot be achieved easily or without the passion of love (Määttä, 2011a), which challenges modern teachers and educators. Today, concentrating on something of one's own that differs from others is not very fashionable. Many people prefer social acceptance and favour, tend to adhere to the same, well-matched mold with others, avoid differing from others, and, thus, sell their talent to acquire social favour and acceptance (Kerr, 1985; Uusikylä, 2008).

Skillful teachers know that remarkable scientific and artistic values are impossible to achieve without intensive concentration (Määttä, 2010). Phrasing one's own thoughts, refining one's special aptitudes, as well as building a strong identity, necessitate the ability to withdraw from others' company and the possibility to examine and be engrossed. The masters in practical fields seem to differ from others in their ability to follow strict training programs with enthusiasm and persistently for years (Csikszentmihályi, Rathunde, & Whalen, 1996; Nicpon, 2011). This determination originates in emotional characteristics, says Daniel Goleman (1999, p. 109) and thus, highlights the power of love in directing activeness and vigour—which are also connected with the experience of flow.

FLOW AS A MANIFESTATION OF LOVE

At its magnificence, love appears as a so-called flow experience in many people's expertise and skillful doing. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1990, 2000) has launched the concept that refers to an optimal or autotelic experience where people are riveted so comprehensively by a challenging performance that the awareness of time and place blurs. Flow is possible when the challenges in a task are balanced with an actor's abilities. Flow is an enjoyable state of concentration and task orientation, leading to optimal performance, whether the case is wall creeping, chess playing, dancing, surgery, studying languages, painting, or composing music.

Flow can be achieved when one is able to act to the maximum of one's skills and at a suitable challenging level (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), which is quite similar to Augustine's notion of moments of the soul's attentiveness (see Fitzgerald, 1999). This sets challenges for skill development. If a task is too easy, it will bore. If it is too difficult, it will cause anxiety and fear. The exact experience of flow and the active sense of well-being resulting from the former, encourage people to develop and improve their skills. People are willing to strive for flow whether it was about love for math, art, programming, or orthopedics (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

In addition, Howard Gardner, the developer of the theory of multiple intelligences, considers flow and the positive states of mind of love and joy one of the healthiest ways of rearing children. In an interview, Gardner (as cited in Goleman, 1999) said

> flow is intrinsically rewarding without the hope for reward or threat of punishment. We should use learners' positive moods (love) and through it get them to learn things about fields they can succeed in. People have to discover what they like, what things and doings they love and do these things. Even a child learns the best when he/she loves what he/she is doing and finds it enjoyable. (p. 126)

Pedagogical love might contribute to pupils' learning and success by providing them with positive learning experiences, initial excitement, and perceived successes. These are the seeds of expertise as a positive feeling that can be considered the source of human strengths (Isen, 2001). The special characteristics in this kind

of positive behaviour are, for example, optimism, hope, perseverance, wisdom, happiness, creativity, and flow (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2006).

Likewise, failures can be significant for learning as long as the individual absorbed in the task does not have to feel threatened. A salient question concerning good teacherhood is: What makes a learner boldly seize new challenges, act actively for his or her own learning, and not back away from the challenges (see, e.g., Hakkarainen, Lonka, & Lipponen., 2004; Diener, 2000)? Therefore, pedagogical love would rather aim at the discovery of pupils' strengths and interests and act based on these to strengthen students' self-esteem and self-image as active learners.

WHAT IS PEDAGOGICAL LOVE, THEN?

Education and teaching that aims at bringing out personalities cannot succeed without a loving attitude, says Martti Haavio (1948), one of the most significant forces of Finnish education in the 1950s and 1960s. Haavio emphasized the meaning of pedagogical love in teachers' work and considered that teachers' work consists of the following two obligations: attachment to learners and dutiful perseverance of life values. Pedagogical love springs from an individual learner's presence persuading it to come forward more and more perfectly and diversely. A skillful educator does not just sit by and watch if a learner makes worthless choices or fails in his or her opportunities to grow and develop.

Indeed, Haavio (1948) highlights the moral nature of pedagogical love: Pedagogical love is addressed to every learner regardless of his or her various outer abilities, features, appearance, behaviour, or personality traits. Pedagogical love is a way of teaching, not just "a natural feeling" (Haavio, 1948, p. 71). As a teaching method, "a teacher's pedagogical love will not become dependent on how a pupil responds to a teacher's love" (Haavio, 1948, p. 71), nor does it aim at pleasing pupils or spoiling them but steeling themselves for work, endurance, and self-discipline. Pedagogical love does not try to keep a pupil in constant dependency with a teacher, nor allow a youngster to become independent (Haavio, 1948). Pedagogical love speaks to interdependence—the recognition and acceptance that we need others.

Love appears in teaching as guidance toward disciplined work, but also as patience, trust, and forgiveness. The purpose is not to make learning fun, easy, or pleasing but to create a setting for learning where pupils can use and develop their own resources eventually proceeding at the maximum of their own abilities. A teacher's love for a pupil embodies, according to Schelerian thinking, a continuous trust that there is more in a learner than is shown outside. This is, for example, in line with Aristotle's opinion about love as wishing good for other people for their sake (Aristotle, 1981). Indeed, love has many faces: It covers feelings, acts, attitudes, and learned models. It directs acts and action and lays the foundation for motivation and interest. Love for doing, expertise, and creativity is crucial among teachers and pupils. Furthermore, pedagogical love may sound self-sacrificing. However, we

want to consider it merely as good teacherhood, as well as a method and attitude in the sense that it involves firm trust in pupils' abilities and, therefore, also requires determined and persistent work in order to show this trust. Pedagogical love is not just about unselfishness, but can also have a clearly selfish intention and desire to prove to oneself and others what can be achieved through teaching—the ability to engage students through the teacher's own pedagogical engagement is a rewarding source of satisfaction for a teacher.

The logic of love elicits hidden skills and opportunities even if the logic of the mind has already given up. For instance, in situations where a learner's progress is slow or tangled, a loving teacher takes care that the learner does not lose his or her trust in his or her own learning when getting frustrated. When a teacher believes in a learner's abilities, the teacher will find it easier to convince the learner of them as well. In addition, love appears as goal-oriented action: A teacher plans and implements learning situations that enhance learning. In practice, this means using quite simple techniques, such as concretizing, illustrating, asking questions, discussing, listening and repeating, thanking for the small steps forward, providing remedial or supplementary instruction, making the standards lower temporarily in order to make time for maturing, and not giving up or quitting easily. Furthermore, a loving teacher takes a pupil's personal situation into consideration (e.g., van Manen, 1991; Hatt, 2005).

A loving teacher reveals for a pupil the dimensions of his or her development in a manner of speaking. This is how a pupil's selfesteem strengthens and he or she can develop toward higher activities from the lowest, pleasure-oriented ones. Achieving high-level skills is rewarding because it brings pleasure, and yet, it often demands—as mentioned previously—self-discipline and rejections. Without a teacher's support, a pupil can easily remain at the level where gaining pleasure is easy and effortless (e.g., Katz & Tello, 2003). Thus, pedagogical love is not irrational sentimentalizing or weak-willed following. It is a working method that involves persistent interest and perseverance to support pupils' development for the sake of themselves and the whole society. Pedagogical love is the fundamental principle and method for good teacherhood.

The irreplaceable nature of the method of pedagogical love is also confirmed by Erich Fromm's notion: "The perfect knowledge is possible only through love" (Fromm, 1994, p. 52). For example, the scaffolding technique can be considered a modern neighbouring concept for pedagogical love because this technique emphasizes a teacher's role as a timely supporter. A teacher's task is to intervene in a learning process and support it when a learner's skills are not enough for completing a task. The goal is the principle of minimal help so that a teacher's role becomes smaller, little by little, and a learner develops survival strategies for him or her (Rantala & Määttä, 2011). Similarly, Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the zone of proximal development dissects a learner's potential goals for achieving which he or she needs a teacher's help. Development takes place, first, interpersonally and then, as an individual's inner action. Guided by a teacher (or pedagogical

love), a pupil can reach the actual developmental level (see also Määttä, & Uusiautti, 2012g).

IS PEDAGOGICAL LOVE THE SOLUTION?

School work and teaching can be defined as active stimulus to positive experiences of success and remarkable achievement and as a self-centered oasis of positive emotions. Considered from this point of view, they appear certainly as an encouraging and promising teaching reality. Most teachers and students would want this, but it has its shadow side as well. As desirable as pedagogical love and its consequences may be, fantasizing about such altruistic teaching has accompanying risks.

This two-dimensional image of a teacher's role as aiming at pupils' success can strengthen a myth about teacherhood in which pupils' performance results from a teacher's pedagogical solutions, choices, attitudes, and capability, in other words, teaching skills. Learning is not just pleasure-centered joy, nor does it consist of top experiences that can be chosen by one's own fancies or pointers given by a teacher—not even when a pupil is talented. The risk is also that a pupil's failure, fatigue, reluctance, or inability to concentrate would be interpreted as the pupil's inefficiency or the shortcomings of a teacher's proficiency.

A teacher's work is interpersonal and relational, with a teacher's own personality fundamental to building relationships with students. A teacher's work involves plenty of emotional strain. In addition, a teacher inevitably has to experience frustration in his or her work. There are many situations when a teacher will feel like she or he has failed regardless of the solution he or she creates.

Empathy, caring, and love in a teacher's work are often problematic. Arlie Hochschild (1983) refers to a teacher's work as emotional work where a teacher shapes and controls emotions appropriately. The prevailing emotional rules at school necessitate that a teacher actively produces certain emotions of nurturing and caring, and denies or grows apart from the inappropriate moods of negligence. Consequently, teachers are likely to experience guilt because they cannot sufficiently attend to all pupils in an appropriate way that is congruent with the notion of caring. Erving Goffman (1981) points out the same by claiming how emotional deviation among teachers causes strain or stress. This is likely to happen when a teacher has an unbecoming, unfamiliar, or wrong kind of emotional orientation for confronting pupils in a teaching situation. The school community defines the emotional rules according to which emotions can be expressed appropriately. Emotional expressions and emotional language are delineated and regulated at school. Furthermore, the expression of emotions often varies by gender.

In the mix of multiple demands, a skillful teacher can prioritize the demands of his or her work. A teacher's engagement and drive are enhanced by the simple capacity to be happy about even the smallest achievements and by belief in a learner's ability and desire to work hard within a variety of learning experiences. However, teachers have to realize that their own coping, motivation, and engagement require attention; they are not automatic.

CONCLUSION: THE VOW OF PEDAGOGICAL LOVE

Pedagogical love emerges through teachers' emotions, learned models, moral attitude, and actions. They could be summarized in the following vow of teacher's pedagogical love that is based on Hartmut von Hentig's paper in Die Zeit-periodical (nr. 39; Sep 19, 1991). Fundamentally, a good teacher is accountable to his or her pupils, along with the following principles:

As a teacher and educator, I oblige myself

– to respect every learner's (also the weakest one) personality and defend them when necessary if they are not capable or when innocent to those circumstances that weaken their growing environment;
– to answer for their physical and mental integrity;
– to notice their feelings and emotions in my action and regard them seriously;
– to consider every pupil's personality [just] as any adult's personality and pursue mutual understanding with them;
– to enhance their development according to their developmental principles and rhythms by noticing their special aptitudes;
– to protect learners from anxiety and the feelings of guilt when necessary and strengthen their self-esteem;
– to not to break their will and merely to help them to get their own mind under control when that mind seems quite "impossible";
– to prepare them to be responsible for societal matters;
– to allow them to experience what life can offer at its best; and
– to help them realize what could be a better world than the existing one and to believe that it is achievable.

Good teachers are examples to learners even in the most difficult life situations. Teachers have to believe in their work and endeavour to build a nurturing environment and a more humane world. At their best, teachers help pupils—children or adults— to achievable. The motto of The World's Teachers' Day 2003 refers to the same idea: "Teachers—Opening doors to a better world."

Without pedagogical love, teaching and learning may remain

as a form of effective management of learning and become a means only because it is presumed to offer a link between the intentionality of curriculum designers and the actual learning outcomes which are developed in learners. (Webster, 2009, p. 44)

To be happy about life, to guide students to see the wonder and joy in the mundane is a teacher's most important skill. Being able to help students find and negotiate the joy, wonder, happiness, and pain in the everydayness of life is an increasingly important quality in today's insecurities, with the mounting pressure of increased demands for efficiency. Learning the joy of life can be crucial for many learners in order to avoid or survive the darker depths of life.

THE ABILITY TO LOVE – A VIRTUE-BASED APPROACH

Abraham Maslow (1954) was amazed of the scarcity of research on love. According to Maslow (1954, p. 235), it was surprising how little empiric sciences had to offer to the theme. Especially weird in his opinion was the silence of psychologists because studying love should have been their special responsibility. Maslow thought that the situation possibly originated in academic researchers' besetting sin: they would rather do what is easy than what is necessary. Research on love and emotions has been taken with suspicious and even the facts that people behave in relation to other people and that people live in the net of human relationships from birth to death have not furthered the research (Berscheid, 2006). Nevertheless, the context of human relationship net that is present everywhere both affects an individual's behavior and vice versa (Berscheid & Reis, 1998; Reis, Collins, & Berscheid, 2000).

Negative emotions and experiences such as anger or fear have been studied much more than love. It is the case regardless of the fact that the word love is one of the most popular words in the English language (Berscheid, 2006). Focusing research on the dark side of human behavior may originate in the desire to eliminate and control the negative. Or what could be the reason for skewed research foci?

Seizure of love with research has been regarded with suspicion: is it possible to even study love? Even having success in love seems to be difficult in practice. According to common sense, the hallmark of true love is that one cannot control it. Epicurus's thought from two thousand years ago describes the phenomenon well: "A wise man does not fall into love and it is not true that love would be manna from heaven" (Vander Waerdt, 1987). This thought supports the idea that love is suspicious and even dangerous and one's sense or mind does not have anything to do with love. Merely, the main character of love is lunacy as many authors wrote already in the 19th century (e.g., Stendhal, 1830/1957). Certainly, people do things in the name of love that are morally suspicious: people can for example tell lies in order to help their objects of love (see e.g., Halwani, 2011). This is also why love's moral worth has been criticized.

As is well known, Freud (1971) considered love as irrational by its essence. Freud did not distinguish irrational love from love that is a manifestation of mature personality. Falling in love is, according to Freud, a sort of abnormal phenomenon of which lack of the sense of reality and abusiveness are typical. Therefore, it is just about transferring love from childhood targets of love toward new ones. Freud did not consider that love as a rational phenomenon, the highest testimony of human satisfaction, would be worth studying because he did not think that this kind of love would even exist. On the other hand, Arman and Rehnsfeldt (2006) have stated that

> No modern concept can properly describe the acceptable and appropriate love to others in a wider sense but in some cases love as a concept today risks being misunderstood or implied as an intimate or physical relationship (p. 6).

According to the traditional definition of Platonic love, love is directed toward ideas and especially what is good and beautiful is the best form of love. However, one has to develop one's ability to love: first one loves the other one's body but little by little learns to love the beauty that is part of all beautiful bodies. After that, the lover finds out that it is more valuable to love souls than bodies. As the ability to love progresses toward more general things, for example laws and knowledge, the lover will ultimately learn to love the idea of beauty (e.g., Nehamas, 2007).

In Plato's Symposium, Plato discusses the virtue (or dissoluteness) or eros. However, Sheffield (2006) claims that Plato does not directly reveal whether eros is good or bad, virtue or dissolute, but merely his contemplation is grounded on various themes such as good and happy life and the relation between eros and civilization and wisdom. Apparently, true and genuine eros would enhance good things and would not lead to superficial, selfish, and ethically bad actions. Thus, authenticity and genuineness always lead to virtuous things that are worth aspiring (Sheffield, 2006; see also Nehamas, 2007).

Later on, for example Sternberg and Grajek (1984) contemplated the essence of love through three classic theories of intellectuality seeking the answer to the question of what kinds of factors love consists of. Is love one multifactorial group that is not possible to analyze thoroughly and is characterized by plentiful, positive emotions and by the difficulty of identifying these factors (when compared with Spearman's (1904) theory of general intellectuality)? When adapting Thompson's (1992) theory of the factors of intellectuality to describing the structure of love, it is possible to understand love as feelings that together and separately identified form an experience that we call or name as love. Thurstone's (1938) theory of intellectuality is based on primitive factors. In the light of this theory, the experience of love can be divided into various factors that correlate with each other and that form a conception of the essence of love as a whole.

Yet, the question of which factors love consists of has to be studied more closely. In the literature review, we will introduce some important and relevant theories of love as well as ideas about the connection between love and well-being. We will view them through the things that emerge from three separate data collected among Finnish young adults and seniors. Based on their opinions and experiences on love, our purpose is to create an illustration of love as a phenomenon that grounds on the factors that could be seen the areas in the essence of love.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Love as Feelings and Acts

When reviewing the various forms of love, it is possible to notice the compilation of different emotions, knowledge, and acts that combine the forms. Traditionally, concern and caring are salient acts of love and the feelings of empathy are significant not only in mother's and parents' love, affection between a child and care giver

(Bowlby, 1988; Määttä, 2006; Reis et al., 2000), love for fellow humans (Eriksson, 1989; Janako, 1993), teacher's pedagogical love (Haavio, 1948; Skinnari, 2004; Määttä and Uusiautti, 2011b), romantic love (Beck-Gernsheim & Beck, 1995; Hatfield, 1988; Määttä, 2005b; Person, 2007), and so on.

Among the numerous ideas and categorizations of love, one of the most famous theories is Robert Sternberg's (1986) triangulation theory. According to the theory, love consists of three factors: passion, intimacy, and commitment. Acts and feelings that correspond to the above-mentioned define love. Passion is a functional and motivational component, intimacy is an emotional component, and commitment is an intellectual or rational component of decision making. The emotional shades of these factors differ from each other so that the component of intimacy can be considered warm, passion hot, and commitment cold. After creating the triangulation theory, Sternberg (1998) found a new explanation to love: love is a story which is one-of-a-kind, partly unconscious formation of feelings and acts, to everyone who experiences and witnesses it.

Love and Well-Being

Research on love and positive human behavior has increased recently (Seligman et al., 2005, Seligman, Parks, & Steen, 2004; Gable & Haidt, 2005). It is quite well-grounded because along with evolution Homo sapiens has survived and will survive as it is capable of creating and maintaining collaborative relationships with other people. People seem to be born to create strong, lasting and harmonious intimate relationships with their ilk—in other words, to love them, as Harlow (1958) expressed it simply.

Nowadays, developing interventions to increase happiness is a major focus of positive psychology. At the personal level, positive psychology concentrates on subjective experiences, well-being, satisfaction, flow, joy, pleasure, and happiness, as well as on optimistic and hopeful attitude and confidence in the future. Furthermore, love has been defined as one of the people's basic strengths within the virtue of humanity (see Seligman et al., 2005). At the group level, the interest of positive psychology is in the civil skills and institutions that turn individuals into better citizens—responsible, flexible, and ethical workers (Seligman, 2002).

Positive emotions support problem-solving skills and the ability to act in an innovative way and thus human well-being. The importance and potential of this may seem surprising as the feelings of happiness are so simple and common in nature (Isen, 2006). However, experience has already shown that the healthier and more satisfied people are the better they function and work (Uusiautti & Määttä, 2011c). Indeed, it has been suggested for example that education should include training that increase positive emotion through various trainings of activities on savoring and mindfulness; gratitude, optimism and resilience, such as stress reductions skills training; life-planning and goal-setting skills training; problem-solving skills training; and training that aims at identifying individuals'

signature strengths and having them employ these strengths in their daily lives (Maddux, 2002).

The predictive strength of affective reactions depends on social-contextual factors, such as the nature of the interpersonal relationship (e.g., cooperative or competitive), prevailing (cultural) norms (e.g., "display rules"), and the way the emotion are expressed (Fischer & van Kleef, 2010). In Wärnå, Lindholm, and Erisson's (2007) research, four main virtues— pride, honesty, generosity and love— were found as important for health at work, and they form a wholeness of health. Certain basic features seem to be common to all genuine forms of love. These are caring, responsibility, respect, and knowledge. Love, indeed, means taking care of the object of life actively: when this activeness is missing, also love is missing.

The Purpose of This Study

Studies on the essence of love lack many answers. As researchers, we have studied both the phases and process of love (Määttä, 2010; Määttä, 2011c) and seniors' experiences of love (Määttä, 2011b) and divorce (Määttä, 2011d) and even narcissistic version of love (e.g. Määttä, Uusiautti, & Määttä, 2011). After having viewed love from various points of view, we ended up asking: what do people mean when they talk about love and how do they understand love? What kinds of features of love can be controlled, directed, or learned? If the essence of love was analyzed consciously, it could more and more clearly turn into a positive ability to love.

The purpose of this article is to dissect Finnish people's conceptions about love. What do people of different age talk about when they talk about love? What love is? What kind of feelings, knowledge, and acts does love consist of when contemplated by people of different age?

METHOD

The data in this research were collected through three methods and phases as a part of a larger research project at the University of Lapland. The first set of data was collected among students at the University of Lapland. They were under 25 years old. 35 students were interviewed (22 women and 13 men). Open interview was chosen as the interview method because it allows the participants describe freely what they think love is. The themes for interviews emerged from the participants' views, thoughts, and experiences of love. What happens when one falls in love, what does love give and demand, how could love be strengthened, and what kinds of phases and contents does love involve or could involve? The interviews lasted between one to two hours, they were recorded and written up word by word.

In the next phase, the interview data were expanded by essays. Teacher students (N=20) who studied at the University of Lapland wrote an essay about "Then, I was in love" as an exercise of the Finnish course. The data comprised anonymously written essays that were between two to fife sheets long.

The third set of data was collected among Finnish seniors by inviting them to write about the theme "I would give my all to you, I would carry you on my arms". The invitation was transmitted via a popular Finnish magazine. Altogether, 117 love stories were received. The authors were 50–91 years old. 72 of the writers were women and 38 of them were men. Seven of the stories were signed together by both spouses. The lengths of the letters varied between a few sheets to over one hundred pages detailed biographies.

RESULTS

Some of the participants could not analyze the essence of love. They seemed to be confused about the phenomenon or unable to find the right words. Some concentrated on describing characteristics that they look for in a partner or deliberated for example the question whether love can be even verbally described. Many participants included descriptions about what kinds of feelings, knowledge, and acts are connected to love in their opinion. These features of love—emotional, cognitive, and operational—are interconnected but still can be analyzed separately. Next, our purpose is to reach concrete essence of love by studying these three areas of love through the participants' stories of their experiences and opinions on love.

Love as an Emotional Experience

The participants' conceptions of love emphasize its meaning and content as an emotion. Love is experienced as an emotional phenomenon and its essence is understood at the emotional level and as experiences. However, it is difficult to analyze love as an emotional phenomenon inside out because many participants found it difficult to express their feelings of love in words. Yet, some categories seemed to repeat in stories.

Joy and happiness. In Spinoza's ethics, the emotional tone of love appears as joy. When Spinoza outlined the picture of wise and rational life, he emphasized the meaning of love, joy, and happiness. They mean increasing perfection. Hate, anger, and disregard are similar to grief and mean decreasing perfection. In this research, students associated the feelings of joy with love:

> You see things as extremely sunny; you have to do the greatest plans immediately… it has a positive effect on your life style. (Man, 21 years, unmarried)

> Everything in life felt so wonderful. (Woman, 35 years, married)

Also seniors described their feelings of happiness and joy. The elderly told that they act like children, in a childish and foolish way, and could laugh and notice new reasons for laugh in their everyday life.

> I do nothing but laugh with him. (Woman, aged 60)

> I, a grouch, straight-faced man, find myself laughing aloud. The dark matters are often put aside nowadays. (Man, aged 76)

Happiness and satisfaction must be understood as the outcome of an interaction process between individual characteristics and aspirations on the one side, and social relations and macro-social structures on the other side (Haller & Hadler, 2006). From this point of view, it is important to realize the interpersonal nature of love: it is an indisputable fact that emotions are mostly reactions to other people, take place in settings where other people are present, and are expressed toward other people and regulated because of other people. Therefore, the elicitation of love by understanding other people as the cause, target, or thirdparty observer of these emotions is necessary (Fischer & van Kleef, 2010).

Love refers to a variety of different feelings, states, and attitudes, ranging from pleasure to interpersonal attraction. "Love" may refer specifically to the passionate desire and intimacy of romantic love, to the emotional closeness of familial love, or the platonic love that defines friendship, to the profound devotion of religious love. This diversity of uses and meanings, combined with the complexity of the feelings involved, makes love unusually difficult to be defined consistently, even compared to other emotional states.

