

TRANSCRIPT:

# **On Transformation and Love**

By Jim Selman

**JIM:** It truly is a privilege to be here with you and to be speaking to transformational leaders.

It was also particularly moving to be here this morning and listen to Anne. I was actually wishing to give her my time [slot], but they said one time was enough. I really wanna tell you

how deeply moving that was because she showed us something that, I think somebody acknowledged when they were acknowledging her, that she showed us something about who we are. This sharing that I wanna do with you for the next few minutes, has to do with who we are.

They asked me what I wanted to talk about and I said, what is transformation? Because we're all transformational leaders, whatever that means.

But I want to consider that, even at the TLC level, we don't spend a lot of time actually looking at what are we talking about? You know, what is transformation really? Why does it work?

It's a great word. It explains something. And all of us have a direct experience of it. And yet, at the same time as a community, I don't know that we have a shared notion of what transformation is.

Would you agree with that?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes.

**JIM:** So this is more of an inquiry. Perhaps this is a first of a series of conversations. This is not an answer. Nor do I have any intention to try to describe something or answer something, but really open up something.

We'll start with the question "What is transformation?"

I was also thinking maybe I should call this the meaning of life. But then Marsha's already got that one. She's already writing a book on it.

So the real question then, maybe it's not about meaning, and maybe it's not about transformation. Maybe it's about love, because all of us have spoken today in

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these last two days about love, about giving and receiving. I know I'm not saying anything that you're not intimately familiar with.

And yet, the question remains for me.

How do we develop the capacity to speak about something in a way that makes it accessible, available, and, communicable in a consistent and coherent way?

So, for example, how many people think of transformation as a technology?

Okay? Not a lot of people, okay?

How many of you think of technology of transformation as an experience?

How many of you think that transformation is a process?

Okay, so we could talk about what is it when we have a community of "experts", all of whom have different points of view about something. It begins to raise questions. There's nothing illegitimate about what we're saying. But are we saying what we're saying in a way that's grounded, in a rigorous enough way that we can begin to build something on it?

So the purpose of this inquiry is really to get deeply into what is the nature of transformation.

Now, I have one criteria that I use to try to keep myself sane when I'm working with people. And it's, and what it is, is that if I cannot observe it, whatever I'm talking about is not actionable.

So my first request is, can you accept that premise?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes.

**JIM:** So if I'm going to talk about love, I need to be able to observe what I'm talking about. Love is a beautiful concept, but it's not necessarily actionable.

**AUDIENCE:** You mean observe, as in be able to view it, feel it, sense it? In what way observe?

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**JIM:** I mean, observe it in a way that it's tangible, not necessarily objective, but that you can observe it. So, for example, can you observe a team?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes.

**JIM:** Okay. I would question whether you can observe a team when they're in action. You can observe people, you can observe movement. But you can't observe "team", right?

You can talk about team, and we can all kind of agree that we know what we mean by that. But for the most part, there's a whole lot of people making money in work in organizations selling team workshops without having any idea what team is. They're presenting models. They're presenting ideas. They're presenting in interpretations and concepts. But when they leave, it's not clear that there's any more team than there was before they arrived.

So when I say I wanna develop a way of expressing and understanding transformation that makes it available, like actionable, or I want to expand that to say, I want a way for understanding and observing love in a way that makes it accessible. Now, that doesn't mean that that's true. It just means it's a pathway to produce whatever it is we say we're talking about.

So everybody here, I believe, would agree that you are in the business of producing transformation.

**AUDIENCE:** Yes.

**JIM:** So therefore, you are doing some action that's either producing transformation or you're being in a way that allows transformation to occur. Would you agree with that?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes.

**JIM:** Okay, good. Now, if I were your student and I said, "Okay, teach me to do what you do," what would you say?

You could show me your techniques. You could show me your processes. You could show me your models.

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But that's not necessarily gonna make me a producer of transformation.

Did you accept that?

**AUDIENCE:** That's right.

**JIM:** Now, I wanna be very clear here. I'm not interested in this being a lecture. I wanna make this more of a dialogue with you. And one of the ways I do this is I say that I've found that there are three questions that kind of organize how we listen and how we interact in a conversation.

One of those questions is, "Who are you?" (Or who am I?) That's question one.

Question two is, "What would I be committed to accomplishing if I were not limited by what I think limits me?"

