

The Power of Irish Wisdom By Renee' Gatz, Author

February is the month designated to celebrate love. It is a romantic month that provides us with the opportunity to take a moment and acknowledge the very special people in our life. Sweethearts visit stores to purchase cards, candy, flowers and other gifts to show their love for one and other. Children send Valentine's Day cards to their parents and parents give presents to their children and grandchildren, all in an expression of love. February reminds us to stop and think about the people in our life who have a special place in our heart and provide the support, joy and encouragement that sees us through the rest of the year. Whether you are fortunate enough to have many people in your life that love and care for you or you have a few, none of us thrive without giving and receiving love.

It is the exchange of love that connects us, gives us hope, propels us forward, sees us through challenges, celebrates our victories and can never be taken away from us. Even after our loved ones pass into the next life, the positive impact of our relationship with them remains with us and guides as we move forward.

Mixing the power of love with completely fallible human beings, however, makes relationships anything but a pleasant walk in the country each and every day. That is why love and forgiveness go hand in hand. Without the ability to give and accept forgiveness, love quickly disintegrates, leaving both parties feeling anything but supported, understood and able to thrive. Love is hard work and that is why it is so powerful. Those in your life that are willing to work out differences, hurts, and invest time and emotion in you are special people. We are grateful for the enormous value they bring to our life and we feel special for being able to bring that same value to them. That is why we should willingly strive to nurture those relationships because **anything worth having is worth working hard for.**

Now to love truly, you must truly love yourself. Others become a reflection of how you see yourself. If you are critical of your shortcomings, you are likely to be critical of others. If you lack patience with yourself, you will likely lack patience with others. If you are judgmental about yourself, you will likely be judgmental of others. This type of relationship with yourself stifles love. To truly love, love yourself first. Do so by speaking kindly to yourself, being patient and forgiving with yourself and not **comparing yourself to anyone else.** You are a one-of-a-kind, worthy of love from yourself and others. **Know your own mind,** it will be your guide and give you confidence, which will bring you peace. The confidence you project in the love you feel for yourself will become an outward reflection to others. It will invite deeper more meaningful relationships with the people in your life today and attract new love and joy into your life tomorrow.

Allow the month of February with all the outward images of love—hearts in store windows, roses and Valentine's bouquets in flower shops, heart shaped candy, the isle of pink and red cards you see in the grocery store—be the opportunity to remember to make love a significant part of your day, each and every day. Love is a full time job and

a commitment to yourself and those you love. Like anything else in life, the more you put into it, the more you get out of it.

Happy Valentine's Day! May this year bring you an abundance of love, joy and peace!

Renee' Gatz, author of [Wise Words & Witty Expressions](#)