Bonding and the sense of togetherness. According to the interviews and essays, mutual harmony and like-mindedness increase the sense of belonging together. Sharing similar values and attitudes as well as social background, education, and personal characteristics seemed important (e.g. Bruze, 2011).

> I have a burning desire to be with the other; it's impossible to be without that person. (woman, 21 years old, married)

> It was so easy and good to be with him at once… I felt that he really understood me. (Woman, 26 years, married)

With common hobbies and shared interests life stays rich and active and spending together feels amusing and pleasant.

> After recovering from illnesses, we have participated in voluntary work actively, we write, paint… by encouraging each other. (woman, married for 55 years)

Many older couples found it binding that they could be proud of their children and told that they enjoy how their children take care of them. Good relationships with children are important especially in later life.

> In rearing, we have tried to stick to the forbiddance so that children did not have to ask the same thing from the other parent. Our relationship with children has remained good. Otherwise, it has been important in our life that we have

tried to cherish our promises, including the wedding vow. (Man, married for
59 years)

Shared activities form a fund of experiences which is like an emotional bank
account. It also functions as a safe for a rainy day. It is easier to confront trouble if the
couple has built strong confidence that difficulties can be solved (Hatch & Bulcroft,
2004). The positive fund of experiences protects the marriage against problems
and provides strength for finding favorable solutions (Hendrick & Hendrick, 2009;
Maisel & Gable, 2009).

We enjoy being together and appreciate the life we live. We have developed
our own language over the years by which we sort out things; and outsiders
would certainly not understand our intentions.

I felt strong congeniality; I did not have to say all. I felt that she was the one
for me. (Man, 20 years, unmarried)

Appreciation and the sense of responsibility.   In addition to bonding and needing
the other, love manifests itself as appreciation and responsibility. The participants
had used the words of appreciation and admiration abundantly. However, there were
love stories where people blame themselves for not giving Enough credit to the
other.
   The words of appreciation, respect, and thanking enhance self-esteem and coping.
They are pleasing and inspiring.

Love means tenderness and noticing the other; it involves the sense of
responsibility. (Man, 33 years, married).

It certainly is the number one in life and gives content to life. Soon you'll
notice, that little by little you start making plans in your life so that you take
the other into account as well in those plans. (Woman, 22 years, unmarried)

Swinging emotions and accepting changes in feelings.   The participants also
reported the swing in the emotional experiences: at times, love appears as a good
feeling similar to euphoria while some other times, it leads to the depths of depression.
Daydreaming, sleeping trouble, restlessness, and concentration difficulties come
with the territory:

I can't define that love; it's just a sort of mood, a certain note in yourself…
on the one hand, you are extremely energetic and somehow active and on the
other hand, you are like you were not on the planet at all. So, you just hope
that you could be and let yourself float… It has, you know, two opposite sides.
(Woman, 21 years, married).

Love involves actually quite a lot of despair too. Love is like walking on
broken pieces of glass before you know whether you'll get requited love or

not. It occupies your mind quite comprehensively, brings meaning in your life. (Woman, 31 years, married).

It is important but also hard to accept dissimilarities and changes in the other. Thus, it is impossible to predict the degree of changes. Only a few know in advance how they will react to changes in work tasks, the birth of a child, or moving, economic pressure, or ageing. Even the changes in one self may surprise (Riehl-Emde et al., 2003).

Of course, you sometimes miss the unique feeling of falling in love and going for someone but still I wouldn't change it to this feeling of security and protecting and taking care of the other. Or who knows? (Woman, 26 years, married)

Love as Knowledge and Skills

Besides emotional experiences, love consists of knowledge and skills. Fife different groups of skills and knowledge could be distinguished from the participants' stories and they all have a special role in love.

Accepting oneself and the other as is.   Because of the natural resistance to change (e.g., Gottman, 1993), people try to mold their own lives and acquaintances according to their own wishes and needs. Yet, other people cannot be owned or treated like an object but one has to allow everyone to maintain their differences and independence. Furthermore, the differences and the inevitable and even unpredictable changes in others and oneself have to be tolerated.

I noticed new things in myself: I would laugh more and be more social. I learned to take others' opinions into consideration. I felt that I was filled with energy. It was a lovely feeling. (Woman, 23 years, unmarried)

Interaction skills.   Many kinds of trouble, hardships, and conflicts come with the territory and are a part of our everyday life. Ultimately, it is not about the number of problems but the way the problems are solved (see also Fincham, Paleari, & Regalia, 2002). Ability to interact, listen and speak, were considered valuable.

Earlier, we did not sweep our disagreements under the carpet but they were thrashed out immediately. (Woman, married for 53 years until widowed)

Love is not easy because when you live together with someone, you have to make compromises all the time. Perhaps you have to give a piece of yourself but certainly you'll receive it back doubled. (Woman, 22 years, unmarried)

The participants of this research regarded positive attitude and willingness to solve the conflicting situations as important. Appreciating words and actions protect love. Then, love is built on a positive basis: it is not worth avoiding problems. Instead,

one should have the courage to address them understanding that disagreements are a natural part of life. Furthermore, one has to accept the fact that one cannot always be right.

Problem-solving skills and gaining strength from trouble. No one is perfect nor does everyone manage to avoid problems. "The pitfalls of our relationship have turned into resources along with the difficulties," noted one senior couple. A hardship either binds or separates depending on whether it is solved or tolerated. How people handle indisputable problems and conflicts, tolerate them, and, if possible, are able to solve them are the most essential factors (see also Gottman et al., 1998).

> We argue and make up. Afterwards, we can seemly laugh at everything. We don't bear a grudge. (Man, 42 years, married)

Furthermore, the seniors of this research had noted that if life had been stormy and colored by hardships, the spouse's company provided a safe stronghold. Therefore, according to the data, not only problem-solving but also learning and gaining strength from it appeared as skills of love.

Self-control and forgiveness. Accepting changes requires compromises, flexibility, and bargaining but not excessively (see also Uusiautti and Määttä, 2012). The things that are and are not negotiable should be made clear. Maybe those people who are able to overlook others' annoying characteristics, small faults, and soft spots enjoy their human relationships the most. On the other hand, patience, self-control, and ability to overlook the other's annoying traits may become a shortcut to happiness.

> If we argued, he would came to me and say that we don't have time to argue because life is short. If one has some flaws, so does the other as well; there isn't such a thing than perfect human-being. (Woman, married for 60 years until widowed)

> Disappointment, mistrust, and muteness crumble the relationship. We two, my love and I, have settled ourselves against these with determination. (Woman, 35 years, married)

Enthusiasm and humor. Playfulness and sense of humor protect against many problems. Some seniors said that they have their own inside thing because of which others do not always understand them. Sense of humor also helps tolerating or accepting unpleasant things such as the other's minor but irritating features or obstacles that hinder one's own activities.

> My daughter told us parents one that you both are so funny that you deserve each other… shared "whimsy" belongs to the bright side of our marriage. (Woman, 32 years, married).

Love as Acts

The third main category in our concrete illustration of love is the acts of love. Love is not just emotions or skills. Love also has to be manifested through actions. Without this area of love, love would not show in practice. Nor would it be possible to evaluate the depth or sincerity of love if people did not show the essence of their love through action.

Active observation and caring.　According to the data, the phrase I will does not automatically guarantee marital happiness. A marriage requires sensitivity and effort to notice each other, to support, and to gratify. The numerous moments spent in peace and harmony become significant.

Thus, love seems to require activeness that is manifested by various acts that show that the other cares and notices. Regardless of age, people find the feeling of getting support, comfort, and security important. Active observation and caring are shown in empathetic acts not only in the highlights of the life but during ordinary weekdays as well.

> The older you grow, the more necessary the spouses find each other. Two people cope better at home as well by helping each other. (Woman, married for 50 years)

> I want him to be happy, I couldn't love him more. When he is at his weakest, I feel almost bursting with love and tenderness. (Woman, 21 years, married)

The elderly told that they were glad to take care of their partners although sometimes, a spouse's conditions require plenty of work, 24/7 caring, and limit one's life strictly. With this act for love, people can strengthen their belief that they have lived in the right way and borne their responsibility.

> You care for the other so much that you want start taking care of so much that it even transcends your own needs. (Woman, 21 years, unmarried)

Caring derives from the Latin concept caritas which stands for giving altruistic love to fellow human beings. Thus, caring is connected to love. According to Arman and Rehnsfeldt (2006), caring as a virtue and act of ethics is—from both a natural and professional points of view— inseparably related to love as universal value.

On the other hand, Kendrick and Robinson (2002) have reflected the meaning of tender, loving care (TLC) in relation to agape and nursing. This kind of perspective to love represents the core purpose and essence of caring engagement with patient. The authors claim that often the concepts of love and care are treated as identical.

Encouragement.　Encouragement as a part of loving acts is manifested by comfort and support in the tumults of life. In addition, the participants reported that it is important to encourage the significant other to use his or her talents and develop

as a person. According to the data, love stays alive in times of trouble if partners are willing to slow down, soothe, stay by each other's side, introduce new views, encourage, and seek a better life arising from even the most intolerable situations (Carrére et al., 2000).

> The pitfalls of relationship have become strengths through difficulties. (Man, 28 years, married)

> My wife inspires me the most when she is satisfied with herself. When she is happy and enjoys her life and doings, I, too, enjoy her the most. (Man, married for 32 years)

When a spouse supports and appreciates, acknowledges and backs up, family life becomes rewarding and inspiring: the spouses can lean and rely on each other in times of hardship.

> We lost all our possessions but not each other. (Woman, 32 years, married)

Empathy.　Empathy is the capacity to recognize and share feelings (such as sadness or happiness) that are being experienced by the other. A benign atmosphere results from caring and being interested in each other's well-being without ignoring oneself either. According to the participants' opinions, empathy is shown in little, everyday things but which are extremely meaningful. An empathetic partner expresses his or her ability to observe and recognize the other's feelings and act accordingly. Empathy is, thus, a manifestation of putting one's soul into the other's state of mind and situation or being on the same wavelength—understanding the other completely. It is therefore slightly different from caring and active observation as the latter can be done without fully understanding the other's feelings.

The decision of commitment.　Commitment means a willing and strong decision to stick to that particular relationship, and not to give up easily. In other words, commitment is an intention to act or refrain from acting in a specified way. Therefore love is also a matter of decision: when the first fascination of love has faded, the decision of commitment has the more important role. Commitment represents the motivation to keep up love and to work at it.

> You cannot give up too easily—in life in general nor when living together with someone. You also have to appreciate your family. (Couple, married for 52 years)

DISCUSSION

Sometimes, love may manifest itself in a negative, oppressive, addicted, or repressive form (e.g. Bergman, 1995; Capell-Sowder, 1994; Määttä, Uusiautti, 6 Määttä, 2011; Peele, 1988; Person, 2007) but in this research its positive contents were emphasized.

Perhaps, the reason for it lies in the phrasing of a question which in this research was free-form and allowed the participants to elicit those thought and views that they had in mind spontaneously either as their own experiences or hopes. Maybe people tend to see love in a way they wish to see it and thus emphasize positive points of view or believe in the possibility of positive love.

However, the results encouraged us to expand our analysis: what if the ability love was compared to human virtues. After having read all kinds of categorizations about human virtues—starting from Aristotle and Plato, the Old Testament to the Talmud, Buddha, Bushido and the Boy Scouts—Seligman and Peterson and their research group managed to define six virtues that seemed to be common in all these above-mentioned views. The virtues were Wisdom and Knowledge, Courage, Justice, Temperance, Spirituality and transcendence, and Love and humanity (see Seligman, 2002, p. 132–133). According to this view, love means deep caring for others and it makes life worth living. In other words, love is an emotion of strong affection and personal attachment. Furthermore, love can be seen as a virtue or strength representing human kindness, compassion, and affection (e.g. Seligman et al., 2005). Likewise, according to Wärnå, Lindholm, and Eriksson's (2007) research, love is a central virtue and it enriches health by its meaning of giving strength to health and giving strength of life.

Based on the results of this research, love at its best appears as a phenomenon that covers those emotions, knowledge, attitudes, acts, and decision-making that are typical of human virtues. The ability to love can be actualized and it can become as a part of human well-being (see *Figure 2*).
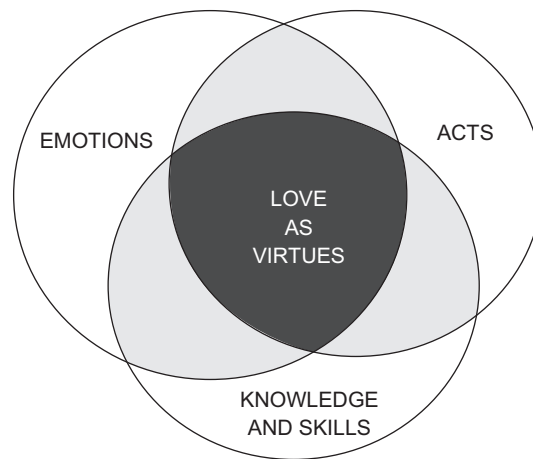

Figure 2. Love as virtues.

Figure 2 illustrates the interconnected nature of the three areas of love introduced in results. When these areas are mixed in a balanced manner, the result can be regarded as love that grounds on and is equal to virtues. Next, we will use some time

contemplating our idea further on and discuss the idea of love as equal to virtues from various points of view.

The concept of virtue is widely discussed in both theological and philosophical literature but virtue combined with health or well-being is not that popular issue (e.g. Wärnå, Lindholm, & Eriksson, 2007). It is not possible to summarize its philosophical analysis into one chapter comprehensively. Instead, we will bring out some interesting and somewhat conflicting ideas about love and whether or not it can be seen equal to a virtue.

What is comforting in Seligman's view about human virtues and strengths is that "with enough time, effort, and determination, the strengths – can be acquired by almost any ordinary person (Seligman, 2002, p. 135)". Seligman employs the term signature strength when referring to those features that are the most characteristic to each person. Using one's signature strengths every day in the main realms of life is supposed to bring abundant gratification and authentic happiness. Seligman asks: how to use these strengths in work, love, parenting, and in having a meaningful life?

Christine Swanton (2010) has studied the concept of universal love as virtue. She regards universal love, then, as a high level of abstraction compared to its sub-virtues or elements such as kindness and forgiveness. Merely, Swanton considers love as preparedness to be kind or forgiving or whatever is defined as the elements of universal love to anyone. Shortly put, her definition of universal love is the following:

> The virtue of universal love is a preparedness to manifest love toward any human individual regardless of attractiveness, merits, and so forth, and is expressed by actual manifestations where appropriate (Swanton, 2010, pp. 155–156).

Thus, preparedness refers to a fundamental emotional orientation to the world as a whole.

This preparedness is somewhat similar to Fahmy's (2010) interpretation of Kantian practical love.

> The duty of practical love is the duty to cultivate a benevolent disposition toward other human beings as well as practical beneficent desires (Fahmy, 2010, p. 321).

In Fahmy's thoughts 'benevolent disposition' may be considered similar to 'preparedness to manifest love' in Swanton's definition. Is the virtue of love then an attitude or a certain kind of position toward other people and the whole world?

Crisp (2010) has analyzed the nature of virtue ethics and his thoughts strongly seem to ground on Aristotle's ideas: Acting virtuously requires that the agent acts with knowledge, acts from rational choice of the actions for their own sake, and acts from a firm and unshakeable character. Thus, if love was defined as a virtue, one should always act in a loving way. Crisp (2010) points out that it is not enough to know what a virtuous people would do but also to act accordingly. In this sense, virtue can and should be manifested in practice—and indeed, love as acts was one important finding in our research as well.

In addition to act, we argued that love is also emotions. What about emotions as a part of a virtue? Our illustration shows that emotions are part of love but whether emotions and feelings should or could be part of virtue has been questioned. The reason for it lies in ethics. According to Meyers (2008), the moral worth of a virtue must be dependent on its conduciveness to acting rightly. From this point of view, sympathetic feelings (typical of love as well), unlike sense of duty, can motivate someone to do wrong. Therefore, Meyers suggests that virtues should not be identified with feelings. Instead, Meyers (2008, p. 244) uses the term "practical sympathy" that is not a feeling but, according to our interpretation, merely the ability to understand what it feels like to be in another person's situation. This kind of sympathy gives people and their actions moral worth and can be considered a virtue. The core question is, from this point of view, "what should one do" instead of "what should one feel". Therefore, Meyers also calls it the virtue of cold-heartedness or cool-heartedness.

Despite the ethicality or moral worth of love, there are numerous contemplations whether love is a matter of feeling or deciding. Even Kant has defined in Doctrine of Virtue love as a matter of feeling on the one hand and on the other hand there are duties of love to other people (see e.g., Fahmy, 2010). Our viewpoint is that emotions that are connected to love are positive and produce good as such, for example feelings of joy and pleasure and the sense of togetherness.

Moreover, if love is not seen only as an emotion that is beyond our control, it can be seen as a decision that is manifested by acts. In a relationship, by defining love as a decision Bardi (2011) means a lifetime effort and persistency, not just being with someone because of holding to a decision instead of love. Considered from this point of view, by moving between the darkness and finding love again, people develop constancy in their gifts of love to others.

This view is supported by Fromm (1956) and Solomon (2002) as well. Solomon regards constancy as a virtue in love although love toward the other can be ignited for a variety of reasons ranging from the noblest character or just the beauty of the beloved. Fromm (1977) has pointed out that love is not about just an affect or a passive inner emotion but active aspiration to help the beloved to grow and be happy. This aspiration must be based on one's ability to love.

The ability to love, thus, represents knowledge and skills that are essential in love: knowing and paying attention to not only others but also oneself; problem-solving skills; interaction and negotiation skills. It is worth noticing that these skills are also achievable to any ordinary person. Therefore, this kind of interpretation of love supports the idea that love is controllable and voluntary virtue that can be learned.

CONCLUSION

The definitions of love may vary but the contents of definitions do seem to share the basic idea of love. It is reasonable to suggest that love should be directed to people as an abstract version of persons (Landrum, 2009) or toward all and thus everyone is loved (Mooney, 2002). Love, then, refers to an attitude or emotion that is directed in

every human being or a human being as such—not in a particular group of people—and can be enhancing everyone's well-being.

Considering love consisting of virtues and its connection to well-being seems not only important but also necessary in the modern world of self-centered projects. Erich Fromm (1977) has aptly asked whether today's people's selfishness manifests true love to oneself as an individual including all one's intellectual, emotional, and sensitive characteristics. Or is it merely a testimony to the lack of self-love? Fromm continues his analysis by saying that if love for fellow humans is a virtue, then self-love also has to be a virtue—instead of a vice—because one self is a human creature. Self-love is actually the opposite of selfishness: selfish people are not capable of loving other people including themselves.

It is important to know that love can be utilized for the common good. We live our lives with other people and we experience ourselves choosing and feeling in relation to other people and events, in other words, acknowledging human interdependence. Bertrand Russell has said: "The good life, as I conceive it, is a happy life. I do not mean that if you are good you will be happy; I mean that if you are happy you will be good."

Likewise, Storh (2009) successfully combines love with the idea of "minding others' business". She explains that the requirement in question is easy to accept when the minding is aimed, for example, at preventing one person from violating others' rights. Yet, she suggests that the idea would expanded so that we might be morally required to intervene in someone's life in order to promote that person's own happiness raises. Storh (2009, p. 136) concludes:

> My flourishing depends on the flourishing of others. That makes it all the more important to permit wise intervention in others' affairs, for in minding others' business, we are also often minding our own (p. 136).

Why is this research important to educators? If love is something learnable, it can be employed to enhancing others' well-being and therefore, it concerns everyone and especially the educators of today when the main emphases seem to be in efficiency, competitiveness, and individualism that lead in increasing insecurity and constantly changing world. Indeed, the ethics of caring (or bothering) concerns teaching (Gilligan, 1982). In fact, caring has been argued to be the central aim and method of education (see Noddings, 1988; Burns & Rathbone, 2010). In this case, the emphasis is on the special value of love and concern for learners. A teacher's caring means genuine love, aspiring to understand and make an effort for pupils' protection, support, and development. Because of this pedagogical caring, the teacher especially pursues pupils' potential to develop and thus help them to find and use their own strengths.

Drawing parallels between love and virtues is just one definition of love but one with a quite wide perspective. In today's world, many phenomena tend to make the emergence of love more and more difficult while at the same time it seems that love is the most needed. In this article, we have introduced a very comforting viewpoint that love is not that mysterious and uncontrollable after all. Instead, its various factors can be named, and the skills and knowledge of love can be learned.

CHAPTER 3

LOVE IN RELATION TO OTHER PHENOMENA

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE? A SCIENTIFIC COMPARISON BETWEEN THE OVERLAPPING AND DIVERGING PHENOMENA OF FRIENDSHIP AND LOVE

Friendship and love concern everyone and form a great part of the social world we live in. Hardly anyone would like to live without friendship or love. There are various kinds of friendship relationships and forms of love, and the meaning of them seems to vary and has varied throughout the history. But what are characteristics of today's friendship and love? Or have opportunist ambitions, cold-hearted calculation, and power issues started to dominate friendships and love as well? As the society has become more and more complicated and circles of life have differentiated, it is more and more difficult to find attachment, shared points of interest, and sense of togetherness.

Along with love, friendship is one of the oldest and most fascinating themes in philosophy. Friendship is given an ennobling and enriching meaning in the life span of a human being. Love is considered the basis of human life. Still, the essence of friendship and love is something that seems to run away when trying to define it. Furthermore, in today's world, less and less time is devoted to close and intimate relationships because busy modern people already seem to find it difficult to have enough time for each other. For what are friendship and love needed eventually and are they even worth all trouble? Is modern friendship and love about benefit or pleasure? What is the difference between love and friendship?

We contemplate these issues in the light of our own studies about the various forms of love and the most recent studies on friendship. First, we dissect the concept of friendship and love. Based on the vast body of research literature and our own previous studies, we analyze the differences and similarities between these two phenomena. Our purpose is to dissect friendship as a form of love and its essence in relation to love.

WHAT IS FRIENDSHIP?

Plato (see Irwin, 1979) and Aristotle (see Sherman, 1993) already contemplated what characteristics a friend has and what friendship is all about. The phrase 'platonic friendship' harks back to Ancient Creek referring to a friendship without any sexual dimension (Leone & Hawkins, 2006). In addition, sociologists have studied friendship abundantly (Bell, 1981). Classic Sociologist Georg Simmel's (1949/1910) studies on sociability and Max Weber's (1980) studies on status and status-bound classification can be considered research that aims at analyzing friendship (Allan, 1989). Also Paul Lazarsfeld (Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1954) and Robert Merton (1968) analyzed the process of friendship and its meaning in the 1950s.

One of the famous sociologists, Ferdinand Tönnies (1887/1955), tried to, already at the end of the 19th century, separate friendship from other forms of social behavior.

According to him, friendship is less intuitive and more a habit and is based on free selection more than other forms of social behavior (cf. Luhmann, 1986; Melkas, 2003). As friendship is based on free choice, there have to be reasons that encourage building friendship and that make it worth cherishing it. Among others, Herman Schmalenbach (1977/1922) continued with this thought.

All in all, friendship has gotten a whole new meaning in the modern everyday life. —In order to promote the Good society we can use ourselves; our feelings of society in changing society, says Lindgren (2012, p. 23). Therefore, friendship as emotional social phenomenon is also sociologically interesting. Friends are about to take the place of family and relatives in the western culture. People do not tend to ask for help and support from the family but more often from friends; and people seem to spare more so-called quality time for their friends than for their family (Pahl, 2000; Wiseman, 1986).

From the cultural-political perspective, friendship can be seen as a part of communality. Indeed, Lynn Jamieson (1998) deliberates the communal change during the past few decades. The society's responsibility for individuals' needs, security, health, and productivity has been transmitted to the individuals themselves, enterprises, organizations and, for example, schools. People create ethical communities that are based on the relationships between them and that are criss-crossed and strengthen each other (see Etzioni, 1997). These communities are states of emotional relationships and their stability is affected by shared values and norms, and history. Therefore, friendship can also be seen as a small community that shares the responsibility and helps individuals in problem-solving (Meredyth & Minson, 2000; Orell, 2007).

In psychology, special attention has been paid on the selection of friends (e.g., Van de Bunt, 1999), how friendship is born (e.g., Hallinan, 1979), and what kind of people become friends (Fisher, 1982). There are several theories about the selection of friendship: according to the reinforcement theory, we like people who reinforce us and our behavior (Patterson, 2007) whereas the investment models say that we enjoy being with people who we can benefit (Rusbult, Drigotas, & Verette, 2007). Friends share, for example, the same age and similar attitudes and basic values. Friendship offers companionship and support that can be emotional, practical, and material (Allan, 1989). Furthermore, various friendship styles (Matthews, 1986; Wright & Patterson, 2006) and even great differences in expectations and the number of friends during the life span (e.g., Hartup & Stevens, 1997; Knox & Hickson, 2001; Tschann, 1988) have been distinguished.

