

Aletheia

April 2023

Love





aletheia
[A-LAY-THEE-UH]

(n.) *truth, disclosure*
(greek)

About Us

Aletheia is a student outreach publication that strives to provide a voice for all students at Lynbrook High School. Inspired by Los Gatos High's Reality Check and Monta Vista's Verdadera, Aletheia was created to facilitate communication and overcome stigmas concerning prevalent and/or taboo issues within the Lynbrook community. Each issue of the publication comprises of firsthand experiences submitted anonymously by Lynbrook students and alumni, professional articles relating to that month's theme, and other resources compiled by the student staff. Finalized issues are published and distributed to the school. Past issues may be found on our website, under Archives.

The content in Aletheia is composed by the students at Lynbrook High School in San Jose, California. Ideas and thoughts expressed within the publication are not necessarily reflected by the school administration or staff.

SPRING 2023: LOVE

Romantic love sparks a lot to us. It's a part of life we all want as it is romanticized by everyone and everything. Love is an amazing thing. It changes how you view yourself and how you become extremely considerate of who you are in love with. It's also interesting to see how we handle love once we're in it versus as a spectator. Love comes at all ages, it doesn't matter who or what. You can't explain it, you know when you just know. It always becomes something more than a crush for me personally. Lol ;) confident much?



not that important

i don't know, i cant tell the difference between romantic and friendship

i dont know i haven't experienced it yet

i dont know i haven't experienced it yet

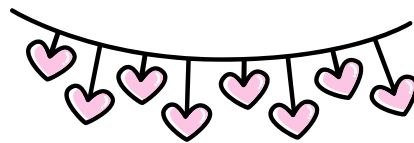
it depends on if it's legal

i dont know i haven't experienced it yet

it does not matter to me

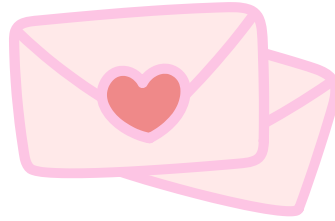
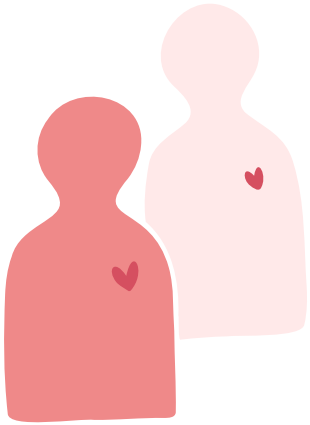
friendship is more important to me

i love tea



ive never been in a relationship before, but i sometimes fantasize about being in one with people that i think are cute. recently ive been talking to this guy online and he seemed interested in me but i kinda expected him to suggest we meet up in person or something like that since he goes to another school and all. it sounds stupid, but i kinda ghosted him after that and disappeared bc i was frustrated. frustrated that i idealize other people and expect them to fill a void in my life. frustrated that the idea of being in love is so appealing to me, yet it rarely ever turns into anything more than just a crush. i think im just lonely and want to share a close bond with someone.

on the other hand, sometimes i realize that like yeah being in a relationship in hs might not be for me just because i prefer to have my own space and im already kinda overloaded with responsibilities. but still... it sucks to always see high school relationships as a core part of the high school experience and never actually getting to that.



Personally I've never been in a relationship and I'm beginning to think that I'm the problem. I get "icks" pretty easily and it makes me stop liking any guy i've ever talked to. yeah it's sometimes sad when I see cute couples in public or online, making me wish i was in a relationship, but there's also so much work that goes into it. sometimes i see my friends who are in relationships and cringe at it, though i may be a biased hater. Idk if this feeling of cringe comes from jealousy that i don't have anyone like that or if i'm genuinely cringing at the idea of a public relationship and PDA. As someone who's never been in a relationship, i like to think I know a lot about them. I've talked to a lot of guys but it's never meant anything because I never developed feelings for them, and I knew it wasn't going anywhere, it makes me wish I could develop feelings for someone and go on the chase, for them to reveal their feelings for me. I dream about having a relationship in the movies, the one where no one knows about it but us, partly because it's embarrassing, partly because i want to be mysterious, and largely because I think it'd be nice to have one thing in my life that no one else knows about but makes me happy. i don't think i've genuinely developed feelings for a guy in 2 years, which is pretty sad. I really just wish I could like someone but it's hard for me :(on a final thought, if i were to develop feelings for someone, i would not tell anyone even my best friends, because it's awkward for me to be vulnerable like that, and it's cringe to me.