**AUDIENCE:** Repeat that. Say that again.

**JIM:** What would I be committed to accomplishing if I were not limited by whatever it is I think that limits me?

**AUDIENCE:** Great question.

**JIM:** Okay? And the last question is, "What's missing for me to accomplish that?"

Now, we've had a lot of discussion around story [at this event]. One of my beliefs that I'll come back to here is that pretty much, in fact, Aristotle said it before me, "Life is a likely story." Okay?

And so I'm gonna also propose maybe transformation is a story.

Then what is that story?

Can we observe and tell that story in a way that can actually open up something for each of us?

My objective here is not for you to think what I say is particularly brilliant. But what you can see for yourself about your own work—all of us are expressing

transformation in different ways— and make your own work more accessible to you.

So I have two objectives.

One is that your own work, your own way of being, your own power, your own capacity, your own creativity is more available to you.

And secondly, that you have a much more rigorous grounding in [your] ability to give it to another.

One of my definitions of wisdom is the ability to take your knowledge and experience and give it away to another person in a way that brings out the best in them. So I have wisdom as an action, not as a content of knowledge.

So let me ask you to answer the first question—or the second question, rather.

We'll skip the first question. I'll assume you know who you are, alright?

Let's go to the second question, which is, tell me some things that you would be committed to accomplishing that you're not accomplishing or not committed to accomplishing because of some limitation.

**AUDIENCE:** Loving everybody.

**JIM:** Pardon me?

**AUDIENCE:** Loving everybody and everything.

**JIM:** Okay. So when you say loving everybody and loving everything, I assume that you have a view that you don't love everybody and love everything, correct?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes.

**JIM:** Okay, that's great. So that's one example. Let's have some more examples. Everybody should think of one. Yes. Lynn?

**AUDIENCE:** Ending the illusion of separation on our planet.

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**JIM:** And what would you be committed to?

**AUDIENCE:** Ending it.

**JIM:** And what limits you? Why don't you just do it?

**AUDIENCE:** I'm not big enough.

**JIM:** You're not big enough.

**AUDIENCE:** I'm not. Yeah, it's not me.

**JIM:** Why not?

**AUDIENCE:** Other people are. First answer in my head. Other people know more. Are better qualified.

**JIM:** That's true. They are. Yeah. But why is that limiting you?

**AUDIENCE:** I think ultimately the story is that I cannot go for it.

**JIM:** Well, the point, the point is, whatever you're answering is you're telling me your story.

**AUDIENCE:** Yes. Yeah, totally. I'm not valuable enough to be that person.

**JIM:** So Lynn, if we take that example, and I'm speaking to everybody here, okay? As you have this idea that you could effectively end that illusion of separation *except for the story*, is that right?

**AUDIENCE:** Yeah.

**JIM:** Okay. Now I wanna put one more little point here on the table, and then we'll get to this.

I have another notion. This relates to the first question that who we are is defined by four relationships.

The relationship we have with ourself, the relationship we have with other people, the relationship we have with circumstances, and the relationship we have with time. Clear?

Now, this story that you're telling, Lynn, is about your relationship with yourself, correct?

Or not?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes.

**JIM:** Okay, good. So there's the issue, let's call it "I'm not enough".

**AUDIENCE:** I'm not valuable is really the issue.

**JIM:** I'm not valuable. Mm-Hmm. And then can you see you have a relationship with

that issue.

**AUDIENCE:** Totally. Longstanding.

**JIM:** Yes. Now, can you see that you've been spending most of your life working on the issue.

**AUDIENCE:** Yeah.

**JIM:** Either overcompensating or being right by it. But doesn't matter what you're doing, it just matters that your focus is the issue: I'm not valuable enough. Is that clear?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes.

**JIM:** Okay. Yeah. Now, everybody, remember I'm talking to you here. This is just the example, alright? Now, so you're working on the issue called I'm not valuable enough, and you also have a relationship to that issue.

But you're not working on *the relationship* with that issue.



You're working on the issue.

Does everybody follow that?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes.

**JIM:** So all you can do is end up with some variation of the issue: either better, improved, or you'll have a blinding insight and you'll go away for a while and it'll be right back. How long has this one [this issue] been around?

**AUDIENCE:** Uh, life.

**JIM:** Yeah. So maybe, maybe the issue is not where you need to work. Maybe you should work on the relationship. Now, here's the \$64 question, and where I'm gonna try to segue this into a conversation about love. Do you have a choice, Lynn? And I mean [all of you]. You put in your name. Do you have a choice in how you relate to yourself?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes, absolutely.