WHAT IS LOVE?

Freud (1971) considered love as irrational by its essence. Freud did not distinguish irrational love from love that is a manifestation of mature personality. Falling in love is, according to Freud, a sort of abnormal phenomenon of which lack of the sense of reality and abusiveness are typical. According to the traditional definition of Platonic love, love is directed toward ideas and especially what is good and beautiful

is the best form of love. However, one has to develop one's ability to love: first one loves the other one's body but little by little learns to love the beauty that is part of all beautiful bodies. After that, the lover finds out that it is more valuable to love souls than bodies. As the ability to love progresses toward more general things, for example laws and knowledge, the lover will ultimately learn to love the idea of beauty (e.g. Nehamas, 2007).

Love has many definitions and many faces as well (Määttä & Uusiautti, 2011b). In addition to romantic love (Beck-Gernsheim & Beck, 1995; Fenchel, 2005; Hatfield, 1988; Hegi & Bergner, 2010; Person, 2007; Sternberg, 1998), there is friendship (Alberoni, 1983; Blieszner & Adams, 1992; Fehr, 1996; Hartup, 1995; Miller & Perlman, 2009), love for fellow humans (Eriksson, 1989; Janako, 1993; Paldanius & Määttä, 2011), mother's and father's love, love of one's country (Määttä, 2006), and pedagogical love (Haavio, 1948; Skinnari, 2004; Määttä & Uusiautti, 2011b). In addition, there are countless classifications constructed from the phases or essence of love: Tzeng (1992) has created an octagon model, Shirley (1982) a vector model, Reiss (1960) a circle. Furthermore, there are, for example, a filter theory (Kerchhoff & Davis, 1962), ABCDE-model (Levinger, 1983), balance, exchange, and equilibrium theories (Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978).

According to Schelerian thinking (see Solasaari, 2003), a human being is fundamentally an emotional creature. A human being's interest in his or her environment, its phenomena, and object world, as well as within himself or herself, is primarily emotional by nature and only secondarily intellectual or willed. People concentrate on what pleases them and what they value. Scheler calls this outside-directed, intentional, interest love. Love arouses intellectual and logical thinking (Solasaari, 2003). Thus, ordo amoris, ranking order created by love, develops. Ordo amoris determines people's action, choices, goals, and opportunities—even destiny.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP

Given the above-mentioned definitions and categorizations of love and friendship, it seems worth discussing the differences between friendship and love. Friendship might be easy to distinguish from more superficial relationships, such as having a nodding acquaintance with someone or work role-based relationships. But what is the difference between love and friendship?

1. Friendship develops little by little, in the course of several meetings, and it deepens along with time (Gouldner, 1987; Vittengl & Holt, 2000). On the other hand, falling in love may result from a long-term friendship or working relationship but often falling in love is a totality that does not follow any rules or laws (Määttä, 2006). Falling in love does not necessarily have any degrees while friendship may have a variety of forms (Allan, 1989).
2. Love means ecstasy, passion, and torture (Määttä, 2006; Määttä, 2011bd) whereas friendship tries to avoid pain (Parks & Floyd, 1996). Good friendship is not a bed

of roses but it can hurt, poison, or restrict (Berndt & Keefe, 1995) and friendship can also involve sorrow and abandonment (Furnham, 1989; Weinstock & Bond, 2000)—yet, friendship is easier than love because it allows distance between friends. Friends look for each other to spent pleasant time together. When being together is unpleasant, friends keep distance for a while to sustain their friendship (Blieszner & Adams, 1992). Life with a loved one, side by side, resembles simultaneously the fascination of love but also is a touchstone. In love, the other's intimacy may become oppressive, clinging, or obsessive, like an addiction (e.g. Bergman, 1995; Capell-Sowder, 1994; Määttä, Uusiautti, & Määttä, 2011; Peele, 1988; Person, 2007). In friendship, both have their own space and place and although one could cross the line, it will be only temporary. It is impossible and unnecessary to enter the other's territory. Protecting their individuality does not mean that friends would grow apart from each other but they will have a new chance of becoming closer. This is the secret of the attraction of friendship: friendship is not a declaration or stable fort but it manifests itself as igniting or lingering movements, serene or turbulent currents between two people (Wiseman, 1986).

3. When one falls in love, a transformation takes place: the one in love is as if he or she was blind and looks at the loved one through rose-tinted glasses (Murray, Holmes, & Griffin, 1996). In friendship, the other is true; neither does one usually look at the friend through the lenses of one's own hopes and interpretations. However, at the beginning of friendship, one may see the friend in an idealized manner. When friendship becomes deeper and the attachment gets stronger, one starts to accept the friend's negative sides as well. In friendship, one does not have to adjust his or her behavior according to the images or hypothetical expectations caused by the other's proximity. (Leone & Hawkins, 2006). Instead, people can look for their own identity, dimensions, living world, and voice and does not have to take any given role or accept any idealized mold (see Stevens, 2000).

4. When people fall in love, they are capable of the most talented performances while trying to adjust to those expectations and imaginative needs that they expect their partner to have—as if they had the sixth sense to foresee the other's needs (e.g. Harvey & Pauwels, 2009). This is different in friendship: when being with a friend, one expects the friend to share his or her self-image or, at least, hopes that the friend does not see him or her very differently. One can be oneself without the fear of becoming embarrassed or undermined. Pretending or trying to impress the other does not belong to good friendship (Fehr, 1996). The distance between ideal and reality is quite short in friendship. Earning this kind of intimacy necessitates the development of mutual trust, reciprocity, and security (Bell, 1981). The paradox of love is that it requires two people to merge into one and still both should hold on to their individuality (Aron, Paris, & Aron, 1995). In good friendship, friends allow each other the freedom to be themselves and become what they possibly can. Thus, friendship is usually more stable and consistent than love because it respects the other's freedom and does not try to

mold the other according to one's own preferences. Friendship does not despise, undermine, envy, or nullify but the core of friendship is to want good for the other for him of her, not for one's own happiness. (Allan, 1989.) A friend does not cling, have vested interests. Nor does he or she abandon, but stays, suggests, searches, wonders, wakes up, and guides in a better direction (Aboud & Mendelson, 1996).

5. Love may be one-sided (Wade, Auer, & Roth, 2009) but friendship is mutual and reciprocal. One can hardly be a friend to someone who he or she does not regard as his or her friend. Maintaining interaction belongs to both friends. The relationship tolerates even a long distance as it can smolder every now and then. Friendship as such does not need any guarantees or promises of eternal permanence (Cramer, 1990). Love and friendship are tested in everyday life and at times of trouble (Hartup, 1994). A friend does not leave alone and abandon but wants to help and support. Still, friendship must be cultivated and it might require effort and bother. Hardships can either deepen or revive friendship—or end it totally.

THE SIMILARITY BETWEEN LOVE AND FRIENSHIP

Although friendship and love have some fundamental differences as was discussed in the previous chapter, they have plenty in common, too. It can be even stated that friendship is an expansion of love: love without friendship is rare, but friendship without love is impossible.

1. First of all, both love and friendship are difficult to define or study comprehensively. They are something mysterious and inexplicable. Scott Peck (1978) argues that when studying love, we play with a mystery that is too extensive or profound to be explained by words. The scientific language does not always sufficiently illustrate the language of emotions. In love and friendship, emotions touch with the whole scale from the ultimate feelings of joy and ecstasy to the deepest forms of disappointment, anxiety, and self-destructive behavior (see also Määttä & Uusiautti, 2011a).

2. Love and friendship provide people with a variety of positive emotions and resources in life and therefore they both are important for human well-being. At the same time, both love and friendship necessitate action and virtues. (See Uusiautti & Määttä, 2011b.) Friendship and love as forms of social relationships make an important part of human resources (Määttä & Uusiautti, 2012a). Good interaction skills, empathy, flexibility, patience, caring, and interest are significant social resources that support the creation and preservation of good and close relationships. People live in the network of human relationships their whole life. Previously, we have defined love as three-dimensional ability that consists of emotions, acts, and knowledge and skills (see Uusiautti & Määttä, 2011a). If friendship is considered an extension of love, it, too, has to consist of the above-mentioned areas.

    a. Our illustration shows that emotions are part of love and seemingly they are part of friendship, as well. Love as the core of friendship means deep caring

for others and it makes life worth living. In other words, love is an emotion of strong affection and personal attachment. Furthermore, love and friendship can be seen as virtues or strengths representing human kindness, compassion, and affection (e.g. Seligman et al., 2005). Yet, there are numerous contemplations whether love is a matter of feeling or deciding. Even Kant (in Doctrine of Virtue) defined love as a matter of feeling on the one hand and on the other hand there are duties of love to other people (see e.g. Fahmy, 2010). Our viewpoint is that emotions that are connected to love are positive and good-producing as such, for example feelings of joy and pleasure and the sense of togetherness and security. These are emotions that friendship provides, too.

b. Secondly, love is manifested through acts and similar acts are needed in cherishing friendship. Crisp (2010) points out that it is not enough to know what to do but also to act accordingly. In this sense, care and love involved in friendship can and should be manifested in practice. Both love and friendship mean closeness that arouses from communication and exchange of thoughts. Friendship and love are experienced by asking, listening, empathizing, and protecting. Friendship is a multidimensional phenomenon where friends can be close to and support each other without being selfish or asking for return gifts.

c. In addition to emotions and acts, knowledge and skills that are essential in love are also essential in friendship. Such skills are, for example, knowing and paying attention to not only others but also oneself, problem-solving skills, and interaction and negotiation skills. It is worth noticing that these skills are also achievable to any ordinary person. Therefore, this kind of interpretation supports the idea that love and friendship are controllable and voluntary virtues that can be learned. It seems that skills and knowledge that are needed in friendship are also achievable and learnable and it can be understood through concepts such as—minding others' business (Storh, 2009) and—minding the close relationship (Harvey & Pauwels, 2009).

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) studied the model of adult attachment through the person's internal model of the self (positive or negative) and the person's internal model of others (positive or negative) and found attachment patterns in friendship that varied according to the dimensions of avoidance and dependency. Indeed, ability to build trust and experience intimacy depends on their capacity to share feelings, thoughts, and desires and to develop an affective bond with a friend (see Bauminger et al., 2008).

3. Not only is friendship valuable among women and men (see Hall, 2011) and different races (see Shelton, Richeson, & Bergsieker, 2009) but also across human life span. Friendship is important in childhood and adolescence (see Bauminger et al., 2008; Dwyer et al., 2010; Zimmermann, 2004) and in adulthood (see Romano et al., 2009; Welch & Houser, 2010) but with different emphases—sometimes for benefit, sometimes for pleasure, and sometimes it is even similar to a some sort of exchange relationship. Likewise, love is equally important in

every phase of life from childhood and adolescence to adulthood (Määttä 2010, 2011c) and in senior age (Määttä, 2011b; Määttä & Uusiautti, 2012c). The basic need for love and friendship does not seem to disappear along aging although the means of fulfilling these needs may vary. Becoming accepted and the need to love and receive love are undeniable and natural regardless of age, health, or gender.

4. Individuality and differences in ways of expression set their own challenge at the expression of love and friendship. One cannot just concentrate on the information given by the other—friendship also gives room for silence, the space where language is not enough or necessary. The question is also about dialogue although words cannot always describe the reality. Still, questions are needed when trying to create room for genuine discussion and openness (Cramer, 1990). Previously, we showed how difficult it is to maintain individuality in love while it is easier in friendship. Yet, individuality and the possibility to become accepted as is are essential both in love and in friendship. It has been shown that life without love and friendship is miserable (Solano, 1986) because they both are important to individuals' self-respect (Voss, Markiewics, & Doyle, 1999).

DISCUSSION

Everyone needs intimate relationships which provide appreciation, support, recreation, and protection. Positive social relationships, such as friendship, bring other benefits, too. It is an effective means of enhancing self-esteem and feelings of mastery (Rousseau, Salek, Aubé, & Morin, 2009) and thus promotes for example success in other areas of life, such as work (see e.g. Uusiautti & Määttä, 2011b).

Meyers (2008, p. 244) uses the term "practical sympathy" that is not a feeling but, according to our interpretation, merely the ability to understand what it feels like to be in another person's situation. This kind of sympathy gives people and their actions moral worth. Like love, also friendship can be regarded as a decision that is manifested by acts. Furthermore, love at the core of friendship is not about just an affect or a passive inner emotion but active aspiration to help the beloved, the friend in this case, to grow and be happy (Fromm, 1977). Good friends make each other flourish. The friend helps to choose the right direction, gives life force, and new perspectives—one does not see enough if alone! Therefore, friendships are invaluable even in today's ruthless and busy life. According to Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991):

> a challenge for future research is to explore empirically how attachment patterns are externalized, maintained, and revised in interaction with the social environment (p. 242).

In this article, we have dissected friendship as an extension of love. Moreover, we have contemplated whether friendship could be regarded as ability similarly as we think love is fundamentally a matter of ability to love.

To further Barthlomew's and Horowitz's thought about the direction of research, we argue that in the modern world of busyness and self-centeredness, it would be necessary to study and learn the ability to love and be a friend. It seems obvious that people cannot cope without intimate and loving relationships—both platonic and non-platonic love relationships—but the modern era necessitates new approaches to finding means to create, cherish, and act in these relationships as the time people have for their loved ones has decreased considerably. What does this tendency mean for human well-being? Considering love and friendship as abilities may provide a way of reconsidering these invaluable areas of life.

LOVE AND CREATIVITY—PARADOXAL BUT IMPORTANT HUMAN VIRTUES

Everything that a human being finds interesting, exciting, and pleasing, can spark love or creativity. In fact, people are almost universal in their appreciation of love and creativity (Hendrick & Hendrick, 2009; Simonton, 2009). Creativity and love are topics of ever-increasing interest, given its importance and applicability to literally every field (e.g., Prabhu, Sutton, & Sauser, 2008).

Everything is significant, extensive, wonderful, and shining in a passionate creative action. "Everything, that is seen by the eyes of love, is beautiful" (Duck, 1991, p. 64) is a reflection that strikes a chord from creativity as well (Girod et al., 2003; Hagman, 2005). Therefore, it seems that love and creativity manifest themselves as an ambition to make their object develop, grow, and unfold, whether it was other people, art, science, ideology, or nature.

In this article, our purpose is to define the essence of these two concepts and produce an illustration of their interconnectedness grounding on our previous studies on love and human strengths (Määttä, 2010, 2011b, c, d; Määttä & Uusiautti, 2011b; Uusiautti & Määttä, 2010, 2011a, c, 2012) and an extensive literature review on the theme. First, we will have a look at the concepts of love and creativity and the dissect the manifold nature of these two phenomena. We have selected some interesting points of view that are to reveal the interconnected nature of these two concepts—yet being aware that the list is not at all encyclopedic. However, the perspectives we are about to highlight set up basis for our fundamental idea: at the end, we will discuss why it is important to study these two concepts together.

THE MULTIPLE FACES OF LOVE AND CREATIVITY

The Concepts of Love and Creativity

Love is a complex phenomenon (Bierhoff & Schmohr, 2004) and may occur in different forms. Love for fellow humans or agape is defined by the metaphor of the Good Samaritan and manifested in practice in welfare work (e.g., Aristotle, 1981; see also Fromm, 1956). Individualistic features, position, nationality, gender, abilities, race, or language do not determine a human being's value. Those differences based on skills, intelligence, or knowledge are insignificant compared with that human basic presence that is the same for all people: the right and need to be loved, accepted, and cared for as well as the right and need to grow and develop (Bradshaw, 1996; Lanara, 1981; Sprengel & Kelly, 1992).

According to Erich Fromm (1956), the mature love expects that a human being has proceeded into the level of a human being who has a creative attitude toward the world. At this stage, one has freed oneself from the dependency to other people,

narcissistic self-centeredness, and will to use other people in the interests of one's own. Fromm's definition implies that love could be considered as a virtue. Indeed, Seligman, Steen, Park, and Peterson (2005) have named love as one of the human virtues (see also Uusiautti & Määttä, 2011a). Respectively, creativity can be found from the list as well.

Seligman et al. (2005, p. 412) say that creativity simply means "thinking of novel and productive ways to do things". Sternberg and Lubart (1999) have defined creativity as the ability to produce work that is novel and appropriate. Simonton's (2009, p. 262) definition follows that of Sternberg's and Lubart's. Creativity can be defined through two conditions: First, it must be original. It means that creative ideas are novel, surprising, and unexpected; however, originality is not sufficient criterion. Creativity must also be adaptive which means that others should find the created thing adjustable or the creation should be adaptable.

Sometimes, creativity is defined only as a feature that produces concrete results (e.g., Carson, Peterson, & Higgings, 2005). Furthermore, creativity can be defined to mean only the so-called divergent creative reasoning. In the divergent working, several options for solution are kept open in a flexible way, whereas the convergent way of working concentrates on one solution in order to achieve the right convincing result. (Basadur & Hausdorf, 1996; Runco, 1993.)

Impossible to Research?

As shown in the previous chapter, it is perhaps impossible to define comprehensively what love or creativity are or are not. They are something mysterious, inexplicable, beyond all mundane; and yet, some important research on love and creativity has been conducted. Freud's coeval, Finck, ended up stating that "you may say almost anything about love and you are presumably always right" (Freud, 1959, p. 64).

Scott Peck (1978) argues that when studying love, we play with a mystery that is too extensive or profound to be explained by words. Hendrick and Hendrick (2009) share a more practical point of view to research on love: they divide it into naturalistic/biological and psychological/social approaches. The first one is rooted in the body, in emotion, and people's evolutionary heritage while in the latter one, concepts such as cognition, social motives, interaction and communication are of prevailing interest.

The creativity research, for its part, has pointed out that the theories of creativity are creative products by definition (e.g., Harrington, 1975; Uusikylä, 1992). The research on creativity has also regarded as suspicious: much research has been done in laboratory settings but not in real-life situations (e.g., Paulus & Browm, 2007) and creativity has even been called as "one of psychology's orphans" (Sternberg & Lubert, 1999, p. 4). Creativity has been modeled from various perspectives, though. For example, Paulus and Brown (2007) have presented a model of how social-motivational factors might influence the cognitive process of individual idea generation but they also claim that there is still much to learn about the complex process of creative idea generation.

Indeed, creativity is difficult to research: firstly, it may be viewed as some kind of a mental process; secondly, it can be seen as a certain type of person who exhibits creativity; and thirdly, it can refer to concrete products that result from creative working—and each of these manifestations can be researched differently (Simonton, 2009). According to Simonton (2009; see also Subotnik & Arnold, 1995), there is lack of research that pursues explaining the development of creativity.

When it comes to creativity, well-known schemas do not apply because creativity springs up in situations where it is not at all clear what strategy or behavior will yield an acceptable outcome (see Rietzschel, De Dreu, & Nijstad, 2007). Achievements in the arts and sciences provide inspiration, give comfort, decrease suffering, and improve the quality of human life; and thus are well worth assessing accurately and investigating in detail (Carson, Peterson, & Higgins, 2005). Furthermore, creativity is understood not only as an individual's feature (a lone genius) but more often as a result of group work (see Nijstad & Levine, 2007; Simonton, 2009). Indeed, Anderson, de Dreu, and Nijstad (2004) have suggested that creativity and innovations should be studied more comprehensively and in a more routinized manner as the modern, constantly changing working life alone requires it – not to mention other areas of life.

WHAT IS IN COMMON TO LOVE AND CREATIVITY?

Paradoxes

Love requires that two human beings become one and still remain as individuals. At the end, everyone has to lean just on oneself, as hard as it is (see Perry-Smith & Shalley, 2003).

Roman Poet, Ovidius (1966), described one paradox of love already two-thousand years ago (43 BC-17 AD): "I cannot live with you or without you". Excessive closeness and too much of a distance separate out and the high tide and low tide of love—the fluctuation of rapprochement and withdrawing—do not follow any predetermined pattern. There are several other paradoxal aspirations and dual messages. They all pose tensions to the hopes and promises set on love. The higher are expectations, the higher are disappointments.

Also creativity includes paradoxes. On the one hand, creativity is understood as an exceptional talent reached by only a few (see e.g., Lubinski et al., 2001). On the other hand, creativity is seen as a characteristic that covers everyone, as a sort of human ability (see Treffinger, 1986). Recent studies (see e.g., McWilliam, Dawson, & Tan, 2008) have shown that creative capacity building can be made visible and even translated into means that can be used in teaching and that constitute creative capacity. Indeed, the understanding about the nature of creativity has shifted from the quality of only the rare (Big "C") toward a necessity for all (Small "C") (McWilliam, Tan, & Dawson, 2010; Csikszentmihalyi, 1997).

The Connection between Suffering and Creativity and Love Lunacy

Love is foolery, have many of the earliest famous novelists said. Robert Burton (1963/1651) declared in the 17th century that love is not just lunacy but also "sickness, fever, agony" and describes quite in detail the world-shaking and negative effects that love has on both the individual people and the whole society. In this way, he shows his reverence to Francis Bacon who quite simply stated at the end of the 16th century that "it is impossible to be in love and be wise" (Bacon, 1557/1955). Bacon's thoughts are highly regarded in Shakespeare's plays as well.

Later on, the definitions of the nature of love and falling in love have been delivered more and more. Alberoni (1983) describes falling in love as assimilation, Tennov (1979) refers to limerence, whereas Girard (1972) talks about losing oneself, Fromm (1988) about the disappearance of individuality, Askew (1965) about neurosis, Kilpatrick (1974) about anti-socialization, De Rougement (1956) about orientation toward death, Burton (in 1651) about insanity, and Stendahl (1830/1957) about crystallizing.

As an antithesis, love has been regarded as a divine phenomenon, a manifestation of immortality in the mortal people. Camus (1955) emphasizes the unifying power on which love is based: A human being is directed by the longing for the tranquility, eternity, and security of which falling in love consists. Sam Keen (1974) refers to love as motivation and energy. Erich Fromm (1988) considers love an active force. (See also Määttä, 1999.)

Creativity has also been associated with the mental problems, emotional instability, and neurotic personality (e.g., Kaufman, 2005; Prentky, 2000) as well as suffering (e.g., Ghadirian & Ghadirian, 2009). A Freudian conception of the reasons for creativity is based on the instincts and subconscious repressions of the psyche. The need for creation has been understood as an attempt to solve conflicts or to be enhanced by suffering. The motivation for creativity has been explained by numerous negative characteristics that describe insanity or derangement. (Guastello et al., 2004; Jamison, 1995; Uusikylä, 1992.)

The present views and research results, for their part, emphasize how creativeness is the most efficient with those whose personality is harmonious and stable. Creativity is the most productive with those whose personality consists of features such as independence, strength, optimism, inner-direction, and flexibility, tolerance of conflicts, energy as well as perseverance and goal-orientation. (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, 2000; Eysenck, 1993; Maslow, 1988.)

Merely Equal to Joy?

Many researchers connect the positive features with love and creativity. They are joy and pleasure. When Spinoza (1994/1677) sketched the illustration of a wise and rational life, he emphasized the meaning of love, joy, and happiness. They stand for growing perfection; whereas hate, fear, and disregard mean diminishing perfection.

(See Giancinto et al., 2007.) Creative activity includes pleasure as well. Finnish Author Anja Kauranen said in an interview that: 'I do not know whether I would wrote if it did not constantly include the feeling of freeing oneself, lightness, and delight.' (see also Perrine & Brodersen, 2005.)

At its best, creativity manifests itself as a current, so-called experience of flow (see Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Flow is a top experience during which one is pulled in such a comprehensive way in the challenging performance that the consciousness of time and place blurs. The experience of flow occurs when the challenges of a task and the abilities of the individual are balanced. It refers to a state with enjoyable concentration and activity resulting in a productive and successful performance; whether it was the case of writing, wall creeping, playing chess, making a sculpture or surgery, or composing (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000.).

Engagement can be considered similar to flow (Siitonen, 1999). It refers to the fascination and passion of functioning or creating: When working at one's limits and experiencing inspiration, satisfaction, and the feelings of joy and delight, one is riveted by an interesting task: time disappears and hours turn into minutes. The positive experiences and perceived achievements form the germ of expertise. During the current, emotions are not only controlled and funneled, they are positive, filled with energy, and help accomplishing the task. Getting depressed or becoming distressed is the opposite of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Falling in love means pleasure, too; the emotions of pain and loneliness disappear as the fantasies and dreams appear, and the experiences of symbiosis strengthen. The awareness of 'We' and the feeling of completeness become more powerful. The English word for it is felicitous: 'to fall in love'. A human being falls or stumbles. One's own ego disappears and the emotion of falling in love is total. Nothing is normal or conventional. The consciousness of time and distance get lost: the feeling adheres infrangibly just like the concentration associated with the experience of flow.