I'm gay. I've seen quite a few openly queer people at Lynbrook, but I envy them. I've told a grand total of one class of 2022 senior that I like. I feel like the two main things keeping my closeted are my relatively tenuous relationship with my friend group and my conservative are-you-talking-with-your-girlfriend mom, though I think she may already know/suspect (she asked who is <2022 guy>, the day after I sent him a serenade that I realize now I was singing kind of loud when recording, knowing full well that it would never amount to anything. I felt like getting it off my chest). I feel like I find too many people attractive. I hate how most people around me seem to be straight but are able to act gay with each other. Honestly, reading past Aletheia responses, it kind of hurts to see how basically everyone is straight. It hurts to see everyone around me in relationships and knowing that I'll never get one unless I actively seek out people whom I know to be gay. I have unhealthy crushes on five people, two of whom are staff (one I know to be married). They make each monotonous day palatable but I know that I'm setting myself up to be heartbroken. At least I'm not like that February and May 2014 foot fetish guy.

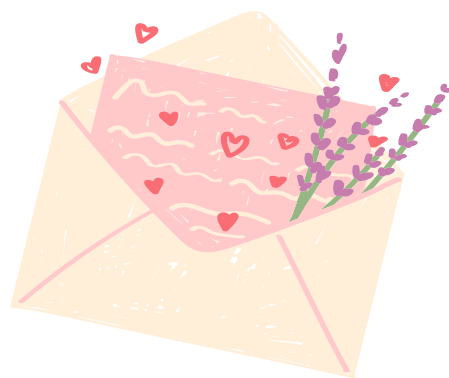


well to me the word love is not just a word or saying to me, because saying i love you to a person means you actually care, do things for them, always be by there side, and always helping them with everything even if you both are mad or sad or happy. I would wait to say i love you when its the right time, i would just say i like you until you get to know them for at least a year or longer, love is a very strong word.

Hows being in a relationship changes you? Well you will still be yourself duh, but to the person your with they can change your feelings and how you think, because they can say smart things and really important things you never knew or noticed, and the same thing to them you can change them.

Age in relationships are very very important, especially if your a minor still, like i would say 14 and 16 is fine, but once the person turn 18 and the other person is still a minor, they cant be dating or talking like there dating, they can be friends until the person turns 18 and after that they can date as long as they want, but its illegal to a 18 or older year old person to be dating a minor**. For having crushes on the person, or if you both like each other, for it to go longer or to be more than that, you need to just keep talking and knowing each other and hanging out with them more, and if you guys do like each other more then start dating when you guys are ready, but if you guys dont have the same bond or don't get a long it wont last.

What do i feel when i see other relationship around me, i feel like they are learning on whats coming and how it will feel like to be in a relationship. and to be honest they don't really impact me that much. Just saying to be very careful in relationships and who you like or love, if you guys just met or just started dating, don't straight up say i love you wait for the right time to say it, and don't trust them fully yet until you guys are together long enough. Just dating is harder than you think, its more work, and you have to care more, and give them attention more, and it can somethimes take things away from you, and it can also change your life too. just be careful who your with and dating. bye bye! :)



** Information is incorrect, see professional article for more guidance.

[teacher: mr. miller]

teacher interview



**This image is from Canva.*

WHAT IS LOVE AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU?

Teacher: Interesting, good question. I think love is really kind of like a feeling of mutual respect and care for somebody. I don't think when I hear the term love, after you know, living for 38 years, it's not automatically romantic love that comes to mind because after living a full life up to this point, love takes a lot of many different forms. I've been a father for the last four years. So like, that's a very different form of love. I think friendship is also a form of love and friendships that kind of last, like stand the test of time, are a form of love as well. And then of course, there's romantic love, and that's also kind of like a form of mutual respect and just enjoying being in another person's presence.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THERE IS TO GAIN FROM HAVING CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEOPLE IN GENERAL?

I think I think having relationships is one of the best ways that a person can discover who they are. I don't think that anybody really develops their personality when they are in a bubble. Like I think that if you're, if you're a loner, or if you're kind of by yourself a lot of the time like you don't get the benefit of seeing both the like joys and benefits of seeing other people's personalities. And points of view. And you also don't get the sort of contrast of seeing, you know, like, what you don't want out of another person or what you don't want to become and I think, I think romantic relationships can definitely be a big part of that.