**JIM:** You do. Then relate to yourself as valuable. No process, no psychological, no insight, nothing, just cut the crap and change your relationship. Can you follow that? Okay. Now stop it. Stop it.

**AUDIENCE:** Stop it?

**JIM:** Stop it. Now I do not want to trivialize this and say it's easy because these are deeply embedded and embodied experiences and points of view that you believe are true. Is it correct?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes. Yeah.

**JIM:** Now, how many of you are familiar with Fernando Flores's work? Okay. Are you familiar with the statement "An assessment is never true or false"?

**AUDIENCE:** Yeah.

**JIM:** And do you accept that statement?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes.

**JIM:** Yes. That's logical. It's linguistic. I can defend that I have offered anybody in the world. I will give you my company. I literally will sign a paper and give you my whole company if you can give me a single example of a single assessment that's true or false, that's how clear I am about that.

Now, that's different than an assertion, which may be true or false. But be clear that that's just a matter of facticity. It's a nature of language that in the structure called language an assessment is always relative to the point of view of the speaker and can never be proven to be true or false. Yes. And

**AUDIENCE:** Can you distinguish that for me? I mean, if I say you are alive, how's that, that not an assessment?

**JIM:** Well, there's some people that probably are spiritually enough evolved that they would say, I'm walking dead. Okay. Or there are some spiritual traditions that would say, you know, the, the blink we call my life is only relative to living from the point of view of history. I'm just a dot on the, on the, on the paper. So it's, it's just a point of view.

**AUDIENCE:** Yes. Okay. Alright.

**JIM:** So here's my point is that the power of transformation is not in changing something, but in changing your relationship to something. Now, most of you know that. And the way we change our relationship to something is by making a commitment to change our relationship. But you have to be able to make that commitment in the face of a historical interpretation or paradigm, or worldview, number one, that people don't change.

Uh, Gabriel, where's Gabriel? You speak Spanish?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes.

**JIM:** I don't, but I've been learning for about 13 years. And you, if you don't speak Spanish, just sort of follow the music here. In Spanish, there's two verbs for being, okay. One verb is called 'se', and one verb is called 'estar'. So all you English

speakers, this is education time. Now, this kind of being 'se' means, and just tell me if I'm correct, permanent, fixed, unchangeable. And this kind of being 'estar' means changeable.

So how do you say the government is corrupt in Spanish?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes. We say 'se'.

**JIM:** Ah. So it's an absolute fact that government corruption comes with life and government. You can't have one without the other, right?

**AUDIENCE:** That's right.

**JIM:** So a way of seeing this is that when they talk about change, they're speaking in a context of no possibility in a way that causes the persistence of what they're trying to change. Now, let's say, how do you say she is lazy?

**AUDIENCE:** We also use permanent if we've already characterized them to be that way.

**JIM:** Yeah. So by the way, we do the same thing in English. We just don't have the tool called two verbs. When we talk about institutions and we talk about people, we speak about them as if they don't change. Yes. We only leave the intransitive for a state [of Being] like I am sick. Traditional states transitive. I'm sick, I'm unhappy.

Now, the point of this I want you to see is that you and I live in a culture. We live in a paradigm.

We live in a worldview that people are the way they are, and they don't change. And if they do change, it's gotta take some remarkably exceptional story. They had a miracle or some variation of those kinds of divine interventions that change the circumstances. Unusual situations. An epiphany.

Now, we have said in the world of transformation, that Being is a choice. How many of you believe that your way of Being is a choice?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes. Yes.

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**JIM:** Okay. So what are we? As transformational leaders, we are in the business of empowering people and ourselves to change our relationship to ourselves, each other, circumstances and time.

I am saying that when we have done that, or that is to say, when 24/7, we are essentially the authors of our relationship with life in words, not reacting to anything, that's mastery. When we're no longer at the effect of anything in those four domains.

So Lynn, do you see that you've been at the effect of I'm not valuable?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes.

**JIM:** Very good. Are you anymore?

**AUDIENCE:** Not in this moment.

**JIM:** Okay. Can you hear that little voice saying, "But is it gonna last?" Yeah, because you're deeply committed to the story as if the story's true. But the story is never true because the story is only assessments anyway. But because we either forget or lack the distinction between that internal voice we have and who we are, we end up listening to the voice say, "I'm not valuable enough." Or something happens. We say, "There's proof that I'm not." Yes or no?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes.