On the other hand, suppressing an individual's creativity results in several negative consequences. A human being, whose presence and activity are being set too much of the terms, pressure, and stress, and who has to adjust within too strict limits, ends up behaving aggressively and destructive. Aggression is one of the negative consequences of creativity.

Tongue-in-Cheek

Creativity and love relate to humor and playfulness which can be considered human virtues as well (cf. Seligman et al., 2005). The experiences of realization and joking both exemplifies the ability to free one's mind and soul (see Burch et al., 2006). Curiosity, unchained creation, and spontaneity are peculiar to a child. They are also the source of creativity and love (e.g., Russ & Kaugars, 2000). Furthermore, according to Dewey (1991), the balance between playfulness and sobriety is the ideal of intellectuality.

Love consists of love plays in which the playful behavior, being silly, and joyfulness bring laughter and delights to the life together. Love and playfulness belong together. Desmond Morris (1967) defined play as a voyage of exploration that enhances "the atmosphere of wonder and curiosity; will to search and find and experiment." In this way, play and playfulness can be connected to love, creativity, and joy, as well as to the delight of wonder and discovering something new. It is even alleged that all creativity rests on play (see Koivunen, 1997; Wolfradt & Pretz, 2001). From this point of view, also the playful behavior of those who are in love frees themselves to find the new characteristics from themselves and from other people, and at the same time, the charm of novelty and power of the feeling of falling in love strengthens.

Nor do laughter and being silly, coddling and love plays—childish behaviors—show any signs of subsiding even later in life. There are numerous examples of the fact how the age does not diminish the joy and playfulness of love. The age is forgotten: they just are and enjoy being spreading joy to everyone.

Bugger the Age

The previous chapter suggests that love and creativity are not conditional of age although the forms of love (Määttä, 2005b) and creativity (see e.g., Hong & Milgram, 2010) change along with age. The ability to love and create is part of a human being even in later life because people do not lose their ability to love romantically along aging (Lang & Fingerman, 2004; Määttä, 2011b). Both love and creative functioning satisfy our deepest emotional needs regardless of age and are irreplaceable to the emotional and intellectual balance in this busy, performance-centered, and competitive culture of ours (see Simonton, 1989).

Thus, love and creativity do not retire, on the contrary. There are reasons to claim that people are born old and get younger as they age (Heinonen, 1988). When young, people embody the genetic heredity and lean on the given certainties and patterns whose durability and suitability have not been tested by experience. Along with age, the experiences increase and one's own special personality develops. Through the experiences, one undergoes a transformation and becomes younger. Jarmo Heinonen (1988, p. 40) stated: 'All that is ancient and inherited in him/her gives place to new.'

Also creativity alters along with aging. The expressive creativity—spontaneity and originality—is that form of creativity that diminishes after childhood. It is replaced by the prosperous and productive creativity or possibly inventive creativity. (Taylor, 1988; Wolfradt & Pretz, 2001.)

In the history of art, there is a variety of examples of artists, composers, authors, film makers, and architects, who have created their best work in later life. Aino Räty-Hämäläinen (1988) estimates that J.S. Bach's works of his old age are considered the most beautiful and that Giuseppe Verdi composed Otello at the age of 74 and the most daring of his operas, Falstaff, at the age of 80. Helene Schjerfbeck was an active creator until she was over 80 years old; likewise, Artist Rembrandt renewed

and developed into more and more peculiar along with ageing. Nor do authors think that their writing is age-bound. Supposedly, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's talent of being a love lyricist still at the age of 80 stemmed from his powerful will to complete Faust. He sketched this work for six decades and maybe this goal lengthened his biological age. 90-year-old Finnish Movie-Director Tyyni Tulio thought that her creative power originated from the gift of not giving up: "One has to have a goal that makes life meaningful and that is the secret of mental agility."

A Matter of Will but Avoiding Duress

Love and creativity require also practicing and learning as well as testing the new boundaries. Are love and creativity, such as learning is, both merely working, after all? A love affair will not last automatically but sustaining it requires activeness, creativity, and sensitivity like any other success. Creativity is also disciplined working and vigilance (Wang & Horng, 2002). Just an inspiration or intuition will not be enough. The creative ideas are needed but they also have to be carried out and made visible, turned into action.

"The door to happiness opens outwards", Kierkegaard has noted (see Lehtinen, 1990) and thus, assures also of the significance of the acts of love, changing the positive emotions into actions and words. Even the smallest acts of love can spark the strong emotions. How to make the other radiate, what pleases the other one; stopping to think these questions may be a short-cut to happiness. At its best, making someone happy is rewarding, the emotion of excitement rubs off and shakes: "she fills my heart with very special things, with angels' songs with wild imaginings, she fills my soul with so much love" (Where Do I Begin).

The other side of the coin is that the activity and diligence will not necessarily advance satisfyingly. Although one had plenty of drive and belief, hope and industriousness, that all can move mountains, still love and creativity include solving constant conflicts, and non-stop molting and reproducing the experiences of real actuality. Creativity or love will not necessarily appear as desired, not by trying or by demanding. Love or creativity cannot be enhanced by forcing. Instead, one has to be intrinsically motivated to carry out these ideas as extrinsic motivation has been proven to have negative association with creativity (Prabhu, Sutton, & Sauser, 2008)—neither do compulsion or outer rewards guarantee genuine love (Gordon & Chen, 2010).

Venturing on the new dimensions belongs to love. In this sense, love is like art, notes Erich Fromm (1956). A human being enters the unknown world and has to do things differently than before and may find moving in the strange ground is frightening. Overcoming the fears and taking risks consist of "self-discipline, concentration, overcoming one's own narcissism, mind, and humbleness" (Fromm, 1956).

Creativity requires commitment, concentration, and devotion (Probst et al., 2007). Neither will love flourish if the partner's existence is ignored and considered

self-evident (Gottman et al. 1998; Johnson et al., 1992). No one avoids setbacks and difficulties nor will creativity or love be discouraged by them. Even the failures provide resources if the difficulties and conflicts are tolerated without giving up immediately. If one is ready to search new views and better life that results from the misfortunes even in the situations that seem the most intolerable, the faith and will to survive and succeed will not be shaken. Sometimes, the problems are certainly so overwhelming that even the good efforts, abilities, or will do not help.

The will to alter and mold love, other people, and one's own life situation according to one's wishes is human. Creative activity and love require compromises, tolerance to conflicts as well as flexibility and bargaining, but not excessively. Affinity leads easily to the subordination and exercise of power even though "love should seek its own". Alberoni (1983) characterizes the compulsion to own the other one and the crisis it results in felicitously by comparing it to catching a butterfly. Neither love nor creativity live or flourish if chained. In addition, creativity consists of apparently stagnant, inactive periods (Beeftink, van Eerde, & Rutte, 2008). It is not always possible to produce something visible that delights self or the others.

The Role of Imagination

"Love is the victory of the imagination over the brain" (May, 1969, p. 74) and "creativity is the kingdom of imagination" (Krippner & Dillard, 1988, p. 125). Several aphorisms emphasize how creativity and love constitute their own reality as they both require imagination.

Although other people and activities are real in love there are plenty of fantasies and false reality. Even in love, there is a phase when it does not appear how the eyes see it but how the mind experiences it. A human being constructs love to fit his or her hopes and ideals. Watzlavik (1974), for his part, describes love as "a syndrome of utopia", which appears as a tendency to see love as a solution to everything although there is not any solution really. In love, one lives in a fallacy of unrealistic fantasies. Or is this actually the fascination of love: to strive for perfection that does not exist but in which one believes so deeply that one is ready to struggle over obstacles and seek something greater and more complete? Perhaps, it is that the illusion that makes one happy is not more insignificant than the truth that leads one back to earth. (Murray et al., 1996.)

When it comes to creativity, imagination has been considered a way of seeing, feeling and providing mystical strengths. Imagination consists of the conscious and unconscious interaction between the extrinsic and intrinsic experiences as well as the previous and present ones. Juho Hollo (1932) noted in 1932 that imagination is a special mental function along with the memory and reasoning. Imagination is the union between intelligence and emotion in which the ability to organize and unite mental pictures actively and passively is essential.

Reasoning and memory are needed for providing material for imagination and this material is shaped and changed by imagination, as a result of intuition and free production. The emotion is required to ignite and spark inspiration and spontaneity, whereas the reasoning and intellectual syntheses are needed for working and reshaping. (Gaut, 2003)

Breaking away from mannerism belongs to imagination; although a healthy imagination does not travel only in unreality but expands and completes the reality. Imagination is allocated to what is not yet or anymore, what is not present. Finnish Author Olli Jalonen (2000) describes his writing: "at its best, it seems to include something like tiny parts from the future".

CONCLUSION: WHAT COMES FROM THE HEART, SETS OFF THE HEARTS

The survival of mankind and the development of our culture have always been built on the human ability to create and love. For this reason, it is reasonable to dispel the false notions that these essential features of a human being could not be addressed through research as well—in order to reveal, describe, analyze, and explain. This was the purpose of this article as well. Moreover, we suggest that modern scientists should pay attention to the interconnectedness of love and creativity as they form an important part of human well-being. How this linkage could be put to use, for example, in education?

Every human being and society need love to stay healthy. Additionally, the value of play, imagination, and creativity is priceless. The healthy development is not possible without love or the various forms of creativity. How to support the development of children's creativity? Because of the connection between love and creativity, it seems reasonable to assume that a teacher who applies pedagogical love could foster students' creativity regardless of the educational level. Pedagogical love provides a specific teaching attitude and shows in quite a concrete way that acting in the teaching profession as the core of pedagogical love consists of trust in pupils' learning capacities and the desire to help pupils improve their abilities and talents (see Määttä & Uusiautti, 2011b).

Whereas Freud defined human mental health as the ability to love and work, the ability to creativity could be added to the features of mental health. Especially, the experience of flow and active searching for the sense of well-being within creativity enhances development into the top level. Human beings' aspiration to constantly improve their skills is at least partly due to the wish to keep track of the current or to strive for higher levels of well-being (Diener, Lucas, & Napa Scollon, 2006).

Furthermore, the interconnectedness of love and creativity should be paid attention to in working life as well. Uusiautti's (2008) research revealed some encouraging results concerning success at work. In her research, top workers had experienced love for their work but also considered creative traits, for example in the form of proactive way of working, important as well (see also Uusiautti & Määttä, 2010; 2012).

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Is love creativity and creativity love, then? Yes, they are, but not just that. Love is not just creativity. It is serious and important to all of us as well as a bruising, touching, and developing emotional and learning experience that opens new views— as do creative processes and actions. In addition, creativity needs love in order to stay live; whereas love needs creativity in order to stay attracting When it comes to love and creativity, it seems that what comes from the heart sets off the hearts.'

LOVE FOR WORK AS THE WAY TOWARD WELL-BEING

Love means deep caring for others and it makes life worth living, in other words, love is an emotion of strong affection and personal attachment. Furthermore, love can be seen as a virtue or strength representing human kindness, compassion, and affection (e.g., Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005) and it has many definitions. What about love for work? Is it "love" and how could it be defined? Not only spend people a substantial portion of their life at work but some of them also enjoy working and are enthusiastic about it. Love for work can be fascinating and liberating or oppressive and compelling. Love for work may develop into an addiction but it can provide enormous satisfaction as well. More often, however, we tend to situate love in other areas of life than in work. Today's working life poses continuous efficiency and development pressures to all employees regardless of the occupation. Therefore, surviving in the riptide of modern working life has become demanding, not to mention succeeding in it. Would it, thus, be reasonable to contemplate for a moment the idea of love for work: what kinds of elements it could consist of? Positive emotions support problem-solving skills and the ability to act in an innovative way and thus human well-being. The importance and potential of this may seem surprising as the feelings of happiness are so simple and common in nature (Isen, 2006). However, experience has already shown that the healthier and more satisfied the employees are the better they work (Rissa, 2007).

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WORK

Still in the 1990s, the role of feelings at work was almost ignored by focusing almost exclusively on only two constructs: namely stress and satisfaction (see Briber, 1999). Nowadays, developing interventions to increase happiness is a major focus of positive psychology (Schiffrin & Nelson, 2010). At the personal level, positive psychology concentrates on subjective experiences, well-being, satisfaction, flow, joy, pleasure, and happiness, as well as on optimistic and hopeful attitude and confidence in the future. Furthermore, love has been defined as one of the people's basic strengths within the virtue of humanity (see Seligman et al., 2005). At the group level, the interest of positive psychology is in the civil skills and institutions that turn individuals into better citizens—responsible, flexible, and ethical workers (Seligman, 2002).

Those characteristics of work that enhance efficient and engaged working have been illustrated in many ways. For example, Hackman and Oldham's (1976) job characteristics model describes meaningful work relating to jobs with characteristics such as task variety, identity and significance, feedback, and autonomy. However, individuals' perceptions of their jobs do not depend entirely on the objective

characteristics of the job: for example, high-quality leadership has the potential to positively influence employees' perceptions of the meaning of their work and thus to affect also their psychological well-being (Arnold, Turner, Barling, Kelloway, & McKee, 2007; Gilbreath & Benson, 2004). According to Arnold et al. (2007), humanistic work values – in other words, the normative beliefs individuals hold about whether work should be meaningful – have an important influence on the likelihood of finding meaning in current work and psychological well-being. This kind of idea of humanistic work values are in line with the definition of healthy work as well:

> Healthy work exists where people feel good, achieve high performance, and have high levels of well-being (Quick, 1999, p. 123).

Thus, healthy work does not rest solely on the above mentioned objective characteristics but positive feeling is also important. That is why we want to focus attention toward love for work in this article.

THE AIM OF THIS ARTICLE

In this article, our a im is to dissect the concept of love for work. It can be defined as a part of a broader emotion 'liking' but can easily be associated with attraction and romantic relationships at a work place (Briber, 1999). However, in this article our aim is to analyze love 'for' work not 'at' work—although the latter could make one feel love for work an d, indeed, love for work is experienced at work but presumably the feeling keeps up at home as well. Therefore, love can be seen as a particular strength of character which is robustly associated with work satisfaction across a range of occupation types and positions (Peterson & Park, 2006). First, we consider the phenomenon from the point of view of employees' love for work: how can love for work be defined and what elements does it consist of? Secondly, we dissect the phenomenon from leaders' perspective: what does love for work as well as fostering that attitude and transmitting it to followers mean for leadership? Furthermore, our purpose is to connect love for work with vocational education and in-service training: what their role is in the genesis of love for work and how they could enhance it. As love is one of the fundamental concepts of positive psychology, our review is strongly tinted by this theoretical perspective.

EMPLOYEES' LOVE FOR WORK

Happiness and satisfaction must be unde rstood as the outcome of an interaction process between individual characteristics and aspirations on the one side, and social relations and macro-social structures on the other side (Haller & Hadler, 2006). Happy people perform better at work than those who report low well-being. Furthermore, happy workers are better organizational citizens, because they help other people at work in various ways (see Diener & Seligman, 2004). Kaye (2010)

points out that happiness can be directly translated into engagement, productivity, and satisfaction—the wide definition of productive work (see Prewitt, 2003). Likewise, according to Lyubomirsky et al. (2005), positive affect is associated with multiple positive outcomes including better performance ratings at work, higher salaries, and improved health.

Furthermore, there is evidence that successful employees do also have a positive and optimistic attitude toward work—downright love—and they experience work satisfaction, joy of work, and work drive (see Uusiautti, 2008).

Kinjerski and Skrypnek (2006) have listed factors that are associated with individuals' experiences of spirit at work. These factors can be considered essential also when defining love for work:

1. Leaders and senior members who inspire employees through their leadership and their example;
2. a strong organizational foundation that includes a shared vision, mission, purpose, and an intention to contribute to the overall good of society;
3. organizational integrity and work that is aligned with its mission and purpose;
4. positive workplace culture including a positive physical space for employees to work in;
5. positive connections among all members and a sense of community in the organization;
6. opportunities for members to pursue professional and personal growth and to fulfill their own personal mission through work; and
7. appreciation and regard for the contributions made by its members (Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2006, pp. 290–291).

Kinjerski's and Skrypnek's description is interesting as it presents only one reference on physical working conditions (the positive physical space for employees to work in) while the others refer to inspiration, mission and purpose, good intention, integrity as well as to positive culture and inter-worker connections including appreciation. Opportunities to develop oneself professionally and personally, for their part, strengthen the positive feeling toward work as well.

Love for work resembles voluntary altruistic or helpful acts that have the potential to enhance organizations and that are called organizational citizenship behavior (see Spector & Fox, 2002). Individuals may make voluntary contributions that go beyond specific task performance or the psychological contract with the employer and these behaviors are intended to help either people or the organization. Furthermore, people who are empathetic by nature will tend to help others, while people experience being fairly treated will tend to help the organization.

LOVING LEADERS AND LEADERS' LOVE FOR WORK

The role of emotions in the leadership process has attracted increasing interest in recent years and leaders' emotional expressions are typically more important to

followers than the objective content of their communication (see Glasø & Einarsen, 2008). Emotions and emotional intelligence have even been considered as the heart of effective leadership (Arnold et al., 2007).

Furthermore, an ethic of caring establishes, instead of guiding principles to blindly follow, a moral touchstone for decision making (Hoyle, 2002). When leaders consistently exhibit love, forgiveness, and trust in relationships, their employees respond with increased commitment and loyalty.

Bass (2000) describes the important role that emotions play in contemporary leadership, by contrasting ''transactional'' leaders with ''transformational'' leaders. Traditional transactional leaders rather focus on mutual transactions and the exchange of rewards for performance and efforts between employee and employer instead of considering affective experiences. Transformational leaders project a vision that their followers believe in, they inspire and support the followers, and make them feel wanted and valuable to the organization. The latter leader type corresponds to our conception of a loving leader.

The present understanding, that well-being is not only valuable because it feels good but also because it has beneficial consequences, makes loving management imperative at work places. According to Rego, Ribeiro, Pina, and Jesuino (2011) fostering organizational virtuousness (e.g., through honesty, interpersonal respect, and compassion; combining high standards of performance with a culture of forgiveness and learning from mistakes) improves employees' affective well-being and promotes a more committed workforce. Considering these findings and mirroring the growing contributions of the positive psychology (e.g. Gable & Haidt, 2005; Buss, 2000; Seligman et al., 2005), it seems clear that a "positive-people-management" perspective should be considered, both by practitioners and scholars internationally (see Calori, 1995).

Sensitive and loving leaders develop a culture that demonstrates concern for individual needs at the work place (Fairholm & Fairholm, 2000) but they pay attention to and support their followers' personal life as well (Ransford, Crouter, & McHale, 2008). Yet, an organization where employees are happy should also make profit in economic sense. However, these two factors do not exclude each other. It has been shown that effective leaders are sensitive and responsive to their followers' needs by providing advice, guidance, as well as emotional and instrumental resources, by supporting employees' creativity, initiative, and autonomy as well as desire to meet new challenges and develop and acquire new professional skills and thus enhance their self-worth and self-efficacy (e.g., Popper & Amit, 2009). Happiness not only produces a quantitative improvement by increasing efficiency but also a qualitative one by making a better product or outcome by the virtue of pride, belief, and commitment to one's job. Happy employees exhibit higher levels of jobrelated performance behaviors than do unhappy employees (Wrigth, 2004).

Therefore, emotions are also given prominence in leadership (Campbell, 2007). It has been also stated that authentic leaders are

as guided by the qualities of the heart (passion and compassion) as by the qualities of the mind (Avolio et al., 2004, p. 805).

Love in leaders' work can also be considered from the point of view of the interpersonal nature of emotions. According to Fischer and van Kleef (2010), it is an indisputable fact that emotions are mostly reactions to other people, that emotions take place in settings where other people are present, that emotions are expressed toward other people and regulated because of other people: therefore, the elicitation of love by understanding other people as the cause, target, or third-party observer of these emotions is necessary for leaders.

CAN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IGNITE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING SUSTAIN LOVE FOR WORK?

If individual strengths and virtues as well as loving leadership enhanced love for work, would vocational education have the role for igniting future leaders' and employees' loving and caring attitude toward work? Does vocational education provide students with learning settings that enhance the emergence of the positive emotions toward work?

It has been suggested that education should include training that increase positive emotion through training and activities on savoring and mindfulness, gratitude, optimism and resilience, such as stress reductions skills training, life-planning and goal-setting skills training, problem-solving skills training as well as training aiming at identifying students' (future employees') signature strengths and having them employ these strengths in their daily lives (Maddux, 2002).

Consequently, it can be argued that in-service training could sustain or enhance the emergence of love for work and therefore, in-service training has a special role as well. In the modern society, people has to be ready to learn new all the time but education and training in adulthood also shape employees' lives individually and strengthen their subjectivity (Kilpeläinen, 2004). Employees who want to develop themselves and their work appreciate the opportunities produced by inservice training (Uusiautti, 2008; Uusiautti & Määttä, 2010). Thus, in-service training can function as a booster of love for work: it strengthens it as employees notice their increasing and improving proficiency and provide them with the feeling of mastery and self-fulfillment. Caring as the principle of professional development can even lead to "perfect storm" that can lead to a much deeper and more personal engagement (see e.g., Flint, Kurumada, Fisher, & Zisook, 2011).

CONCLUSION

The predictive strength of affective reactions depends on social-contextual factors, such as the nature of the interpersonal relationship (e.g., cooperative or competitive), prevailing (cultural) norms (e.g., "display rules"), and the way the emotion are

expressed (Fischer & van Kleef, 2010). Based on our review, love for work can be studied both from personal and interpersonal perspectives. Love for work is not just something that an individual employee or a leader can experience but what they can spread in the work community and what can be enhanced through education as well.

Love for work consists of the following elements as well: persistence, enthusiasm, commitment, optimistic and reactive attitude as well as willingness to develop one's proficiency. Furthermore, according to our studies, all these features epitomized successful finnish employees (see Uusiautti & Määttä, 2010). This conclusion raises inevitably a question: Does love for work also lead to (or enhance) success at work? It could, as for example according to Rimé (2009), positive emotions enhance individual well-being in two different ways: by the increase of the level of positive affect that they entail and by the positive feedback that a successful experience brings to the knowledge base and the self.

In work context, love and caring emphasize the connection through responsibility to others rather than tight rules and discipline. Indeed, Cadwell and Dixon (2009) have defined love, forgiveness, and trust as organizational constructs that are freedom producing empowering, and vital to enhancing employees' selfshould efficacy.

To expand our analysis further, it can be pointed out that emotions, such as love, can be utilized for the common good. We live our lives with other people and we experience ourselves choosing and feeling in relation to other people and events, in other words, acknowledging human interdependence (Oatley, 2010). In the work context, it can be stated that if a workplace that operates on the highest ethical plane is the goal, one should work for creating a happy people's work place with engaged employees who have fun at work and who find ways to make their work of profound service to others.

CHAPTER 4

SKEWED AND CRUMBLED LOVE

WHEN LOVE DRIVES YOU OFF THE TRAILS: NARRATIVES OF MORBID LOVE

Romantic love appears as the keystone of happiness and it is seen to involve plenty of various positive physical, psychological, and behavioral features (Aron et al., 2005; Gonzaga et al., 2001; Fisher, 2004; Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986; Määttä, 2011a,b; Määttä & Uusiautti, 2012a,d; Uusiautti & Määttä, 2011, 2012). These features are, among others, increased sense of well-being, energy, stronger self-esteem and self-regard, sexual appeal, and expectation of a promising symbiotic future. Many of these factors work two-way: on the one hand, they support positive togetherness while, on the other hand, they can become the chains of love. The latter refers to the appeal of the partner's companion and constant, even desperate, longing for it; caring for the partner and thinking of him/her compulsively; the experience of the partner's possession and his/her dependency; and the fear of losing love. Moreover, one's fragility and insecurity also cloud expectations toward love—anticipation and wishes may eventually turn into demands for guaranteed love.

More and more research data about the crises, touchstones, and minefields of love are available (Acavedo & Aron, 2009; Altbauer-Rudnik, 2006; de Boer, van Buel, & Ter Horst, 2011; Peele, 1975; 1988; Sussman, 2010; Thomson & White, 1993; Toohey, 1992). The desire for the sense of well-being connected to love can turn into an addiction (Forward & Craig, 1991; Peabody, 2005). Already before Stanton Peele (1975), Sigmund Freud had noted the similarity of passionate love with substance abuse as he stated (the citation adopted from Reynaud et al., 2010):

> The Soma Elixir (a love potion) is perfectly in line with the most important intuition, that all our inebriating spirits and our stimulating alkaloids are merely a substitute for a single substance, yet to be discovered, the same that the intoxication of love procures (p. 261).