DO YOU THINK THAT LOVE REQUIRES COMPROMISES FROM BOTH PARTIES IN ORDER TO FLOURISH?

Definitely. I think you come into a romantic relationship with expectations. And if you're rigid and unwilling to change, you're probably going to find yourself being disappointed and there's a certain point where you shouldn't compromise too much because they're their negotiables in their non negotiables. So if it's like, you know, I want to spend five out of seven days of the week all day with my girlfriend while being a really social, really involved person involved in a lot of extracurriculars and a lot of that they really value their time with their friends. And you end up getting like a really, you know, serious one on one quality time, three days of the week, you kind of just have to decide is that something I'm willing to compromise? Is that a point where I'm still getting enough out of the relationship that I'm happy with it? And yeah, it is absolutely all about compromise. It's also about do you have enough shared interests? Things you'd like to do together.



**This image is from Canva.*

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO LYNBROOK STUDENTS WHO ARE CURRENTLY IN RELATIONSHIPS?

I didn't date in high school. I didn't date until college. I just didn't feel like I was ready for it yet. Like I could, you know, my priorities in high school were getting my schoolwork done so that I could make my parents proud and get into a good college, and I just really liked hanging out with my friends and playing video games. So I just felt like there wasn't a huge amount of time in my schedule to offer something to another person in that way. And so I was like, you know, I think I'm probably gonna wait until college. For me that was just right. But some of my friends did date in high school and I think I think it's fine. I think it's okay, when you feel ready to start. I think it's okay, wait to a certain degree, like I don't want my son dating when he's 12.

I think to a certain degree, when you feel like you're ready, and you've met that person that you want to explore those relationships with, I think it's fine. I think that you should just enter into a high school relationship knowing that I don't want to say probably well, it might not be a lifelong relationship, because you're young, you're still learning, you're still growing. Some people do marry their high school sweethearts. And I think that that's amazing. But I don't think that happens for most people. Because, for me, I didn't think that I was mature enough to be a good partner to somebody else until I was in my mid 20s, maybe even my early 30s. And so I think you need to discover who you are, and not let somebody else hold you back from doing that and not hold each other back. And so I think as long as you're able to grow together and able to be open to the fact that this might not be the same people that we are now when we're 16 in one year or five years from now, as long as you can have a mature mindset about it and try to grow together and just learn from it, I think that there's no harm in exploring.

WHAT ARE SOME OBSTACLES THAT YOU PERSONALLY HAD TO DEAL WITH, TO MAKE TIME FOR PAST OR PRESENT ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS?

One of the biggest things over the course of my life and relationship has just been like, trust and time apart as I was in a long distance relationship. In college, and the person on the other side of that relationship didn't trust me. And so that was very difficult because when I wanted to spend time with my friends, that individual was really nervous and anxious about me going and doing that and, and so I think some of those things kind of rubbed off on me that relationship obviously didn't work out.

And then in the next relationship, I think I was a little bit suspicious of my significant other when they went to work events and they traveled to like these long weekend long conferences, and they got to go out into these fun social things. And so I had to kind of flip the lens on myself and say, Okay, well, you don't want to be that jealous person. You don't want to be that person that is suspicious, and not giving the person that you love and care about the breathing room that they need.

So you just have to trust and so I think one of the hardest things is the push and pull of trust when it's like time away and that person is out in the world. And you know, whether you've been with them for two weeks or you've been with them for five years, just having to like take a deep breath and say if I love and trust this person, then I have to trust this person and you know, believe that they're not going to do anything to hurt me or anything to hurt the relationship and everything will be okay in the end. And so, making sure it's like getting yourself to that point where if you're not trusting you have a conversation with the person but if you know that it's just kind of an insecurity kind of dealing with after yourself.

ARE YOU GRATEFUL FOR THE RELATIONSHIPS YOU'VE HAD, EVEN THE ONES THAT DIDN'T LAST?

Definitely. I'm grateful for every relationship that I've had, the friendships that didn't last, romantic relationships that ended up not working out and I've actually remained friends with a large number of my exes. And I think that that's that kind of show, that's I think what relationships should be like you learn from them. And even if it doesn't work out, even if there's no future in a relationship, you try to end things on a good note, so that you're not just left with this bitter taste in your mouth, and then you see it as a learning experience.

LOVE

Jenna Starnes



The experience of being seen, heard, understood and, well, loved is a nearly universal human desire. We often long for this type of connection at some point in our lives, and we're biologically hardwired to do so. As the various submissions to Alethia point out, however, romantic love and its pursuit can be quite the fickle thing.