**JIM:** So again, I'm just saying that where I'm starting from is this idea that transformation is relational. And I'm also saying that something's happening in the world that's emerging.

We did not invent transformation. We did not invent paradigms. Paradigms have been evolving, changing, coming and going throughout human history.

But at this particular time in human history, which I personally think is sort of analogous to the Renaissance, there is a new emerging paradigm of Being. We as human beings are no longer going to be the same in the future as we are now.

Because a paradigm is not simply a frame of reference against an objective world.  
The

paradigm itself constitutes what you mean by reality. It's not that you have a  
paradigm and think about reality. Your reality is your paradigm. You with me?

**AUDIENCE:** Yeah.

**JIM:** So when we talk about something emerging, an emerging paradigm, what  
are we talking about? I'm labeling that transformation. There is an emerging  
paradigm, and what that paradigm is doing is revealing who we are in relationship  
to what's possible, not necessarily giving us a different point of view about what's  
already there. We all on?

**AUDIENCE:** Please say that one more time.

**JIM:** I'm saying that what I believe is that we are evolving or emerging ourselves  
into a different relationship with reality, but not the reality of what's already there,  
but in a relationship to what's possible. Right?

**AUDIENCE:** So you're transcending what's here?

**JIM:** No, you're not transcending what's here. There's nothing to transcend.  
You're creating a whole different...It's that you are inventing a new being.

So you wouldn't say that the 21st-century man transcended 18th-century man.  
You say it was a new being emerged.

**AUDIENCE:** Okay.

**JIM:** So the 21st-century man or woman is not an extension of the 17th-century.  
Now you can build that story, you can sure make that story. In fact, I would say  
evolution is a long-term story, but it only explains what happened. It doesn't  
explain what didn't, what wasn't observable before the fact. Clear?

**AUDIENCE:** Yeah.

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**JIM:** Uh, Werner used to say, when the fish fell out of the sea, it wasn't a continuation of evolution. It was a step into a whole different evolutionary space. And in that moment, the possibility of the eagles existed.

So I am suggesting that we are all part of something. I was talking to my friend, Vince Di Bianca, about how this thing that Blaine talked about of transforming business is occurring. And there's a lot of difficulty here because I am saying that we are not going to transform business.

Business is transforming. And what we have are the tools. And I'm speaking to all of you here because you have the tools. We have the tools to distinguish early what's already happening in a way that can empower and enable people to participate in that transition or transformation.

To be able to evolve with evolution rather than have to fight, resist, struggle, and wait a couple of generations before anything really takes hold.

Now let's use this to segue into this question of love.

I'm saying the primary quality of this new emerging paradigm is love. So what characterizes this emergence, this emerging Being that we are now, that's the easy part. The hard part, and I'm now making this a question to you is, what is love?

So this is no longer a rhetorical question. You have the answer. What is it? You've all used the term lots of times in this three days. So what is love?

**AUDIENCE:** An expression of your true essence.

Okay? Good expression of your true essence. Somebody else.

**AUDIENCE:** It's connection.

**JIM:** Very good. What else?

**AUDIENCE:** It's a quality of experience.

**JIM:** Quality of experience.

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**AUDIENCE:** A relationship.

**AUDIENCE:** A relationship of being.

**AUDIENCE:** A stage of being.

**JIM:** Good. What else?

**AUDIENCE:** All that is without our dualistic perception.

**JIM:** Very good.

**AUDIENCE:** All in one together.

**AUDIENCE:** God.

**AUDIENCE:** Full acceptance of the other as completely legit.

**AUDIENCE:** A word.

**AUDIENCE:** A force field.

**AUDIENCE:** What emerges in a radically free Space.

**JIM:** Okay. Now pause for a second. Can you see what we've just come up with from 12 or 20 human beings—or however many people answered—who are all well educated and at the advanced edge of humanity about the subject that happens to be probably the single most important subject on the planet, that has probably had more written about it, more expressed about it, has been the source of more happiness and suffering than any other term that I'm aware of.

And yet we have 25 different interpretations of what it is.

**AUDIENCE:** Pardon me, they're not that different, really.

**JIM:** Well, what would you say ties them together?

**AUDIENCE:** The feeling I got from every word that was said.

**JIM:** So would you say love is a feeling?

**AUDIENCE:** Maybe a resonance.

**JIM:** A resonance. Okay. But can you hear what you're saying now is just another definition?

**AUDIENCE:** Yeah. But can feeling encompass all of it?

**JIM:** Well, just follow my inquiry here, because this is more of an inquiry than an answer.

But I suggest to you the answer is no. Okay?