Love has been compared to addiction (Peabody, 2005; Reynaud et al., 2010) and from this perspective, love has been studied especially as neurochemical (Bianchi-Demicheli, Grafton, & Ortigue, 2006; Carter, 1998; Ortigue et al., 2007; Schultz, 2000), neurobiological (Esch & Stefano, 2005; Goodman, 2008), and hormonal functions (Marrazziti & Canale, 2004; Pessiglione et al., 2006). Pleasures, rewards, and addiction that result from falling in love have been compared to effects of drug abuse (e.g. Adinoff, 2004; Gardner, 2011; Volkow et al., 2006), problem gambling (Potenza, 2008; Tamminga & Nestler, 2006), eating disorders (Savukoski, Uusiautti, & Määttä, 2011, 2012), religion (Taylor, 2002), and even to the smoking of cigars (Brody, 2007). Moreover, love has been regarded as pathological (Sophia et al., 2009) accompanied with studies that use concepts like lovesickness (erotic melancholy; amor nereous) (Duffin, 2005; Tallis, 2005; Toohey, 1992) and disorders

of love (Altbauer-Rudnik, 2006; Brand, 2007; Feygin, 2006; Leckman & Mayes, 1999; Mullen, 1994).

How to measure the features of morbid love? Numerous measurements have been developed to study love; the most famous of which are Rubin Love Scale (Rubin, 1970), Love Attitude Scale (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986), Passionate Love Scale (Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986), and Triangular Love Scale (Sternberg, 1986). All these are based on question or attitude scales that respondents can use to assess the level, change, and elements of their love. Yet, none of them measures morbid love. Only one scale has been developed to measure love addiction (Hunter, Nitschke, & Hogan, 1981). Some other parallels between love and problem behavior are studied, for example the connection between love style and eating disorders (Worobey, 2002), violence (Brenda et al., 2002), or other darker sides of love relationships (Pamela & Regan, 2000).

In case love turns into an addiction, how does it occur at the level of conscious behavior? This perspective is not yet studied comprehensively. How do people describe the bruising side of love, pathological forms of love, fixations and addictions? Little research data are available. The question is relevant also because the definition of an addiction is ambiguous. For example, Jim Orford (2001, p. 344) says that "addiction does exist" (see also, Davies, 2006). And neuro-pharmacogical research on addictive adaptations in the brain provides only one perspective of addiction (Tamminga & Nestler, 2006). In order to gain better insight to love-related addiction behavior, more information about the psychological, social, and emotional essence of is needed (see Schaef, 1989). It is even more difficult to describe the conformities of love because also the phenomenology of love lacks many answers (see Määttä, 2011a,b,c; Määttä & Uusiautti, 2011, 2012a; Uusiautti & Määttä, 2011).

When people talk and think about love, their associations are often quite positive which has been proven an almost universal phenomenon (Fisher et al., 2010; Jankowiak & Fisher, 1992). How well people are aware of the problems of falling in love and loving when they talk about love? Can they name what are the touchstones and difficulties of love? The purpose of this research was to study and bring out descriptions and characterizations of the event of love and cherishing it. The especial interest was to find out how well the participants recognized the negative sides of love and how they wanted to describe them.

METHOD

The data collection and method were based on the narrative research approach (see also Purtilo-Nieminen & Määttä, 2011). Narrative research refers to studies in which the primary data source is some type of subject-provided narrative. The concept of narrative can denote an entire life story or it can refer to the practice of storytelling (Riessmann, 2008). A narrative can be understood as a short story about a particular event and specific characters, an extended story about a significant aspect of one's life, or a narrative of one's whole life in biographical studies (Chase, 2008; see also

Erkkilä, 2006). In this research, the concept of narrative is understood as a story involving a particular event and specific character (Chase, 2008).

In addition, narrative approach requires that informants are able to tell about their lives and experiences freely. Indeed, Erkkilä (2006) points out that narrative also refers to the way of knowing and the nature of knowledge. According to narrative scholars, the story is a fundamental form of human communication, and therefore it accounts for human experience (Atkinson, 1998; Clandinin, 2007).

The narrative interview can be seen as a loose framework for collecting narratives (Hyvärinen & Löyttyniemi, 2005). The traditional interview convention can be replaced by conversation, where interviewees can develop narratives together with the researcher (see Riessmann, 2008). Following these guidelines, the data in this research was collected through two methods and phases. The first set of data was collected among students at the University of Lapland. 35 students, aged between 20 and 45 years, were interviewed (22 women and 13 men). At the time of the study, 18 of them were either married or cohabited, 16 of them were singles, and one was divorced. Open interview was chosen as the interview method because it allowed the participants to freely describe what they think about love. The themes for interviews emerged from the participants' views, thoughts, and experiences of love. What happens when one falls in love, what does love give and demand, and what kinds of phases and contents does love involve or could involve, when love hurts and why? The interviews lasted between one to two hours and were recorded and transcribed word by word.

In the next phase, the interview data were expanded by essays. Students of educational psychology (N=46) who studied at the University of Lapland wrote an essay about "What makes love difficult? What hurts in love? Why is it difficult to cherish a romantic relationship?" The data were collected during the course of love psychology in 2012. The data comprised anonymously written essays that were between one to four sheets long. 36 of the respondents were women and 10 were men. 38 of them lived in cohabitation with their partners, two were married, and six were dating.

The reason for collecting two sets of informal data—essays and open interviews—was that people can reveal what they really think and feel and thus, the many forms and shades of love would be unveiled. Some of the participants described their experiences of falling in love, the process of finding a partner in a versatile ways. Some of them could have several happy or unhappy experiences of falling in love while some of the participants did not have much personal experience: they had found their partner from college or their first love relationship had just begun. What is common to these two sets of data is the rich narration.

Polkinghorne (1995) distinguishes the analysis of narratives and narrative analysis. The former means categorizing, for example by types. The latter refers to the composition of a new narrative based on various original narratives. Both of these analysis methods were used in this research. The aim was to create narratives that describe the essence of morbid love.

In this research, an analysis of narratives and narrative analyses were made from the narratives that the participants told in the interviews. In this research, the analysis was made using narrative structuring that tries to put together a cohesive narrative of experiences and events during interviews. Furthermore, the analysis typified a category-content-focused approach, with parts of narratives being placed in different categories (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiac, & Zilber, 1998).

The narrative analysis generated new interpretations and findings for two research questions:

1. How do students describe the essence of morbid love at the level of behavior?
2. What are the typical traits or narratives of dark sides of love and loving?

Naturally, the generalizability, validity, and reliability of the results can be criticized. The stories are summaries of the course of events and in that form the data describe every participant's way of assessing their own life, the chains of events and emotions that mold it. Therefore, it is not salient whether the happenings are described comprehensively or truthfully but their interpretation of what happened is. One of the research participants had noticed that writing had clarified her/his own action and thinking and thus promoted self-understanding. Another had contemplated the theme from a new perspective:

> Certainly, love is not just joy and happiness but it includes pain and agony that is not my fault. (woman, married)

RESULTS: WHAT MAKES LOVE BRUISING?

The participants described their thoughts, opinions, and experiences in diverse ways from the perspectives of love-related problems and difficulties. In this research, the narrative analysis generated new interpretations of gathered data. After a thematic categorization, we created new narratives that crystallize the manifestations of bruising love. These new stories are new compilations, representative and interpretive narratives based on an analysis of participants' interviews. These constructed stories are what Polkinghorne (1995) calls "storied narratives." In this research, two storied narratives were composed. They seem to be typical narratives: a story of fear of intimacy and commitment and fear of abandonment.

Narratives of the Fear of Intimacy and the Vortex of Love

The person of this narrative is hooked on the event of falling in love: he/she wants to be enamored and fall in love over and over again. He/she is not able to or does not want to commit to the relationship which is, however, sexually satisfying. His/her behavior represents a typical vortex of love, love addiction, that makes one enchanted with enchantment, obsessed with obsession, and love falling in love.

The phenomenon can also be called love dependence which is a fixation making the person repeat the same behavior again and again.

> There was always someone new… it was that zest for life. (man aged 24, unmarried)

His/her life represents a chaos of life or sexuality where pleasure and experiences are groped for through new relationships. Each new conquest is used for bolstering up his/her ego. The love addict hurries from a relationship to another, always seeking new conquests. When love leads to this type of behaviors, the life style is exhausting as new pleasures and experiences are constantly looked for and nothing else than a new romance, relationship or sex partner matters.

The vortex of love manifests itself as five partly overlapping love images, addictions or syndromes that make the person reach for new experiences of falling in love:

1. Addicted to conquering—checking one's appeal
   The most famous representative of this type is probably Don Juan who demonstrated his appeal over and over again to himself and others. Instead of falling in love himself, Don Juan actually needs others to fall in love with him. After conquering someone and becoming certain of his success, he does not need his victim any longer but carries on searching, charming and abandoning new partners. The phenomenon is also called sex addition, Don Juanism, hypersexuality, erotomania, nymphomania and satyriasis and even an academic journal is devoted to this theme: Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity: The Journal of Treatment and Prevention.

   > I did not want to bind myself, I am still too young and I guess there is more that life can offer to me. (man aged 28, unmarried)

   > For me, it became more important to expand my experiences than being together with him. That started to be like watching paint dry. (woman, age and marital status not known)

   > What is the most exciting in love is finding out whether you can charm the other—I have not yet even thought about the continuation after that. (woman aged 27, unmarried)

2. Addicted to an illusion—looking for permanent pleasure
   He/she is addicted to the illusion and cherishes hope of finding love that provides the perfect pleasure. Deep down, he/she feels vulnerable, imperfect, worthless, lonely, and insecure. The solution is to find someone who makes him/her feel complete and safe. Having become disappointed time after time, he/she always tries to find new love believing that finding the one and only is just a matter of time. Yet, he/she is incapable of ever getting rid of the feelings of loneliness and insecurity.

   > I doubted and wondered whether he cares enough for me or not. (woman aged 31, married)

Disappointments follow each other and although anyone better does not seem available, at least not on the open market, I believe I will find one. (woman aged 22, unmarried)

3. Addicted to romances—fallen in love with infatuation
He/she looks for the first moments of infatuation and romance. Addiction to romances is manifested as a dependency on experiences without which life seems wasted. He/she looks for new extreme experiences of falling in love in order to compensate the uneventfulness of his/her life. However, everyday life becomes the emptier the more wonderful experiences he/she gets. People adjust and go numb as the same infatuating experiences do not produce as powerful pleasures as before. Indeed, it is worth asking how many times one people can fall in love deeply in order to fall love deeply.

First, I felt good because of our shared experiences of ecstasy but then they felt mundane—I do not want to content myself with that. (woman aged 23, unmarried)

4. Addicted to recognition—securing one's self-satisfaction
He/she feels caged when the romantic relationship starts to show signs of settling down. The other's proximity is frightening because it can hurt. Thus, the person protects from disappointments by avoiding commitment. He/she looks for new experiences of falling in love in order to feel free and secure. Falling in love becomes a way of proving one's independence, invulnerability, and autonomy. Falling in love turns into a bulwark.

I have tried to set some limits… in case the other decides to leave. (woman aged 21, unmarried)

I did not want to be in a leash—I would not have enjoyed that or even survived. (man, age and marital status unknown)

He/she has an endless desire to prove that he/she is worth loving. Even if he/she found a partner who tells how lovable he/she is, the person tries to find a new partner to assure his/her value. The person's own doubts and inability to trust in others result in constant need for recognition. He/she wants to prove that he/she has the chance of conquering someone. Actually, he/she does not look for intimacy but is afraid of it.

I could not believe what had happened… the absurd feeling of happiness… and then I started to fear or doubt whether this can go on. (woman aged 21, unmarried)

5. Addicted to mirroring—forever pubescent
Some people have the pubescent identity struggle their whole life or do not have it until adulthood. He/she falls in love due to immature self-knowledge. He/she uses others to find out what other people think about him/her. Partners are mirrors

through which he/she looks at his/her own image. His/her emotional life and relationships are under constant whirlpool and testing. Life is seen as a great adventure or continuous experimenting.

> I started to suspect that I am just a habit for him—I wanted to be admired, I enjoyed when someone made a pass at me and the attention, I wanted to test my appeal. (woman aged 25, cohabiting)

Narratives of the Fear of Abandonment and Clinging to the Other

The narration about the fear of abandonment in love is unfortunate because the person believes that happiness, satisfaction, and balance in life cannot be achieved without the significant other. Thus, the person can sacrifice his/her life for helping, caring for, fixing, and changing the other whether the other was an alcoholic, violent, or had other behavioral problems. The fear of abandonment can lead to codependency (Loughead, 1991; Norwood, 1985; Wright and Wright, 1991) and the one who suffers from it starts to live for the other in the name of love. As reactions to the other's abnormal behavior, the person develops unhealthy coping methods, explaining that it is all about love. Consequently, he/she tolerates violence and ignores himself/herself.

> I would be ashamed to tell to what I am ready to submit in order to receive love. (woman aged 26, married)

The person stays in a violent relationship and explains: "I love him." Yet, it is likely that this person does not consider himself/herself worth loving by anyone and thus feels powerless and hopeless and is definite that there just are not any other options.

> As we had promised to love each other in public, you should not give up that promise very easily—quite often I felt guilty because I was not able to defend myself. Perhaps, it was also about the fear of losing her. (man aged 25, unmarried)

The codependent person is sick with worry for the other. He/she tries to help in a way that does not really help. He/she says "yes" but means "no". He/she tries to avoid hurting the other's feelings and simultaneously hurts himself/herself. He/she is incapable of trusting his/her feelings. The list could go on endlessly. The person is used to think, feel and act in a way that hurts himself/herself. On the other hand, he/she is clinging to the unhappy love because he/she denies, undervalues and ignores himself/herself, thinks that he/she does not deserve anything better.

Dorothy Tennov (1979) calls this type of hopeless love limerence. It refers to a convulsive clinging to the other caused by a powerful affinity and need for taking care of the other. The event of falling in love develops into a state of limerence

and codependency little by little. At first, the romantic relationship is unsecure and testing. Then, the attention is focused more and more strongly on the significant other who seems to fill the person's whole life. Constant, compulsive speculation occupies his/her mind totally.

> I could not stop thinking about him and felt like demoniac. (woman, age and marital status unknown)

The fear of losing the beloved, being totally dependent on him/her but not able to control him/her and his/her feelings may also represent the fear of losing control over oneself: the fear of not being able to cope without the other and being terrified because of the thought of being alone or becoming abandoned. This kind of fearful love seems to have three typical features: 1) Addicted to strong emotions—living the strong pendulum motion of feelings where ecstasy and agony take turns; 2) Addicted to the heat of the moment—feeling impatient, and 3) Addicted to pleasing—the powerful inclination to adjust.

1. Addicted to strong emotions—living the strong pendulum motion of feelings where ecstasy and agony take turns
   The more fragile the relationship is the less the person feels of being loved. The sadder the experiences one has from previous relationships, the bigger the fear and compulsion will become.

   > I felt like dying without the other next to me. (woman aged 26, married)

   The thought of requited love takes the person in a euphoric state with an inconceivable feeling of happiness. Yet, the feeling of not becoming loved by the other is always present and thus, ecstasy and agony take turns. It feels wonderful to meet someone who resonates but simultaneously it feels bad, too, as there is so much to lose:

   > You have to have the courage to defy dangers when you indulge in a passionate love relationship.

   The one in love reacts easily to everything the beloved does: his/her every gesture or word is evaluated hoping for acceptance and fearing abandoning. In order to become certain of love, the person begins to study and constantly interpret the significant other's gestures and tones of voice.
   As the codependency develops, the person starts to think that only this one people can satisfy his/her needs. The person is dependent on him/her and needs him/her almost helplessly.

2. Addicted to the heat of the moment—feeling impatient
   The feeling of impatience follows. It means that the person is aware that time flies: it is a sort of fear of death when life seems worth living the most:

   > It feels like living and dying at the same time.

This impatience can lead for example to quick engagement as if love would run away if it is not captures:

> You must strike while the iron is hot.

3. Addicted to pleasing—the powerful inclination to adjust
   In addition, the one in love is extremely willing to adjust. He/she does not find his/her opinions that important. The same goes with the partner's hopes and requests. The person wants to fulfill them even at the expense of his/her own needs. At this point, the main point in life is to make the other feel happy and satisfied.

   The tenderness and cruelty of love is described as "the seventh heaven" and "hell on earth." Love is "agony and torment" or "so wonderful that it hurts."

   > I felt that I cannot exist without that person. (woman aged 21, unmarried)

DISCUSSION

Naturally people want to re-experience everything pleasant. One starts to like and miss that feeling. One of the characterizations of abnormal, painful, and unhappy love is the compulsive need for experiencing the intoxicating event of falling in love over and over again. This need can become so powerful that it goes on even if it leads to negative physical and emotional consequences. Only few can admit that they are addicted or that their repeated experiences are not satisfying after all. They claim that they are enjoying although they feel lonely and unhappy. The core of the satisfaction in the vortex of love is not the pleasure found together with the partner but in the feeling of getting free of daily anxiety, depression or problems with self-esteem or self-regard. The good mood followed by falling in love provides a momentary relief for the deep feelings of insecurity.

Likewise, codependency includes not only fear and sorrow but also joy and enchantment, at least at the beginning of love. Clinging may be beyond rational control. Thus, emotional ups and downs in a romantic relationship reflect to other social relationships too, diminish resources to work and study, and distract one's piece of mind.

In this article, we highlighted two central elements of bruising love. They are, not by any means, the only ones but help understanding about the nature of morbid love. In this research, some issues were less reviewed, such as jealousy (Buunk & Bringle 1987; Rydell, McConnell, & Bringle, 2004; White, 1981), narcissism (Campbell, 1999; Määttä, Uusiautti, & Määttä, 2011) and violence (Buss & Duntley, 2011; Chan, 2011; Flynn & Graham, 2010; Scharpe & Taylor, 1999; Wood, Maforah, & Jewkes, 1998). In addition, it remains unsolved how common the abovementioned behaviors are (cf., Gosling et al., 1998). Perhaps, it cannot be shown easily, nor is it even necessary. Most likely, many people do not experience the feelings of addiction

or codependency while some people have them frequently. Instead, it seems worth becoming aware of these dark sides of love and learning how to live with them—to learn to love.

How one could manage to avoid the negative dimensions of love? Based on the results of this research, the key to stable love is self-respect and sufficient self-esteem (see *Figure 3*). We placed the fear of intimacy in one pan while fear of abandonment fills the other. The quality of self-esteem, especially connected to self-respect, varies. A person's quest for self-esteem and its destructive consequences (see also Greenberg, 2008) can make the love scales tip in the favor or either dimension.

When a person considers his/her own pleasure and contentment the most important, his/her behavior starts resemble fear of intimacy. The person has overly high self-esteem (or quest for it, see Greenberg, 2008) but low respect for other people and for himself/herself, as well. Others' feelings do not matter but the person needs constant confirmation that he/she is lovable. All new conquests function as proofs. Žvelc (2010) calls these relationships as object relationships because the other is perceived as an object for the satisfaction of the first person's needs; thus, the object person has the only value according to whether he/she can satisfy the first person.

When the situation is roughly the opposite, low self-esteem combined with overly high respect for others' needs and satisfaction, the person suffers from the fear of abandonment. Lack of self-respect is manifested in the person's way of ignoring his/her own needs and thinking that the only thing that matters is the other's contentment. Sophia et al.'s (2009) study supports this finding: individuals who are more attached and dependent on others and those naturally more prone to anxiety and concern over punishment are more likely to engage and maintain disturbing relationships, due to fear of loneliness and abandonment.

Thus, self-esteem seems to have the key role. People who are provided with healthy self-esteem are able to pay attention to their human dignity but are also interested in other people, especially their loved ones. Furthermore, it leads to respectful behavior toward others. The love scale is in balance when the person accepts and appreciates himself/herself but can also tolerate and appreciate intimacy without the fear of becoming left alone or hurt. Healthy self-esteem, finding one's resources and development toward greater self-expression in intimate relationships is necessary for finding fulfillment in life and balance in love (Määttä & Uusiautti, 2012a,c) and yet, love is not just about one person: it is about respecting the other person and finding the mutual understanding (Määttä & Uusiautti, 2012d; Uusiautti & Määttä, 2011). Thus, it is relevant to think how to define intimacy and closeness. Harvey and Pauwels (2009, p. 385) define closeness as "mutual satisfaction and behavior that contributes to one another's goals and hopes in life." Harvey and Pauwels' closeness describes quite well the equilibrium in the scale model presented in *Figure 3*.

Self-esteem
Self-respect

Fear of
intimacy

Fear of
abandonment

Figure 3. The scale of morbid love.

CONCLUSION

How to learn to love is a question that is impossible to answer comprehensively (Määttä, 2011b; Uusiautti & Määttä, 2011). Love and romantic relationships have their own laws for many reasons:

1. There are many forms of love and romantic relationships. Love like other complex emotions cannot be defined consistently: it is a combination of versatile emotions, knowledge, and action. These contents intertwine in human experiences. There for any evaluation or description of love is only a partial shade of love.

2. Love is a personal and holistic experience. It consists of those feelings, thoughts and acts that one considers manifestations of love. Different people have various interpretations of love. There are not any specific knowledge, emotional, or behavioral contents that are absolute and common to all love experiences. Although some traits or experiences are more common than others, there are as many definitions of love as there are thinkers, authors, researchers, and witnesses of love. Therefore, almost everything that can be said about love and relationships is true at least to someone in some circumstances.

3. Love is also a relative phenomenon. It is defined in each situation by the partners' contemporary unique characteristics. In addition, the idea of love may change along age. Most people hope that their relationships would develop

positively. Therefore, it is not very surprising that people create—based on their experiences—theories, explanations, and beliefs for reasons that make a relationship fail or succeed. Explanations can also diminish or hinder a couple to analyze the complex dynamics of love. Giving to automatized arguments about the phenomenon of love has its dangers.

It is difficult to find regularities in a phenomenon that depends on individual experiences. Everyone must define love, and the emotion and the decision of existing love cannot be defined by any other people than the ones in love. Love is the most radical form of democracy between two people as it leans on the personal responsibility at its purest. It also includes the chance of being irresponsible because only lovers themselves can make the decision of ending their love: one of the partners votes against the other because feelings have changed.

A romantic relationship is fundamentally open, empty or unsigned state. It is a form that the spouses must create. How they organize their relationship, what love means and how to make it last are questions that the spouses have to answer together. Learning about others' experiences and courses of action can only help.

AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP IN
THE SHADOW OF NARCISSISM

Narcissism is a personality disorder which is perceptibly common (Hare, 1993; Joutsiniemi, Kaulio, Mäkelä, Pekola, & Schulman, 2007; Välipakka & Lehtosaari, 2007). Narcissistic personality disorder belongs to the same group with unstable personality disorder and asocial personality disorder (Vaknin, 1999). Still, a small proportion of narcissism is necessary for survival in life (Crompton, 2007). Healthy narcissism has to be seen separate from narcissistic personality disorder. Healthy narcissism means for example the ability to have all kinds of feelings and be empathetic. Thus, healthy narcissism is based on true self-esteem that the narcissists totally lack (Hotchkiss, 2005.) Put shortly, narcissism turns into illness when it affects human relationships and healthy narcissism negatively.

According to Vaknin (1999), narcissistic personality disorder is not a familial disease. It is not restricted only to certain age, occupational, or social class nor does it follow cultural boundaries. Narcissism may sneak insidiously in someone's life both at school, work or in an intimate relationship. Consequently, life in the shadow of narcissism is everyday life for some people. One narcissist is surrounded by even dozens of afflicted people and this makes the problem big.

Recently, narcissism has got increasingly attention from researchers; however, we still know little about what narcissists actually do in their everyday lives (Hotlzman, Vazire, & Metlz, 2010) or in their intimate relationships (Määttä, 2009). Furthermore, it is often difficult to recognize the narcissist because he/she can act all emotional states in a credible way (Ellilä, 2008).

In this article, we contemplate how narcissism is connected to love. Of course, narcissism is the ultimate manifestation of self-love—or merely, it is a skewed version of love. But how does narcissism affect an intimate or romantic relationship, then? In this article, we will describe how narcissism reflects and what it is like to live with a narcissist in an intimate relationship. The theme is ethically demanding and drawing an objective picture of the reality is not easy. Yet, one kind of reality can be achieved through narcissists' spouses' stories and experiences. The data in this research covers stories gathered from a platform at the web site of the Registered Association for Support for the Victims of Narcissists.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The Concept of Narcissism

The conversation about narcissism has become a part of our daily speech. The world and era that we are living has been called narcissistic, hard, and remorseless.