When we become wrapped up in the early stages of attraction to another individual, our brains are literally setting us up to be all-consumed by the infatuation. In each of our brains there is a reward center that becomes activated whenever we do or consume something that elicits pleasure. Each time this structure is activated, the neurotransmitter dopamine is released into our brain, sending its feel-good vibes throughout our body and encouraging us to continually engage in the behavior in order to keep the positive feeling flowing. In the early stages of attraction and romance, we get a surge of dopamine whenever we think of, fantasize about, or actually see the person we are attracted to; this helps explain why we have such an intense desire to be in constant contact with our potential romantic partner.



Our brain can release such high levels of happy brain chemicals during this early romantic phase that we may find it hard to eat and sleep normally. Dopamine, and its fellow sidekick norepinephrine, while enjoyable and energizing, can also lead to decreased appetite and insomnia. Since our brain's reward center also plays a primary role in addiction, it's unsurprising that we can actually become addicted to love, or at least, addicted to the initial attraction phase in relationships. Some people find this initial phase of excitement so enjoyable, they become disinterested and break off the relationship when the honeymoon phase is over.

Brain chemicals aside, relationships take time, work, and vulnerability. Not only are we propelled by desire to be in continual contact with our love interests, we are also entering into an unspoken commitment to be present for the thoughts, feelings, and activities of another person. And in healthy relationships, there should be space for both partners to share their personal experiences with one another. If you're uncomfortable opening up to another individual and being vulnerable, you may have had past experiences that led you to conclude vulnerability is not safe, and can lead to feelings of hurt, shame, or betrayal. We then might be both desirous of, and repelled by, the idea of being vulnerable in a relationship. As mentioned before, all humans have a basic need to be seen, heard, and understood; we seek love in the hopes of finally being told that we are enough, that we are worthy, just as we are. Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately, as nature often knows what it's doing), we cannot be truly loved for ourselves until we reveal who we actually are!

While relationships should be more enjoyable than not, there is an element of work involved in order to keep them running smoothly. A relationship consists of at least two people navigating different backgrounds, different normalities, different ways of communicating, and differing levels of personal awareness. We may have different boundaries, and comfort levels with PDA. In LGBTQ+ relationships, there's the added layer of considering how out a person is, with whom it is okay to disclose the relationship, and in what environment each person feels safe expressing PDA. There's also work and uncertainty when you are seeking a relationship as well. Questions abound, such as: does this person like me? Am I picking up on the right flirtatious cues? Is this person straight, gay, bisexual, questioning? If I express romantic liking toward them, will I be rejected, or even safe? Here again we face the issue of vulnerability and what we're willing or able to risk in order to reap the reward of potential romantic love.

As one writer stated, "love is an amazing thing." And it truly is. It's also helpful to keep in mind that romantic love does not fill all personal voids or solve all problems, it changes and evolves, and it requires upkeep in order to continue to survive. Sometimes we experience it in high school, and sometimes we don't - both experiences are within the range of normal. When romantic love is healthy, it's worth the wait and the work.

EVERY HUMAN ON THIS PLANET IS WORTHY OF LOVE - MAY YOU FIND IT IN VARIOUS FORMS THROUGHOUT YOUR LIFE!

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- How to be an Adult in Relationships: The Five Keys to Mindful Loving by David Richo
- Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life: Life-Changing Tools for Healthy Relationships by Marshall B. Rosenberg

- <https://www.loveisrespect.org/>
- <https://teentalk.ca/learn-about/relationships/>

- Bill Wilson Youth Hotline (24 hours Crisis Line) 1-408-850-6125<tel:1-408-850-6125>
- Trevor Lifeline LGBTQ+ Crisis Support Text 'START' to 678-678 or call 1-866-488-7386<tel:1-866-488-7386>
- Santa Clara County Teen Line Text 'TEEN' to 839-863 or call 1-800-TLC-TEEN<tel:1-800-TLC-TEEN> (852-8336<tel:852-8336>)

About the Author

Jenna Starnes has been Lynbrook High School's school based therapist since 2020, and continues to be grateful for the ability to see students in person since 2021 (thanks, but no thanks, pandemic!). She is a licensed marriage and family therapist specializing in adolescent mental health. When she is not providing mental health support to Lynbrook students, she can be found listening to psychology related audio books or singing along to Disney movies with her two young children.