In the colloquial language, we consider a narcissist as a histrionic, self-centered, and egoistic person (Myllärniemi, 2005). Although the word 'narcissism' is familiar to most people, we still are uncertain of its fundamental meaning.

Furthermore today, narcissism is widely seen as a continuum from healthy self-esteem to severe narcissistic pathology (e.g., Watson, Sawrie, Greene, & Arredondo, 2002). In addition, the wide related terminology makes it more difficult to understand the phenomenon. Narcissism as a concept is linked to for example narcissistic disorder, narcissistic character disorder, narcissistic personality disorder, classic and borderline narcissistic disorder, psychopathy, and self-damage (Välipakka & Lehtosaari, 2007). However, narcissism does have an accurate definition that describes how we live and take care of our human relationships and thus, narcissism is a concept with can be used to recognize and characterize the basic characteristics that define human nature and personality (Crompton, 2007).

Narcissism means self-love, self-admiration, and unrealistic illusions about one's own greatness. Narcissism may also refer to narcissistic personality disorder that has certain criteria for diagnosis. (Joutsiniemi et al., 2007.) The concept of narcissism originates in Classical Greek: according to the Greek Myth, Narcissus means love for a mental picture created about oneself (Vuorinen, 1998). Later on, Sigmund Freud introduced the concept among the concepts of psychology and psychiatry by his 1914 essay *On Narcissism*. Freud self has told that he borrowed the term from Paul Näcke who used "narcissism" already in 1899 to describe men who were sexually excited by their own bodies but Freud expanded the term to include all kind of self-love and self-appreciation (Freud, 1993; Myllärniemi, 2005).

Narcissism as a Personality Disorder

People have the freedom and right to have unique personalities. However, such health-related factor that harms its bearer or his/her environment is defined as an illness, flaw, disability, handicap, or disorder. Often, this kind of feature makes it difficult or hinders from engaging to balanced human relationships or working. Personality disorder means an adulthood compulsive behavioral model and way of being disposed toward oneself and others. The behavior of people with personality disorder is long-lasting, inflexible, and relatively stable. Often, it is also rooted deeply in one's life style. This kind of person seems just incapable of acting differently (Joutsniemi et al., 2007; Välipakka & Lehtosaari, 2007).

A person with personality disorder suffers from dysfunction that diminishes his/her viability (Rusz, 2007) and it has quite a specific and rigorously defined meaning (Crompton, 2007). Narcissism is mental dysfunction that belongs to personality disorders. In order to be defined as narcissism, behavior must diverge greatly in relation to other people's ways of thinking, feeling, and taking others (Joutsiniemi et al., 2007; Välipakka & Lehtosaari, 2007). According to Hare (1993), narcissism is a syndrome, a combination of certain symptoms. Nine criteria have been defined to

narcissistic personality disorder or narcissism. To be diagnosed as a narcissist, one has to have five of the following symptoms:

1. The person has high-flown illusions about his/her superiority and greatness.
2. The person regards himself/herself especially important and great. For example, he/she exaggerates his/her talents, gifts, and achievements and simultaneously demands that everyone recognizes his/her supremacy and Invincibility.
3. The person has compulsive fantasies about unlimited success, reputation, and omnipotence. He/she fantasizes about splendors and power beyond compare.
4. The person thinks of being so unequaled that only rare and special people are worth of his/her company or can understand him/her.
5. The person demands unreasonable amounts of admiration, idolatry, interest, and attention.
6. The person is deeply convinced that he/she is privileged and the same rule and norms that concern others do not concern him/her. He/she demand special and unique treatment.
7. The person ruthlessly exploits other people for his/her own good.
8. The person totally lacks empathy. He/she is not able or willing to pay attention to other people or their needs and feelings.
9. The person behaves contemptuously and impudently. He/she feels like being superior, omniscient, invincible, and above the law. He/she gets furious when facing resistance or when other inferior people reproach to him/her.
10. The person envies other people all the time simultaneously thinking that others envy him/her. He/she suffers from paranoid illusions because he/she thinks that others act in the same way as he/she does (see Vaknin, 1999).

All the problems in narcissism can be seen to be somehow connected to a skewed self-impression (Keltinkangas-Järvinen, 1985)—to some extent. On the other hand, it has been claimed that a narcissist's personality is not developed or strong enough to maintain a stable impression of himself/herself that would correspond the reality (Keltinkangas-Järvinen, 1978) while some recent studies (e.g., Carlson, Vazire, & Oltmanns, 2011) have found out that narcissists' meta-perceptions of their personality correspond to reality: "Narcissists already realize that they are narcissistic and have a narcissistic reputation" (Carlson, Cazire, & Oltmanns, 2011, p. 199). This assumption represents narcissistic awareness view while the narcissistic ignorance view (Gosling, John, Craik, & Robins, 1998) narcissists believe that others see them just as positively as they see themselves.

   Narcissistic personality disorder is one of the forms of narcissistic character disorders. Other character disorders that belong to the same group are asocial personality disorder, histrionic personality disorder, and unstable personality disorder. Considerable overlap occurs between narcissistic character disorders. Altogether, about 7–9% of the population has this kind of disorder. Among men, the frequency is around 11–18% (Schulman, 2005a). It has been estimated that of 0.7–1% of the population have pathological or permanent narcissistic personality

disorder. Even 75% of narcissists are supposedly men (Vaknin, 1999). Yet, singular or temporary narcissistic symptoms or features may occur in everyone at some phase of life, for example in situations that are perceived threatening but these kinds of characteristics are usually momentary and not dominating enough for making a diagnosis (Joutsiniemi et al., 2007). What is common to all above-mentioned narcissistic character disorders is self-centeredness and ignoring other people (Schulman, 2005a). The number of symptoms and seriousness vary individually according to the seriousness of the narcissistic character disorder (Välipakka & Lehtosaari, 2007).

In addition to character disorders, narcissists often suffer from the hidden feeling of inferiority, self-detracting attitude and shame. Narcissistic personality disorder may also involve psychotic-level serious depression, eating disorders, anti-social behavior, and drug-dependency. Narcissistic personality structure has indeed developed so that the narcissistic person should not have to consciously experience disheartening emotions such as inferiority, helplessness, guilt, or dependency. Often people who live with the narcissist have to experience these emotions instead of the narcissist. In reality, narcissists are, however, deeply traumatized. They "suffer" because their human relationships do not go as expected. If their exterior collapses, they do not bare the situation but may even end up committing suicide. Nevertheless, narcissists will not collapse easily because more often than not, they do not recognize or admit their problems (Schulman, 2005b).

Narcissism and Intimate Relationships

There is some research on narcissists' intimate relationships or how narcissism affects human relationships that should be introduced here as they help understanding the descriptions of the life in the shadow of narcissism. Narcissism is manifested in specific non-reciprocal relationships where there is not room for real partnership and cooperation. Žvelc (2010) divides human relationships into subject and object ones. Subject relationship means an intimate relationship where the partners are treated as individual subjects with their wishes, interests, and needs. The latter relationship type refers to such a relationship where the other is perceived as an object for the satisfaction of the first person's needs; thus, the object person has the only value according to whether he/she can satisfy the first person. Žvelc distinguishes three dimensions of object relations: dependence, alienation, and self-absorption. Narcissism and egocentrism are sub-dimensions of self-absorption.

When it comes to human relationships and ability to love and care, it is worth pointing out that narcissism is linked to emotions and empathy (Hartmann, 2009). Also Fan et al. (2010) have come to a conclusion that narcissism may consequently be closely related to changes in inter-subjective relationships to other persons. Narcissists are unable to feel empathy when empathy is understood as an empathic stance where we are constantly trying to experience the inner state of the other and if possible, convey that understanding through our actions (Geist, 2009).

Self-centeredness in narcissism may seem like self-love which makes an impression of good self-esteem. In reality, a narcissist's self-esteem is almost non-existent. Because of low self-esteem, a narcissist is extremely sensitive, easily hurt, and does not tolerate criticism toward himself/herself whatsoever. However, this kind of sensitivity does not refer to sensitive emotional life but springs up if the narcissist's feeling of omnipotence becomes hurt. Furthermore, this sensitivity will never reach other people or their feelings. All in all, relationships with other people represent only various dependency and rewarding relationships: other people have instrumental value and they are means to regulate the narcissist's own moods (Keltinkangas-Järvinen, 1998).

Since narcissists' self-esteem is contingent on contextual factors, it is fragile and threatened when communicating with other people (see e.g., Burton & Hoobler, 2011). Narcissists behave more aggressively than so-called normal people (Penney & Spector, 2002) but it has also been demonstrated that narcissists are only aggressive when provoked (Baumeister, Bushman, & Campbell, 2000). However, in object relationships, where narcissists perceive their partners as objects, they are likely to be provoked to aggressive behavior easily (e.g., Žvelc, 2010).

Intimate relationships and the reason to enter into one have also been studied from narcissists' point of view. Campbell (1999) suggests that narcissistic romantic attraction can be defined by three elements: an attention to the self, a lack of intimacy, and a related strategy for enhancing the self. According to Campbell's self-orientation model of narcissism, narcissists look for perfection more than caring in their romantic partners. Narcissists may become involved in romantic relationships that lack intimacy, while at the same time enhancing their self-esteem by means of association. Secondly, narcissists may display communication patterns within the context of romantic relationships that are aggressive and self-centered. Furthermore, narcissists are likely to be attracted to perfect non-caring others not only because they view these kinds of individuals as sources of self-esteem, but also because they seem similar to narcissists. All in all, narcissists are more romantically attracted to others who offer the potential to enhance the self by means of identification and admiration. Taken this starting point, it seems interesting to study what it is like to live with a narcissistic spouse.

METHOD

A narcissistic person's behavior can be described as knock-down to its victim with the purpose of removing and destroying the victim's human dignity, self-esteem, balance, and happiness (England, 2007). Although only a fraction of the population has been diagnosed with narcissistic personality disorder, narcissism is more common and becoming more common all the time (Vaknin, 1999). The explanation for the increase in narcissistic disorders may at least partly be found in societal development as competitiveness, individualism, and opportunism are admired—those exact features that are often typical of narcissists (Myllärniemi, 2005).

The purpose of this study is to describe the life in the shadow of narcissism, as a narcissist's spouse. The research questions are as follows:

1. How is a narcissistic person is defined by his/her spouse?
2. What kind of model of the narcissistic behavior in an intimate relationship can be constructed?

The research approach in this research was qualitative because the main interest was focused on the stories and experiences of narcissists' spouses. The phenomenon studied thus represents multidisciplinary research on human relationships which make a complicated research target suitable for being addressed with the qualitative research approach (Acock, van Dulmen, Allen, & Piercy, 2005). In this kind of research, the researchers aim to reach research participants' point of view, their personal and unique perception about the select phenomenon. In addition, the purpose is to study the features of the reality in their original form as far as possible (Kiviniemi, 2001).

In qualitative research, the research target is comprised of people who act as personal subjects. The data were collected from the open web site of the Registered Association for Support for the Victims of Narcissists. The platform is divided into seven forums that cover various topics. The data were collected from a platform called "Intimate relationship – General topics". All seven forums view narcissism from slightly different points of view. One covers men's experiences, one is about narcissists' children, and one about work communities. For this research, the one that covered intimate relationships was considered the most suitable for data collection. The research started in 2008 by collecting altogether 50 conversation chains from the forum. These posts were dated between 5 March and 20 April 2008. In order to extend the data and draw more comprehensive picture about the theme, other 50 conversation chains were collected from the forum, dated between 26 February and 18 October 2009. Altogether the data comprised 100 conversation chains—326 pages as a transcript. One conversation chain could include dozens of messages and comments and therefore the number of pages is considerably larger than the number of conversation chains.

The participants' identity is not known. Total anonymity was possible because participants did not use their real names but pseudonyms when writing in the platform. These ready pseudonyms were also used when analyzing the data and with the exemplary quotations selected in the result section. Altogether 254 pseudonyms occurred in the research data. It is not possible to know whether each pseudonym refers to a different people: therefore, the number of participants is unknown, only the number of pseudonyms. Moreover, because of pseudonyms, it is impossible to know the proportion of men and women in the data or which age cohort the participants belong to. Many pseudonyms refer to a female respondent while a few to a male one but most of the pseudonyms were neutral in that sense.

We have added some citations from the data in the results section and they include the original pseudonym. If the pseudonym was a clear Finnish word,

we have added a translation within square brackets. It also worth noticing that in Finnish language, there are not any separate words for women and men (as there are he and she in English) and therefore, if the author's gender was not recognizable based on the text or pseudonym, we had to use the expressions 'he/she' when translating the citations from the data.

The data analysis was qualitative content analysis. Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2002) describe content analysis as a tool for analyzing documents systematically and objectively. This method aims at drawing a condensed and general description of the phenomenon studied. When analyzing texts with content analysis, the focus is on the search of meanings in the text. In practice, the analysis proceeded by dividing the simplified expressions into five main categories: the exercise of power, maladjustment, immorality, lack of the sense of reality, and need for manipulation. Based on the main categories, a core category was created "Problems in self-esteem".

RESULTS

The core category that emerged from the data was the problems in self-esteem. According to the data, the exercise of power, maladjustment, immorality, lack of the sense of reality, and need for manipulation appeared as manifestations of serious problems in self-esteem (Määttä, 2009). Self-esteem is a salient part of personality affecting the functioning of one's ego. Self-esteem includes the feelings of self-respect, self-appreciation, self-acceptance, and self-proficiency. Furthermore, the desire for self-esteem results from a fundamental need for psychological security, which is engendered by people's awareness of their own vulnerability and mortality (Greenberg, 2008). According to the victims' stories, narcissists seem to have problems in all these sectors. They reflect in narcissists' behavior, presence, and emotional life. From this basis, the problems in self-esteem may be considered as a core reason for narcissistic behavior. Next, we will review the core category in more detail by dissecting its connectedness with the main categories.

The Exercise of Power

The main category of the exercise of power consisted of the following elements: incrimination, subordination, controlling, naming, intimidation, raving, and physical violence. Abusing the significant other covers all such behavior that aims at controlling and repressing the other using fear, humiliation, shame, and verbal and physical insults as weapons (Forward & Torres, 1989). This kind of behavior may be a sign of various dysfunctions in self-esteem. For narcissists with problems in self-esteem, becoming dumped or a threat of becoming dumped means an extreme insult. They may want to retaliate against the insult and injustice with violence.

The usual pattern here is also that the narcissist does something that he realizes is wrong; gets feedback for it 'that was wrong' – so what do you know – all

the sudden he blames someone else for it and demands apology because he has been hurt. (Minttumaaria [MintMary])

Narcissists who suffer from dysfunctions try to prove their omnipotence by using other people and thus strengthen their low self-esteem. The victim should be and act according to the narcissistic person's mind. The narcissistic partner watches, manipulates, and controls his/her victim, victim's mind, feelings, words, and acts. If the victim does not obey, he/she will be punished. Questioning the narcissist's omnipotence triggers off aggressive behavior (see also Keltinkangas–Järvinen, 1998).

The narcissist's blanket comes out from the blanket cover and he/she asks me for help by saying: "Would you like to put my blanket cover in place again?" Would you like to?! By this little utterance, he/she constantly tries to tell that he/she is doing me a favor as he/she gives me the joy of serving him/her. (Beatbag)

Serving and serving, invisible presence. I am not allowed to be seen or heard but service has to go well or else. (Mammu)

He also reads my text messages regularly and checks my telephone calls. I feel like being a prisoner in my own life… I'm not allowed to meet any of my friends either… He wants to dominate and control me. (Wera79)

Narcissists are afraid of becoming abandoned and left alone. Those thoughts cause them feelings of helplessness and anxiety and they express these feelings to their victims through hatred (Malinen, 2007). Aggression may occur as physical or mental violence that involves subjugation, intimidation, or raving among others (Keltinkangas-Järvinen, 1998).

He/she raged and made noise that he/she will beat to death because he/she hates me so much. (Possu [Piggy])

My ex made clear that he/she would assault my mother who is already an old woman. He/she would beat her so badly that I could not stand it. He/she intimidated and threatened to hurt even our children if I left. (Oodes)

…I have a lifetime scar, still stitched, bite marks on my cheek; I thought I would be strangled. (Mamax2)

Narcissists find it difficult or even impossible to tolerate their own flaws. When trying to handle their own deficiencies, they look for them in other people and tend to highlight them by despising. According to this research, it seemed typical that narcissists blame their victims for their own flaws. When spouting to their victims with invectives, narcissists end up listing all their own hidden and dread sides.

I am just a sleaze who ruins everyone else's life. (Susb)

The narcissist gave me a night gown as a present and regretted to say that he could not find any larger size from the store. The gown was size XXXXL… my size was M/L. (Onnitar [Ms Fortune])

Maladjustment

The main category of maladjustment included such features as self-centeredness, volatility, lack of empathy, insensitivity, intolerance of criticism, and inability of intimacy. Self-centeredness can appear as self-confidence and self-content but it is, however, just a façade that hides narcissists' non-existing self-esteem. Self-centeredness also causes the lack of empathy. Human relationships are passionless and negligent. Narcissists did not seem to be able to create real intimate relationships that would be based on affection but they use other people by manipulating them (see also Keltinkangas-Järvinen, 1998).

This negligence is as shuddering as can be. He/she does not feel empathy; not to mention that he/she could understand others' body language. (Chassiel)

He/she treats me TOTALLY like a thing, a commodity, does not even try to hide that I don't have any other value except the sexual one." (Rikottu [Broken])

A person with low self-esteem tolerates setbacks and hardships badly (Joutsiniemi et al., 2007). Indeed, narcissists appeared extremely thin-skinned: they tend to respond to criticism with a rapid counter-attack but in reality are deeply hurt. Criticism causes them shame that may follow and bother them for years. Shame also tells about their own imperfection and humanity (Malinen, 2007). To narcissists, it means the breakage of their own illusions of greatness and superiority.

Keeping up the facade is manifested by even ungovernable changes in moods and behavior. Their moods can alter from the deepest depression to arrogant supremacy and even to a manic state.

Everything is fine as long as his/her things are fine. (Pömppö)

It is extremely difficult to avoid problems because the man changes his mind every day. Today he can solemnly announce that 'from this day we will always do like this' (for example put some object inside a certain closet). After a while, he has forgotten the whole thing and may become angry at me when I do exactly like he told me to do earlier (for example put that thing in that closet mentioned). (Milla)

Immorality

The main category of immorality comprised lying, abuse, cheating, and vandalism. According to the data, narcissists seemed to understand moral as quite a changing and flexible concept. What is right in each situation depends on what is serving

them the best. Moral behavior calls for empathy and conscience that would regulate moral choices. Both of them appeared underdeveloped among narcissists (see also Välipakka & Lehtosaari, 2007.)

> At the moment, I am not aware what things were true in our relationship and what were false… (Lau80)

> For them, everyone is an object before anything. Sometimes rarely, even a tool if one might be useful but mostly just an object. (Daza)

Narcissists need other people to compensate their low self-esteem. These people, in this case their significant others, felt soon depleted when exploited for various narcissistic uses. Narcissists demand constant attention and admiration and received just from one person is not enough for long. Narcissists have to change people as the old ones lose their utility value. According to the data, narcissists cheat their spouses because they need undivided attention from several people. Narcissists lie about cheating, deny it and explain themselves in order not to lose the original source of attention; that is their spouse.

> There are plenty of nine days' wonders; the world is filled with new conquests. (Turvapaikka [Asylum])

> The man goes bananas every now and then during which he breaks things, smaller objects, a brush, pictures, an electric toothbrush, or bigger ones, such as a door or a wardrobe. (Assi)

Lack of the Sense of Reality

The main category of lack of the sense of reality comprised pathological jealousness, paranoia, and megalomania. Narcissists' sense of reality was blurred. They assume that everyone is like they are: envious, dishonest, and malevolent. Therefore, they cannot trust in anyone, not even in their own spouse. Furthermore, they are pathologically possessive to their spouses because they are afraid that their spouses cheat them – like they selves do. Narcissists cannot stand that their spouses spend time with other people. If they do, narcissists think that they are not good enough for their spouses.

> In addition, we had to be in contact all the time: awful number of text messages every day, meetings every day and good-night calls as well. In other words constant controlling. (Tsinnia)

> He/she doubts that the whole world is against him/her. Everyone steels from him/her… He/she is followed when coming back home. Someone has visited his/her apartment. Everyone lies. Everyone is envious of him/her. (Pömppö)

Setting goals may be quite unrealistic because narcissists are not aware or do not recognize their own strengths and weaknesses (Jaari, 2007). Illusions of omnipotence

are common among small children but should disappear along age. Narcissists blow their own trumpet, overestimate their abilities, and brag openly. Fanatic feelings of one's own greatness and capability are not testimony of genuine self-confidence. Merely, they can be considered as assertion toward reality and denial of one's own limitedness. Narcissists cannot admit that they would fail in something.

> He did not have any money but still imagined that we would soon live abroad as millionaires… His plans would come and go. (Leenajka)

> —he/she who is, according to his/her own words, a god and deliberately difficult because he/she is such a unique person that deserves only the best. (Pomppuli)

Manipulation

The main category of the need for manipulation covers discouragement, double bind communication, and histrionics. Narcissists try to keep up the illusion of their own excellence in order to hide their real feeling: envy that is directed to their significant other, victim. Narcissists seemed to become distressed because of others' success or achievements and perceive them as threats to their ego.

> In my opinion, double bind communication is manifested in our relationship by endless and harrowing harping, rotation of good and bad, overflowing provoking and eating one's words. At times, I really don't know the phase of our conversation. (OakLand)

> When being at the same time in the same place with the narcissist, there is no way you could do something your 'own'—It is futile to even think of reading the paper, not to mention a book when the narcissist is nearby! (Rikottu [Broken])

Narcissists want to nullify their victims in order to seem better in their own and others' eyes. They envy especially those admirable characteristics in their victims, such as authenticity, cheerfulness, openness, and honesty. They suppose that those skills and features are unachievable to them and thus subject to be rooted out from their victims as well.

> Laughing makes him/her hysterically furious. Joy has to be eliminated by one mean or another. You are not allowed to cry either. (Pettuleipä [Bark bread])

Narcissists are dependent on their victim because their do not have the strength needed for bearing their weakness. Thus, narcissists need other people to admire them or bring some other concrete advantage.

DISCUSSION

A person with narcissistic personality disorder is fixed and unchangeable. Narcissists are unable to act differently. A thought of a narcissist would change or change his/her

behavior seems impossible as learning some new skill or behavioral model require admitting that he/she does not know it already. Neither can narcissists learn from mistakes because they do not admit their existence. Normally, the ego is a human being's best friend not an enemy. But narcissistic self-hate is deep. Narcissistic personality disorder can be seen the most serious dysfunction in self-esteem.

At the beginning, Vaknin's (1999) list of nine criteria for the diagnosis of narcissistic personality disorder was introduced. When comparing the results with these criteria, the congruence is evident. For example, when Vaknin refers to narcissists' high-flown illusions on their own greatness, in this research the term 'megalomania' was used for describing these delusions. Abuse occurs in both lists as were lack of empathy and selfishness. Vaknin states that narcissists envy other people and think it is reciprocal. In this research, narcissists' paranoia is brought out.

Yet, there are some differences between the lists as well. Vaknin's (1999) categorization does not include the exercise of power that was introduced in this research. For example, incrimination, subordination, intimidation, and physical violence were an apparent result in this research. However, Vakin's intention has been to compile a list that makes diagnosis easier while the focus in this research was in intimate relationships and how narcissists treat their spouses.

Before proceeding to conclusions, some reliability issues should also be brought out that concern this research. Researchers always have to ground their interpretations on the data and not on any random excerpts of it. The data collection process and analysis are described in detail and the aim was to bring out the participants' voices and opinions. Of course, it is reasonable to ask to what extent the messages posted in the platform are selected and filtered. Indeed, the victims' stories represent a specific point of view: for example, not many positive things about narcissists were written on the platform. However, the purpose of the research was to study the victims' experiences and this seemed a suitable way as, for instance, interviewing them would have been practically impossible already because of the control narcissistic spouses have over them. In addition, messages in the platform do represent issues that the victims consider important and worth writing. From this point of view, the data can be seen reliable and truthful.

In this article, the purpose was to introduce narcissists' spouses' experiences and give space to their voices. In order to do that, we have added citations from the data to improve and support the transparency of the interpretations made in this research. Furthermore, the citations give a unique view to the concrete everyday life in the relationship with narcissists as it may be difficult to understand without any concrete examples.

CONCLUSION

The starting point of this research was to study intimate relationships in the shadow of narcissism. The purpose was to find out what it is like to live as a narcissist's spouse. The research showed that narcissism causes extensive problems and challenges

in an intimate relationship. As the knowledge about the phenomeno increases, it will be possible to develop better ways to help narcissists who live in our society (Hare, 1993) Narcissists are extremely dependent on their intimate relationships and yet, they are particularly vulnerable to the threat of romantic rejection as their high levels of attachment anxiety are associated with low self-esteem (see Besser & Priel, 2009).

The following conclusions can be drawn based on the research results:

1. In the intimate relationship, the narcissist is seen by his/her spouse as an unlimited, unstable, and immoral exerciser of power. The narcissistic spouse lacks the sense of reality and has a great need for manipulation. He/she also seems to have the ability to manipulate and thus causes a lot of pain to his/her spouse and other loved ones through hindering their growth and development.

2. Exercise of power in the intimate relationship covers incriminating, controlling, naming, and intimidating the victim. The narcissist rages and exercise physical violence. Due to maladjustment, the narcissist causes trouble in the relationship through his/her self-centeredness, moodiness, lack of empathy, and negligence. The narcissist does not tolerate criticism nor is capable of true intimacy. The narcissist's immorality is manifested in the intimate relationship by lying, infidelity, abusing the victim, and vandalism. Due to lack of the sense of reality, the narcissist is pathologically jealous, paranoid, and megalomaniac. The narcissist manipulates his/her victim. In the intimate relationship, it is shown as histrionics, discouragement, and double bind communication. The victim's possibilities to live full life become narrower and the opportunities to participate in societal developing actions become restricted – life with the narcissist appears as a prison.

3. Fundamentally, the narcissist suffers from difficult problems in self-esteem. Wide dysfunctions in the areas of self-esteem are perhaps the reason for the narcissist's behavior and trouble that follow.

Many features of narcissism can be seen as sources of success in the modern competitive society that is built on self-aggrandizement. The question is that to what extent the opportunistic abilities to bring out one's own proficiency and constantly strive for the better result in trample on other people and having an irresponsible and insensitive attitude to other people (see e.g. Lucher, Houston, Walker, & Alex Houston, 2011). For example, it has been shown that narcissists tend to reduce the closeness of the relationship with someone if that someone outperforms themselves (Nicholls & Stukas, 2011). Trzesniewski's and Donnellan's (2010) study showed that today's youngsters are less fearful of social problems than previous generations and they are also more cynical and less trusting. What does that trend mean for modern intimate relationships? At the same time, another research (see Uusiautti & Määttä, 2012) brought out that having a family does not prevent one from having for example a successful career too: the readiness to make compromises and to take both of the spouse's hopes in the consideration appeared as the key factor. However,

compromising does not seem to fit narcissistic behavior: narcissists' romantic attraction seems mostly as a strategy for enhancing self-esteem (Campbell, 1999). Therefore, it would be important to study how narcissists' self-esteem could be developed in a healthy way and toward healthy narcissism: that would not only benefit narcissists but also those people narcissists have influence over. One way of increasing awareness is through knowing and understanding the everyday life narcissists and their partners live—m and that is the exact contribution of this article.

THE ANATOMY OF A DIVORCE: REASONS, CONSEQUENCES, AND SURVIVAL, AND THE POSSIBILITY OF STARTING A NEW RELATIONSHIP

In the 1950s, marriage represented a traditional and typical form of an intimate relationship and family. Now, divorces, blended families, and single life have become commonplace (Crouch & Beaulieu, 2007; Glenn, 1998). Cherlin (1992) described people's current ambivalence in relation to marriage: Marriage is highly appreciated, although people do not necessarily commit to it, divorces are considered quick and good solutions, and people are ready to enter new marriages more and more unreservedly than before. Does this really correspond to individual people's experiences?

Love as such is appreciated and considered as an important means for one's own life satisfaction and support. Great emotions and expectations are leveled at love. People who demand much from their lives expect that love will heal and remove all the obstacles that prevent happiness, their own deficiencies and bad sides and, in addition, will provide the perfect pleasure.

Disappointments are inevitable. The more you expect of a marriage, the easier you will be disappointed. The dreams turn into traps that involve hopes that cannot be fulfilled (Määttä, 2002; 2005a). Personal plans fail and relationships break down. Instead of making one's "me"-project easier, love hurts. People tend to explain this disappointment by factors that are beyond their control and believe that everything will turn out better next time, in a new marriage and new love.

Usually the fact, how serious and tragic a divorce is, is not easy to admit – maybe because divorces are so common (Crouch & Beaulieu, 2007). It seems like people were afraid of seeing what happens in a divorce. My research pursues defining that far-reaching legacy—both the positive and negative one—that a divorce gives. Although divorce starts something new and leads to the new goals, giving up the past hurts. Saying the past goodbye distresses (Schoen & Canudas-Romo, 2006). Only a few who wind up in divorce have such knowledge or foresight that helps to understand a divorce process. Hardly many of them are able to perceive or imagine all what will happen before a divorce as well as during and after it beforehand.

This article is based on the stories about experiences of divorce written by 74 Finns. Their stories give valuable and genuine information about what a divorce means and how powerful and multidimensional emotional experience a divorce is. Although every story is one-of-a-kind reflecting the writers' own interpretations of their divorces, together all these descriptions can increase others' understanding in a significant way. Divorce involves plenty of features common to all cases, but every divorce also has something totally different from the other ones.

WHY DIVORCE?

There are conflicts in every marriage but yet they do not mean the end for a relationship (Eldar-Avidan et al., 2009; Gottman & Silver, 2004). How do the long-lasting relationships differ from those that break up, then? The difference cannot be explained so much by the amount or nature of difficulties as by how the spouses take the conflicts.

The following are the four types of intimate relationship that end up on divorce (see Duck, 1991).

1. A relationship is doomed to failure already at the beginning because the spouses' values or personalities differ greatly from each other. Quite often these relationships have started either at very young age because of parents' pressure or as a demonstration regardless of the parents' resistance (see Hill, 1993).
2. A marriage falls apart if not taken care of. Mutual interaction does not function well, the partners are not equal, the woman in the relationship is not satisfied with the life style that is accordant with the traditional role models as she works outside home and has to take care of the housework and children on top without the man's help, or the emotional content of a relationship just withers away (see De Graaf & Kalmijn, 2006).
3. The spouses change and develop at different pace and away from each other. They take the challenges that life offers in a way that makes them draw away from each other. One may get unemployed while the other forges ahead with his/her career. If a spouse considers his/her self-fulfillment threatened or he/she constantly falls into contempt, criticism, and vitiation, a relationship is likely to break up (see Carrere & Gottman, 1999).
4. A relationship ends unexpectedly after finding out something unacceptable from a partner. For example, infidelity or a crime can destroy a marriage quickly (Amato & Previti, 2003). Outsiders may regard a sudden divorce as a result of quite an insignificant reason.

Numerous different societal and psychological reasons can be named for a divorce; yet they do not explain sufficiently why people divorce (Coontz, 2007; Gigy & Kelly, 1992). There is not any universal explanation. Not all indigents, or who came from divorced families, or who are in their second marriage or so, divorce. There are as many reasons that cause trouble for human relationships as there are people.

The decision on when to end a difficult marriage varies by couples. There are not any rules for that when a relationship is worth sustaining and when the spouses should give it up. Love or the emotions of lack of love can be defined only by the spouses themselves. For two people, love and marriage are the most radical form of democracy that fundamentally grounds on personal responsibility at its purest (Gottman & Levenson, 1999). However, it also involves the possibility of irresponsibility or one of the partners can conclude that love has faded from his/her side: one votes the other out only because the feelings have changed.

A marriage has failed when it is too painful to carry on as before or when nurturing the relationship requires so much energy that everything else in life seems secondary or becomes overwhelming. Then it is hard to be oneself and think clearly, work efficiently, become inspired of anything, or be helpful, friendly, or caring. If the world that was constructed together for sharing joy, warmth, and intimacy, has shot through fear, despotism, or discord, the prerequisites for living together appear bad. Nevertheless, the critical point of wanting a divorce is not the same for everyone, nor is a divorce ever easy or simple (see Hart, 1976).

For all the heroic attempts, hardly anyone cannot understand the reasons for failure in relationship comprehensively and objectively; nor is it even necessary. By searching the reasons, people try to make their divorce more humanly understandable and acceptable. The reasons for a divorce are seen in different light during a divorce and after it (see Krumrei et al., 2011). There are also excuses involved although all the feelings cannot be expressed by words. Perhaps, many are more right than their ex-spouses believe and err more than they self can admit.

CONSTRUCTING THE POSTDIVORCE IDENTITY

The modern lifestyle challenges people, marriages, and love. Traditions that directed our lives earlier are about to disappear and the future seems uncertain and perhaps even uncontrollable as unforeseeable risks are faced. Giddens (1992) noted that life is like one great experiment that one can control only a little. The only concrete thing that a human being can try to control is his or her own self and identity. People's lives have become a project that is based on self-observation, a sort of "me" project. It is typical that one constructs one's self into something that one can rely on through societal change and as the counterbalance of chaos. One part of the "me" project is spontaneous self-fulfillment and individuality (Bauman, 2001).

Emotional autonomy has a significant role when constructing one's own identity. In marriage, it is tested by a variety of affirmative tests, according to Alberoni (1979). With these tests, people look for certainty whether they want to live in a marriage and whether they are capable of coping alone, without a spouse. Spouses might observe each other's behavior, looking for reasons for giving up on the marriage. They seek evidence on whether the other loves truly and as much as they do and whether their love is likely to last in the future. Being together is, therefore, being alert.

This continuous attention can be explained by modern people's fear of succumbing to love. Before doing so, they need to be guaranteed of having requisite love so that they can plan the future. On the one hand, people want to commit to the other, but on the other hand, they want to prove that they can cope without the presence of the loved one.

Beck-Gernsheim and Beck (1995) referred to the chaos of love that originates in the conflicts of interest between love, family, and the individual who demands personal freedom. Both women and men compulsively look for the right and satisfying way of life; want much of their life; seek love and the right companion;

try dating, cohabiting, and marriage; and try to combine a family and career, love and marriage, a new kind of motherhood and fatherhood, and friendship and companionship.

Thus, a marriage is a central part of a human being's identity. In losing an intimate relationship, one loses something of oneself. After a divorce, spouses have to create new identities for themselves (Oyserman, Bybee, Terry, & Hart-Johnson, 2004). The development of an independent identity and lifestyle requires a different kind of adjustment to the surrounding environment. One's profession, work, household, and social relationships have to be reconsidered (Gadalla, 2009) and children's practical rearing has to be reorganized (Haugen, 2007).

Indeed, a rich body of studies has focused on the effects that divorces have on children's lives from a variety of perspectives (Amato & Cheadle, 2005; Eldar-Avidan, Haj-Yahia, & Greenbaum, 2009; Fabricius, 2003; Moon, 2011) but often the starting point is that divorce is harmful for the children (Amato, 2010; Coleman, Ganong, & Fine, 2000). On the other hand, it has been pointed out that problems in interaction and conflicts in the family have already been enormous before the divorce (Gottman & Levenson, 1999); neither can the divorce as such be the reason for a child's malaise. Of course, it is clear that when a child's home and familiar routines change, the child can also experience feelings of stress, concern, and insecurity (Amato, 1993; Hanson, McLanahan, & Thomson, 1996; Henry & Lovelace, 1995). The divorce-related social stigma and negative stereotypes about blended families can cause trouble for a child, as well (Claxton-Oldfield, 1992).

Coping with divorce varies considerably among divorcees (Nunley & Seals, 2010; Schoen & Canudas-Romo, 2006). For example, according to earlier studies (Fabricius, 2003; Wallerstein, 1991), low-educated women who divorce in later life seem to have a different approach to forming their life after the divorce than women who have divorced younger. The possibility of remarriage does exist, but most people do not seize it immediately. Starting a new relationship might also seem an impossible option in the middle of a divorce. In addition, having a blended family might not seem like the ideal situation (Mikesell & Garbarino, 1986; Ribbens Maccarthy, Edwards, & Gillies, 2003) and research on blended families has been criticized for being too risk-centered—although in the 21st century, research on blended families has increased and become more versatile (Ganong & Coleman, 2004). Societal norms defining postdivorce roles and relationships are not well-established (Madden-Derdich & Leonard, 2000) and thus, identity development after a divorce might be challenging. After the divorce, divorcees enter the era of trying new relationships. Many of them might find it confusing to note that they are "dating" again, as the concept of dating is more easily associated with youth. Being out on a date can seem weird as a concept but still it seems even stranger to talk about mother's boyfriend or father's girlfriend. Our language does not seem to have proper words for expressing adults' dating (Alterovitz & Mendelsohn, 2009).

METHOD

A divorce is a series of victories and losses. Everyone's lives improve if a marriage eroded by painful disagreements is dissolved. The purpose of this study was to analyze what kinds of feelings a divorce excites in divorcees and how they perceive their life after a divorce.

The purpose of this research was to analyze the way divorcees perceive the possibility of starting a new relationship. In this article, we study the theme through the following questions:

1. How do divorcees describe the process of divorcing?
2. How do divorcees perceive the possibility of starting a new intimate relationship?
3. How do divorcees describe their new intimate relationship and life after divorcing?

Finns were asked to write about their divorce experiences. This wish was transmitted via periodicals along with some specific questions that would guide their answers, but the emphasis was on the phases of divorce in the light of their own experiences. The data were collected in the form of informal letters so that people could reveal what they really think and feel and how they act in a divorce in a more open manner. Furthermore, the participants were given a chance to deliberate and outline their answers freely in peace without researchers' intervention. The writers defined by themselves what to include and what to omit in their stories.

Altogether 74 letters were received. Of the writers, 71 were women and only 3 were men. In length, the letters were between one sheet and dozens of sheets of detailed description with attachments and markings from diaries. Although the writers could have sent the letters anonymously, many of them gave their contact information and expressed their willingness to give supplementary information if necessary. In this article, they are treated anonymously.

The respondents were not asked any background information but a fairly good overall picture can be constructed. They were aged between 24 and 76, mainly mothers of one or two. Some of them were childless, whereas some already had grandchildren. They were married at the age of 17 to 26 and their marriages had lasted for between 5 and 30 years. A few of them had divorced twice. Most of them worked before their divorces but some of them had been homemakers and did not start working until after the divorce. For some of them, the divorce was a quite recent experience that had taken place a year ago, but some had divorced several years ago, 14 years at the most. Most of the respondents had initiated their divorce on their own volition. The data were analyzed through qualitative content analysis (Silverman, 2006).

RESULTS

The Pendulum of Emotions when Contemplating a Divorce

The first steps of divorce are taken before the actual divorce. At that moment, a divorce starts at the emotional level (Bohannan, 1971; Määttä, 2002). The phase

of contemplating a divorce is the hardest for many in the whole divorce process. They pack and unpack without being sure whether they should stay or leave. The emotional struggle creates a pendulum motion that can last for years. The spouses ponder whether they should still try and could the former good times come back. The time of uncertainty can be piercing: at times the spouses decide to continue followed by disappointments. They even feel guilt:

> For weeks I tried to think how I could tell my husband that I don't want to stay in this frigid marriage but my conscience pricked me: I have gotten two children and I don't have the right to separate the children from their father.

When the struggle with the thought of divorce turns into a confidence and wish to break up, one has achieved the readiness for divorce.

> The whole marriage was such a madhouse, constant fighting, separateness followed by soothing and being together again. Weekends were bad but often Sundays and Mondays extremely wonderful. Finally, I had had enough, and got tired and decided that I won't watch this anymore at all. We had been going back and forth for too long.

Starting a divorce is a time for mourning (Wiseman, 1975) and power struggle as well. In addition, a divorce process involves the phases of traumatic crisis (Cullberg, 1991). Processing the painful matters in a divorce resembles the emotions related to death, the definite loss. During a divorce, one confronts the demise of the illusions of love and family. The dominating feelings may be depression (Hilton & Kopera-Frye, 2006), grief, and disappointments that can turn into the feelings of anger, hater, and bitterness when the breakdown of a marriage becomes clearer and clearer. Several researchers have described a divorce as mourning (Freund, 1975; Sakraida, 2005).

The Emotional Storm after a Divorce

The first year after a divorce is the hardest dominated by powerful feelings (De Graaf & Kalmijn, 2006). During a divorce process, crisis that takes at least a year, a divorcee divides the shared memories and experiences into various stages of the year, for example into holidays and festivals. One has to spend the first Christmas and the children's birthdays without a spouse, the arrival of the first spring and fall without a partner. Divorcees have to reform themselves in two directions: away from the old and toward the new.

> I was always the one who created the party at home and prepared the traditional feast. Now, I still decorate my home but it's not the same. Although I don't miss the old otherwise, the warmth of family life is missing and that hurts.

One can escape to work and work routines can help to move on with life:

> Summer and especially holidays were the hardest time. I guess I had too much time to think. Despair, pain, and anger often emerged as powerful waves. Many times I would have wanted just to disappear… for once it felt really great to go back to work after a holiday.

As the initial experiences, a divorce usually arouses the powerful feelings of guilt, distress, insecurity (see Gadalla, 2009), hate and bitterness, as well as grief and depression (Gardner & Oswald, 2006). One is not likely to foresee those feelings nor is able to prepare for them beforehand. Often people shrink and hide their feelings and try to make the situation easier by resorting to medication.

> The best moment of a day was when I was allowed to take a strong sleeping pill in the evening and be lulled into the relief that I'll survive at least for the next few hours.

Even though medication might be a good help, one should not shrink one's emotions. They have a distinct meaning: with them people react their experiences out of themselves. No one is answerable to others for his/her feelings unlike for his/her actions.

The degree and strength of emotions vary. Many people grieve in full, some visit the darkest purgatory; while the others seem to handle the situation with a shrug. The whole gamut comes with the territory. All feelings are allowed and they cannot be put in any "order of rationality".

Hate. Hate does not necessarily fade away along with the following years after a divorce. It can strengthen and ignite again. On the other hand, the feelings of hate can be enclosed in a way that one does not have the symptoms at the present moment resulting in a false peace. Unprocessed powerful negative feeling can affect for a long time and in an insidious way. The unsolved emotions turn into the inner invisible chains that manifest themselves as avoidant personality or unsuccessful choices, repetitious incorrect decisions or misinterpretations.

> Because I was betrayed, I looked extremely askance certain types of men and women. Men's friendliness I interpreted as pick-up attempts: he is the same kind of betrayer as my husband. Whereas good-looking young women I easily branded as back-stabbers – these deceitful people I saw everywhere.

> I was wondering whether he regretted, whether he had made too snap decisions, whether I would take him back… I have found it difficult to accept this divorce.

Although many can forgive (see Gordon, Baucom, & Snyder, 2000), the most people do not ever forget. Hatred and bitterness can be strong for years. It can feel strange

as a divorce was supposed to clear the air. It is easily postulated that after getting rid of the spouse one will get rid of the conflicts as well. For many divorcees, this is not the case (Amato & Cheadle, 2005).

> I was quite embittered for many years after the divorce. Now it is already 38 years since the divorce, I have completely gotten out of my bitterness but I can't think back about him with pleasure, hardly ever.

There can be both the old and new grudge between the divorced spouses. The old hate is fed by the memories. They recall the humiliations and insults that took place during the divorce process (Gottman & Silver, 2004). These memories can last forever and sometimes come to mind unexpectedly. The new feud originates in the people's ability to get along as a divorced family.

Grief. Divorce means loss and grief falling on those dreams and hopes that never came true. Mourning helps to close the door to the past and to move on. Although a relationship had been the most miserable, at least at some phase the partners had expected something better from it. Even if one did not cry for a lost spouse, he/she still has to bury the promises of the failed love affair. A crucial part of grief is therefore giving up the shared future (Amato, 2010).

> I had to say goodbye to the marriage and the person who had been so close to me and who shared a significant period of my life. I say good bye to the mystical, deep connection that we shared and learn to accept the fact that it is over now.

Remembering is typical of grief. The memories can be selected so that after a divorce one recalls only the drawbacks and arguments. Little by little, the images of the past become more versatile.

Grief can be quite a selfish feeling. "What will happen to me, how will I survive?" are thoughts that grief after divorce involves – including self-pity as well. Some people's survival attempts are crippled with the shortness of the time perspective: at first they might not be able to think longer but one day at a time. The future has collapsed being a frightening question mark and everyday life is hard to control. Even the simplest decisions seem difficult to make: getting dressed in the morning seems overwhelming and pointless effort. Along with mourning, discerning the future becomes easier and little by little one starts to make plans for the next days, weeks, months, and even years.

> At the moment, it has gone ten months since my divorce and I am already able to understand that I am responsible for my own happiness. Did I have to gain such a simple insight as a result of a hard crisis? Still it is not easy to take care of my own happiness, but sometimes I am even amused.

One is able to cut loose from grief when having learned to live with it, not in the middle of it as Dyregrov (1994) points out.

Embarrassment and guilt. One's self-respect may be tested during a divorce. Failure in keeping up the marriage can cause the feelings of embarrassment and inferiority. At its worst, life is tinted with the aching emotions of self-contempt.

> At one point, I saw myself as a worn out and rejected outcast who is no longer needed anywhere… at times, I saw the whole world walking in pairs while I was just a half separated from my husband.

On the other hand, guilt can also be preying on one's mind. One has a bad conscience; what did I say or do and how the ex will manage? "Should I have tried more after all", someone was asking.

The reasons for a divorce or the one to blame can hardly be found as such nor is it even possible. Naming a guilty will not make surviving from a divorce any easier. Even if one considered oneself as totally blameless—which is quite unlikely—one has to admit at least one's commitment and expectations set for a marriage as failure or disappointment.

> I have to cut the cord to my ex-husband; to say goodbye for the invincible belief that this could not happen. I just have to dare.

Some people can view their past and own role in a balanced and mellow manner. They think that they have done their best and state the inevitability of what happened. Guilt and pointing the finger of blame have disappeared. They have given themselves the right to err as well.

> I surely thought many times what a happy family we would have been. Everything did seem good in the outsiders' eyes. I don't know exactly what happened. I haven't been blaming myself much because I tried my best: I gave space to come and go. And how could I blame the man either if he wanted to go? I couldn't or even wanted to inhibit him. A family life together just wasn't our thing.

Relief and independency. Despite grief, many feel relieved at the same time. Immediately after a divorce, the losses are constantly in mind but little by little other things will come to mind as well.

> Nor do I want my ex-husband here. I feel better now than I have felt for years. Surely, I cry every now and then but much less than I cried last year when I was his wife.

For many, their marriage has been a series of sacrifices. A divorce gives the opportunity to be oneself. Cutting loose from the physical and mental chains means quite a concrete liberation for those who have lived in a troublesome marriage. They notice that they are allowed to realize their hopes and needs and do whatever they want without being afraid. They are not restricted, controlled or objects for exercise of power: they can be in peace.

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> After 27 years in marriage moving away from home in my little apartment, a small studio, was like heaven. Now I live the best time of my life… the doors are open in every direction and I don't have to ask permission for my doings and goings.

Enjoying the Social Support and Freedom

Many appreciate the support given by their close ones (Krumrei et al., 2007). The joy of the friends' compassion relieves. Even those family relationships that had become distant might revive. Often the relatives have followed the chain of events and therefore a divorce does not come as a surprise for them. A divorcee will find this information relieving.

> Many people said to me for free that they had been waiting for the divorce or had wondered how long I will handle it. I was surprised by the fact how many told me that I made the right decision. It didn't make the divorce any easier but confirmed me that my solution was the right one.

Usually, the attitudes of the circle of acquaintances, relatives, and friends are simply approving or disapproving. One's immediate family does not always find it easy to understand that processing a divorce takes a long time: they encourage a divorcee to shape up and their understanding attitude at the beginning may turn into impatience.

> After the divorce, my own life seemed to be at a low ebb. I was completely numb. Then I had to listen to advice that meant to mean good: you should look for a better job or get remarried or do something useful. It was easy for them to say.

Support by the outsiders and well-meaning close ones can start to feel like pressure. However, the pain that a divorce causes cannot be processed any faster. The process of mourning is usually longer and more slowly than the friends think (Lucas, 2005). Friendship is tested: one should not set any pressures on a divorcee for handling the grief. Other kinds of pressures can also occur: a divorcee's grief is not necessarily regarded as sufficient or right, appropriate.

Friends either help or avoid. The time of divorce strengthens the friendships but can also make some of the friends disappear. Regardless of the frequency of divorces, some friends may avoid the situation and do not know how to act. They wonder with which spouse they should be friends after a couple has divorced. Again, the others evade. They can consider a divorcee as a threat, a dangerous competitor. These reasons can make a divorcee feel isolated (Tein, Sandler, & Zautra, 2000).

After a divorce, one is different and the old friendships do not function in the same way than before. The shared subjects may be checked and a divorcee may not be interested in the same topics and hobbies that he/she was when married. Instead

of clinging to the old friends, it is important to get new friends who fit in the altered life situation. A friend is the one who supports and understands and helps to see the new doors.

A divorce changes one's sexual life as well (Call, Sprecher, & Schwartz, 1995). At older age the divorcees have difficulties of defining their direction. The first memory of dating goes back to the youth; and they know that they are no longer any blushing fillies. Marriage has given a different mold for them. A married couple's sex life has become stable as it is and might be the only experience of sex. The image that they have had along marriage can be so deep-rooted that creating a new sex life instead of it is not easy. Meeting another kind of sexuality or new partner confuses and one is not necessarily prepared for that. Having the courage to have new sexual relationships is frightening and worrying, yet fascinating too. One has to even reconstruct one's sexual self-esteem. The dating skills one had before marriage are rusted and improving them does not happen in a moment. How can one start "dating" again?

Renewal: Creating an Identity

Marriage is for many a central part of their self (Fisher & Alberti, 2005). When losing a relationship, one also loses something from oneself. Along with a years-long marriage, one creates a picture of oneself, one's spouse, and marriage and that picture also functions as a mirror to outside defining one's outer position.

> I would continuously remind myself of what I had lost. When shopping, I saw the families being together, something that I myself had to give up.

Giving up the role that one had when married becomes easier if a divorcee is able to strengthen his/her separateness and new identity. One can appreciate oneself in a totally new way after divorce: "I can like myself even though I am not the other's spouse".

When looking for a new balance and new life, many are able to cut loose from the roles and division of labor shaped in marriage.

> Seven years have come since the divorce. I am grateful that we were able to break up in good time. I like this new me more than the previous me.

> Now it's my time to show what I am capable of: it is not necessarily much but at least it cannot be anything worse or something that wastes my life more that the life I had when I was married.

Some told that they had seized the new opportunities: started studying or concentrated on developing their professional skills and enhancing their careers or on new relationships and hobbies. However, not all divorcees had enough strength or courage for renewal.

The Ability to Handle the Everyday Life

After a divorce, the everyday life and behavior of most of the women did not differ greatly on what it had been in marriage. The crucial thing was their altered conception of their life, qualities, and behavior. Little by little, many of them experienced the new feeling of freedom after noticing that they will survive. Some are able to see as strengths those features that were previously considered as flaws. For example, the everyday housework and learned daily everyday skills as well as many qualities in one's personality (diligence, energy, enthusiasm, creativity, and scrupulousness) can be interpreted as resources (Orbuch et al., 2002). They are able to carry on with their lives being more relieved and not scolding themselves, and to perhaps make disappear from their minds the undermining, demanding, and nagging voice from their marriage.

> At first I thought that everything falls over but bit by bit I felt my strengths again. I could start doing things in my own way at home, in fact, in the same way as previously but without hearing the critical or disparaging voice in my ears.

Neither will, for example, poor living conditions after a divorce prevent from being satisfied with one's life (see Kiiski, 2002; Nunley & Seals, 2010; Poortman, 2005):

> Nothing will replace the peaceful life in which I can now retire. I enjoy the peace and tidiness. Now I have made my way home.

Some women concentrated only on their children after divorce (Baum, 2003). Some of them had been doing that already when married and they continued with this life style. Children can help organizing the everyday life. (Strohschein, 2007). On the other hand, there is a danger of these "heroes" exhausting themselves with their aspiration of carrying on the same kind of family life that they had had before divorce.

The attempt to handle both work and all the housework and childcare alone makes a mom easily exhausted and miserable, or absent-minded. Then, concentrating on children signifies even more loneliness and less social contacts (Thompson, 2008).

However, even many of those divorcees who have a vivid social life experienced deep loneliness. Being together with the others does not bring great happiness, albeit comfort.

> Although I had people around me, it wasn't the same. The new people seemed sometimes even interesting being still unknown but mostly I did not feel like interested in talking, showing the chocolate side of me, pursuing to make a good impression. Loneliness was sometimes harrowing.

In the end, the feeling of loneliness does not however have much to do with living alone. In others' company, one can be as lonely as being alone. Many feel lonely even in their marriages. Yet, many blame a divorce for their feelings of loneliness.

The cursed silence seemed to threaten at times: there weren't any voices, no sound of running water in the bathroom, no his things in disorder everywhere making me annoyed. Loneliness felt sometimes quite oppressive.

Those women suffered from loneliness the most who had concentrated on living in a family and with their husbands; when left without a stable family life, they experienced being left without love, appreciation, and self-respect (Amato, 2000).

The feeling of loneliness disappears when one stops considering the moments of loneliness as the signs of one's worthlessness. Fear of being alone fades along with starting to realize that one self can be "enough". Breaking out of a marriage and anchoring to one self starts to seem welcome at that point when one understands that his/her emotional survival is not dependent on others or losing a marriage.

The Fear and Desire of Starting a New Relationship

Every human being needs love: both to give love and be loved. Divorcees' memories of bruising love are sorts of leftovers that make people reserved when it comes to creating new relationships. On the other hand, divorcees have experienced the pleasure, love, sensuality, sexuality, warmth, and affection of an intimate relationship. People want to experience these feelings again, but in a better form and better relationship (Leslie & Morgan, 2011).

Divorce as an experience might cripple someone with the fear of entering a new relationship. Divorcees can lack interest and activity for some reason. This is how they might try to avoid reexperiencing the pain of their previous marriage, but the price they pay for it is abstaining from those feelings of joy and serenity that an intimate relationship can, at its best, offer. "Actually, I've had enough of men. I don't want more of them," might be a common sentiment.

Many divorcees are enthralled by the idea of having a new relationship: On the one hand, they yearn for it, and on the other hand, they avoid it. Because of the fear of getting hurt, one can build a bulwark against proximity (see Thompson, 2008). Divorcees do not want to take the emotional risk that love involves: Falling in love does not guarantee requisite love, trust could lead to disappointment, and confiding can hurt. These thoughts appeared in letters in the following manner:

As if I had constantly reminded myself of what happened the last time I let a man too close to me. When I fell in love, I trusted and got married. . . I have to stay alert. It can't happen even again, I mustn't cause myself pain.

After this, no one will ever know me again. I can't and I shouldn't take that risk. I'll bury myself deep into my heart.

Half a year after the divorce, I started to date with another man but it didn't work out, we broke up. Now, I can't imagine my life without a man but still the thought of committing to someone seems strange.

One of the traps of the past might be the solid generalizations and prejudices (see Tein, Sandler, & Zautra, 2000), as they can act as a shield against new relationships. Then, one can undervalue all representatives of the opposite sex ("You cannot trust on any man"), or one's status is regarded in a one-sided manner ("They always take us, divorcees, like . . .").

Divorcees doubt their chances of being accepted with all their wounds from the previous life. Many of them contemplate the after effects of a failed marriage. They carry their experiences of being hurt with them in their new relationships (see Eldar-Avidan et al., 2009). They can be hypersensitive to failure and thirst for success and acceptance endlessly. Because they know that anticipated failure is likely to come, they consider it important to cut loose from the past and forget about the depths of the previous marriage. Many try consciously to avoid taking their old problems into their new relationship or repeating the same behavioral patterns.

> I have a new relationship with an unmarried man but I don't know if this was such a relationship that I would like to have. I would need more the proximity of an adult man. Here, I am like a teenage girl, uncertain and fanciful. I have told my story to my new companion and that I don't know yet what I want. I still try carefully not to have him as the dump of my divorce.

On the other hand, divorcees easily lose their trust in their own judgment. They remember their stumble and lament their own foolishness. Thinking of having made a mistake, they are afraid of taking a new risk (see Lucas, 2005).

> I was quite afraid that I would not fall into the same kind of type as the first one was. I was cynical and through a magnifying glass looked at all bad sides, so that I would not trust in the other too naively.

Many divorcees considered the failed marriage as a learning experience and thought that they had learned from their mistakes. They had started to think about their courses of action and whether they should be changed. They realize that a new relationship can be based on different principles than the last one, especially as they are more prepared to admit their own mistakes. Many of them share the belief that the new relationship will be successful because they have grown as human beings (Ebing, Pruett, & Pruett, 2009).

> I believe and hope that I can now act in a relationship even a little bit better. I still trust on the chance of a good relationship but it still seems quite distant that I would get married again. Yet, I wouldn't like to live alone the rest of my life.

When trying to maximize success, most divorcees do not want to indulge straight ahead in the new relationship. They weight the chances of the new relationship carefully and analyze their past life comprehensively with the new companion (see Fisher & Alberti, 2005).

It feels like I'm not ready for anything very serious yet. Perhaps, my divorce process is still somehow unfinished and unprocessed. I have used my energy for taking care of the routines in daily duties and learning of being a single parent; and haven't actually given time for anything else.

But the exception proves the rule. One woman wrote of committingfairly quickly after the divorce, defying the chances of failure:

I found the new man quite quickly. This relationship was anything but slow warm-up; everything happened fast. A few months' dating and then we moved in and immediately I got pregnant. Everything went so fast. Maybe we both thought that we have to seize this opportunity, it's nowor never.

Divorced men seem to remarry faster than divorced women. The same tendency occurs in other countries, too, at least in Europe and North America (Cseh-Szombathy, Koch-Nielsen, Trost, & Weeda, 1985). The explanation has been that men are more likely to deny the problems a divorce has caused and escape them in the new relationship instead of working them out. However, when studying Finnish men and their coping with a divorce, De Bruijin, Homm, and Talasterä (1994) proved it a myth that having a new marriage would be just a masculine way of rejecting oppressive feelings. According to their study, a new relationship and spouse merely help men to confront those emotions and issues that the divorce has caused. Men indicated that the new spouse was a central character with whom they could analyze their divorce-related feelings. It does not mean that new partners would have only the role of a supporter or therapist, but especially when the other had experienced a divorce as well, they were able to support and get support from each other. The significance of such a dialogue appeared in divorced women's writings in this research, as well. The shared experiences bind:

Every now and then we talk about the divorce that both of us have experienced. We avoid discussing certain issues in order to not hurt each other but many things bind. And it relieves.

The new, happier marriage.　　Only a few turn their back on the chance of having a new relationship even if they had burnt their wings badly in their previous marriage. Divorcees want their new relationship to succeed, which means that they expect it to last for the rest of their lives. Yet, they doubt the chance of success and analyze their coping with problems, as they know that the second marriage, especially if children are involved, includes huge risks from the start (see Krumrei, Coit, Martin, Fogo, & Mahoney, 2007).

I'm sure that this marriage will last because we have decided that we won't split up. Often, sitting on the benches of sauna, we think how our children would make a bit easier in their life and wouldn't make the same mistakes that we have. However, we have come to the conclusion that everyone has to learn their own lessons.

Usually, the new love relationship or new marriage restores an adult's self-esteem quite effectively. Divorcees tell how the new relationship feels better than life without it. In addition, they think that their new marriage and the new spouse are better than ever (Coleman et al., 2000).

> Two years after my divorce I met my new spouse. He had also experienced a divorce and we analyzed them together, too. He was optimistic and easy to talk with. Now, this new man seemed worth trusting as he seemed so independent and I didn't have to nurture him like my previous husband. He even has a sense of humor. Moreover, our children get along well and they enjoy being together. Therefore, we decided that as we both have divorced once, if we want to be together, we have to do it right. We have been married for 4 years and this relationship works. Our children have almost turned into siblings.

Divorcees usually describe their new relationship in a positive manner. The painful divorce and loneliness that follows it increase the appreciation of the new marriage. Formalizing their new relationship by getting married means restoring the balance, getting back to "normal," back to the natural status provided by marriage and family life.

The new marriage is considered strong, balanced, serene, and mentally rich, a sort of a stronghold of happiness after tribulations of the previous marriage (see Sakraida, 2005). The letters reveal how disappointments and failure in the previous marriage are a pointer to the new relationship and what it should be. Divorcees are convinced they are more prepared to work more for their relationship to make it last.

> I met my present spouse 8 years after the divorce. Already when we first met, the interest was strongly mutual and our intellectual connection worked at once. Still, we contemplated about moving in for a long time because both of us had good experiences living alone and worse when living with someone. Now it feels like the previous experiences function as a sort of building material for the present life and with them, we are going to cope with possible problems.

Divorcees' perceptions of issues in their blended families.   According to the letters, despite the emphasis on happiness, several issues occur in blended families and they were discussed openly. It seems that the new marriage is taken realistically (see Krumrei, Mahoney, & Pargament, 2011). Those who get remarried seem to understand that life is not a bed of roses and there is no such a thing as a trouble-free relationship. Divorcees seem to realize the difficulties and cope with them. What they have experienced in the previous marriage does not have to ruin their future.

> The spiral of infidelity was a snake that whispered in the ears of both of us (my ex-husband and I) in my broken marriage. I was shocked with the fear of becoming abandoned and escaped from my twisted marriage. I don't want to be unfaithful. With my present husband, I have no reason to be.

The environment does not always support the blended family. Even the closest ones might raise their brows and have doubts about the success of the marriage. Attitudes can be surprisingly prejudiced.

> On the other hand, the blended family has its problems. The blended family is not a nuclear family. At the beginning, people asked really inappropriate questions about our family and we were thinking, my husband and I, whether the one who asked is really so stupid or just otherwise uncivilized.

> Some people's attitude is strange. Don't they realize that we are a real family, not any leftover from a normal family or reheated form.

If a blended family means that it is, at least, one of the spouses' second family, it is not a new form of a family. In Finland in the 19th-century agrarian society, blended families were as common as they are today. Then people used to get remarried after their previous spouse died. It was common and normal that widows got married because it was one way of solving the practical problems of everyday life.

After a divorce, some divorcees want to try different forms of being together. Being married or living in different places can prove a workable solution.

> Ten years after the divorce, I started dating with an unmarried man who was almost 11 years older than me. We lived in different places and our relationship works well this way. This relationship is the happiness of my life. I have two children from my previous marriage and I am not going to have more children because I don't want my children to feel themselves outsiders.

According to the data, children's position is a salient issue when starting a new relationship (see Leon, 2003). When divorcees pursue having a happy relationship, children are strongly connected with this aim. On the one hand, the examples tell about two opposite emphases: Divorcees emphasize the value of the spouse and their mutual relationship. On the other hand, they talk about the new relationship with their children's terms. Taking care of the relationship and cherishing their parenthood might turn into balancing between what is primary (see Albertini & Garriga, 2011).

The roles of stepfathers, stepmothers, and stepgrandparents are burdened by negative myths (Cartwright & Seymour, 2002; Hawkins & Eggebeen, 1991): Stepmothers are mean and stepfathers violent, even homicidal. In addition to these prejudices, blended families lack clear rules that would guide their daily solutions: how to be loyal to all parties, how much to intervene, should one stay distant or try be close, how to handle jealousy (see Dunn, 2002). Yet, parenthood can be carried out with established practices in a blended family as well (Strohschein, 2007).

In her study, Ritala-Koskinen (1993) contemplated children's position in a blended family: whether a child is the reason for problems, the one who suffers,

adjusts, defends, is discriminated, or the richness of a blended family (see Finley & Schwartz, 2010). It is impossible to give an unambiguous answer. The child can be the reason for starting a new relationship or a hindrance for it, and a quality controller in the selection of a new partner.

> I was married to a man who also had divorced once. We have one child together and my preexisting child, but we are we, a family, and we think that this marriage is as valuable as the first one was. I was remarried because I wanted to marry this man, not because it was time that you were supposed to get married.

The failure of the new relationship: Should I stay or should I go? Although many stories about the new relationship are descriptions of more mature and realistic marriages, some participants reveal how their new relationship failed. For all the wishes for a better life and an end to loneliness, the new relationship or partner might not have brought the happiness after all (see Wang & Amato, 2000). Admitting that this second marriage is about to fail introduces a new struggle and a pendulum motion: whether to divorce or stay (Orbuch, Veroff, Hassan, & Horrocks, 2002).

> I have thought about my past life and come to a conclusion that thi present relationship has been the top in a negative sense. Probably, this is just a way of being together. I have thought about my future and what it would be without this man. I wouldn't have to smell the liquor every night, listen to terrific snoring, no one would be unfaithful to me, lie to me, I could come and go as I please without fearing what might wait for me here when coming back. I am more and more intrigued by this option if that man does not do anything to make things better.

> This relationship has been about to break up many times but every time the man has managed to disarm me and then we have had it better for a few weeks. At the moment, the situation is that if something peculiar doesn't happen, this relationship will end now and forever.

Along with aging, the meaning of a relationship appears differently. A marriage provides an impression of security when people fear aging, involution, and lonely old age. A marriage is hoped to provide outer support when people have to cope with incapability and infirmities (Chiriboga, 1989; Rokach, Cohen, & Dreman, 2004).

> It remains to be contemplated whether this will lead to a break-up or not, I'm not going to let this situation out of my hands too easily but count the good and bad sides with a notebook. My age also affects the decision. I have to think whether I want to spend the rest of my life alone or whether I content myself with this dead-wood marriage. The future will show.

DISCUSSION

The Struggle of a Divorce

Marriages and divorces, new relationships, and break-ups exert one's resources. Despite being enervating, for many women and men, they seem to be the trigger of defining their own flaws when trying to develop into better people. A divorce produces an emotional baggage with plenty of insecurity and uncertainty but which provides promises, challenges, and options as well (Gardner & Oswald, 2006; Guru, 2009).

For some, a divorce appears as a relatively painless change in life or a crisis bypassed quite quickly; whereas for others it is a long-term and serious trauma. For some, the quality of life can improve significantly and after years, they tell how they live the happiest time of their life; whereas a divorce marks the others with tragic imprints that last for years or for the rest of their lives at its worst. They struggle with the feelings of hate and sorrow for a long time. And a divorce always affects children somehow.

A divorce signifies many kinds of struggle and change. The most visible effects last for two or three years and after that people usually seem to get their life in some sort of order. Life returning apparently on the right rails does not necessarily cool down those inner tumults of feelings that people experience after a divorce (Amato, 2010).

A divorce can prove deceitful. Although being easy in juridical sense, mentally it is a long process. Nor does time always heal the wounds. Lives of many of them change totally. A divorce molds not only one's personality, identity, self-image, attitudes, and world view but also one's conceptions of society and family, the way of life and habitation, as well as the way of organizing one's leisure and work (see Fisher & Alberti, 2005). An endless chain of new events causes changes in a divorcee that others do not always see.

Children's Feelings during a Divorce Process

All family members should be allowed to show their feelings. Even if adults tried to cover their emotional reactions, children would certainly notice their parents crying, feeling blue or restless (Kelly & Emery, 2003). If this matter is not discussed, children will become worried and afraid and interpret the situations based on their imagination. Children's emotional antennas are much more sensitive than adults' are.

Children should be allowed to mourn as well. When they are assured that it is not dangerous if parents cry and if children do not feel threatened, they are able to express their emotions more openly. At the time of parents' break-up, showing one's feelings can be as difficult for a child as it is for an adult without encouraging doing it. It is important that children can hold on to their trust in mother and father even

when the parents' mutual relationship is tested and when children express their hate or anger (see Schwartz & Finley, 2009). When children do something wrong, they have to be punished but they have to be entitled to express their emotions and they must not be punished for their feelings.

When a family falls apart, children are concerned about their position and future and are afraid of losing their parents (Ebing, Pruett, & Pruett, 2009). The way children will cope with a divorce depends greatly on how safe they think their life is. A crucial thing is how well they have been informed of the solutions related to family and themselves. Children should be able to trust in life and their parents so that when leaving home they can be sure that it is there when they come back too.

A divorce is not just one separate event in children's or adults' life. It is a continuum with the life-long effects. All the phases of children's life span from confirmation to wedding and a grandchild's christening follow the divorced parents (Haugen, 2007).

Children's growing is always bumpy and volatile whether the parents break up or not. A divorce as such is not the greatest threat to a child's development. Every child, like an adult as well, has their own inner mechanism that guides toward a balance the straighter the more parents can support them. Many divorcees are surprised how strong children are at the end as long as their basic safety is guaranteed (Finley & Schwartz, 2010; Leon, 2003).

How to Succeed in the New Life?

A divorce is a crossroads of many changes in life. After a divorce, a divorcee has to draw his/her map of life again. Both the human relationships, organizing the everyday life and the wider social solutions will have their own place. The way one organizes the children's position, work, habitation, leisure, and friendships, is a sum of several decisions and choices (Wang & Amato, 2000).

Marriages and divorces, new relationships, and break-ups absorb human strengths considerably. For all their enervating nature, they seem to be the thrust for figuring out one's own flaws in the attempt to become a better human being (Gardner & Oswald, 2006). People grow through hardships. Whether one has divorced or not, everyone has moments in life when they are haunted by extreme feelings of chaos, emptiness, uncertainty, or despair. However, everyone has experiences of surpassing these moments. They prove that people are capable of growing.

A divorce causes uncertainly and insecurity (Wiseman, 1975) but offers promises, challenges, and options instead of necessities (Rutter, 2009). A divorcee can think that the situation provides an opportunity to try different options instead of adjusting to a predetermined mold of expectations (Guru, 2009). Step by step, a divorcee can expand his or her life and cross those limits that he or she might not have been ready to settle for at the beginning of the divorce process.

Every divorce is one-of-a-kind. People have a variety of ways of coping with a divorce and different chances of creating a new, stable relationship. Based on the results of this research, the following courses of action can be distinguished.

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The stagnant.   The divorce was perceived as quite painful and the experience has turned the divorcee numb. Divorcees with this kind of attitude lack the effort and activity to solve the problems and are helpless and depressed. Their lifestyle resembles floating from day to day and mourning for all they have given up. The length of this state varies according to the divorcee's resources and strengths.

The refusers.   These divorcees deny the significance of their marriage and divorce in their life. The impression is that they do not take their previous relationship seriously, deny it without stopping to think over the situation, or reject the painful feelings of hatred, grief, guilt, or disappointment.

The conformists.   Conformists content themselves with the prevailing situation. They weigh the benefits that the divorce brings against the disadvantages trying to adjust to the changes that the divorce involves.

The substitutors.   These divorcees try to build their postdivorce life on their resources and possibilities. Some concentrate fully on their children, career, or welfare work to help others who deal with a difficult life situation.

The survivors.   Survivors tend to see their new life situation as bright, even liberating, and they act actively to find a new lifestyle. They look for new opportunities in their selves, life situation, and environment, and seize these chances.

DISCUSSION

Surviving a divorce and having a successful, new relationship depends on many things but the following three matters seemed to be especially important: the quality of the broken marriage, the divorcee's self-appreciation, and the divorcee's appreciation of his or her competencies (see Coontz, 2007). If the previous marriage was long and involved plenty of strongly binding and positive features, the divorce can be difficult. If the marriage remains superficial without any strong feeling of connection, the dissolution of marriage will not be likely to cause great pain.

Self-respect and healthy self-esteem form the core of survival in of life's troubles. If people believe in their value without clinging to others too much, and if they find themselves valuable without the status of husband or wife, their survival will be easier. Although self-confidence is shaken during the crisis of a divorce and one's sense of self-respect might decrease, the divorcee will cope better if he or she can lean on his or her own personal strengths and the marriage or spouse is not the only source of his or her self-esteem. Furthermore, passing through the divorce process successfully phase by phase is likely to raise one's self-esteem.

A divorcee's gathered or natural competencies are also significant for survival. Talent, education, occupation, attractiveness, and social skills can vitally affect one's ability to organize life after the divorce. No one can totally avoid pain even though

one is able to write magnificent essays, paint beautiful pictures, or arrange fancy dinner parties. But being aware of one's possibilities, trusting on them, and building life on them help people creating a new life and new relationships.

Intimate relationships and love are expected to offer personal acceptance, care and security, and intimate proximity where it is crucial to recognize and respond to the other's emotions and needs at the emotional, mental, physical, and even cognitive level. This study shows that divorcees have not lost their ability to love and act in an intimate relationship. Instead, a divorce represents an opportunity to look in the mirror, learn, and do some heart-searching; thus, at its best, a divorce helps one learn to understand oneself better but also to learn a great deal about intimate relationships: how to pay attention to oneself and to the other, how to maintain independence but become united with someone, and how to love in a way that is healthy and makes the relationship flourish. Finding this balance is important because well-being in private life is clearly and verifiably connected with other areas of life, such as well-being at work (Poortman, 2005). The group we called survivors represent divorcees who have the courage to pursue well-being but also the resources and strength to survive and build a new identity.

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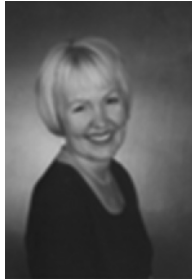
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