**AUDIENCE:** Okay.

**JIM:** If you're looking for a rigorous insight into the nature of something, everybody having a different point of view doesn't give you enough rigor to get anything other than it's another point of view. Now, remember, I'm not taking anything away from your way of expressing it. Okay? That's brilliant.

**AUDIENCE:** What's standard around your rigor?

**JIM:** Well, let me hold that to the end of the conversation because right now, it's pretty much gonna be up to you to answer it for yourself at the end of the conversation. If it gives you some access to love beyond what you've already got—which is enormous, okay—or gives you access to giving it away to other people, then I would say there's probably more rigor there. Okay? But if nothing changes, then it's probably just blah blah.

**AUDIENCE:** No, I'm just asking for the course of the conversation that we're in. There's a standard around the rigor in order to find...

**JIM:** I'm giving you a hundred percent authority over the standard. Whatever standard you use is the one I'll use. For each one of you...because each one of you started with your point of view about love in the first place. Okay?



**AUDIENCE:** Got it. Yes. Okay. What I'm not hearing is where you start. If I cannot observe this or it is not tangible, then it's not actionable.

**JIM:** Yeah. I mean, that's right.

**AUDIENCE:** So would you hear that in many of the answers we had?

**JIM:** No. The answer is not observable. So I can't observe resonance.

**AUDIENCE:** I feel like I can.

**JIM:** I know you can, but that doesn't make it observable in words.

**AUDIENCE:** What's experienceable?

**JIM:** Experienceable is not necessarily observable. Now, I'm not saying it's illegitimate. It's just it usually requires me to be an apprentice to learn what see. What happens is if you have a experience and you have mastery, but you don't have it in a way that you can observe it or give it away, then the only learning access I've got is by apprenticing. Okay?

**AUDIENCE:** So communicating what it is that my standard is around what I feel love is...the communication of that is a key element, isn't it?

**JIM:** Well, let's see. Let's stay in the question, but, first of all, just take it one step at a time.

Do you accept the premise that in any group of people, everybody seems to have a different point of view about what it is?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes. Yes.

**JIM:** Okay. And all of those points of view are personally valid, personally legitimate, personally relevant. But as a community, as human beings, it's still pretty much whatever you particularly think.

**AUDIENCE:** Yes. Yes.

**JIM:** I'm sure that there are people who are killing other people today in the name of love.

That you would think of to be abhorrent. So, in fact, a lot of the killing has been in the name of love come to think of it. They used to burn witches because we love them. So, again, I'm proposing here just to step back and consider. Isn't this interesting?

Isn't it interesting that a topic as real and powerful and as central to human beings as love is pretty much is left to everybody's opinion?

**AUDIENCE:** We can access it through poetry. We can have song. I was so profoundly connected with my love this morning, okay? But it was an unusual experience. It wasn't necessarily a 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week kind of experience.

**JIM:** Very good. Well said. So let me ask you another question. Is love learnable? Can you learn love?

**AUDIENCE:** I think so.

**AUDIENCE:** No.

**JIM:** How many people say yes? How many people say no?

Okay, so we are a mixed group. Roughly 50 50.

**AUDIENCE:** I say both.

**AUDIENCE:** I dunno, sir.

**JIM:** Just notice how the question stirs up your intellect.

**AUDIENCE:** Well, you better give me the definition because I wanna make sure that I get the right answer.

**JIM:** But people don't live that way. People live that it's not very learnable or they live that it is learnable. But if they're learn, if they have it as learnable, then I wanna learn how I learn it. Is that fair?

**AUDIENCE:** Yeah. Yes.

**JIM:** Now, again, the value of this inquiry is to just notice the diversity of you that we have here among a community of fairly enlightened people.

Now let's take it one more step. You can talk about the expressions of love. And that's observable, right?

**AUDIENCE:** Yeah. Expressions of love might..

**JIM:** Well, sorry, the expression may be observable, but whether it's an expression of love or not, I don't know. Gas is [an expression]...you could argue that. Again, as soon as you start trying to build up a case and a story, 'cause that's how our story evolves.

I feel warm when you're with me. I say, therefore, you love me. I stop feeling warm; therefore, I conclude you don't love me anymore. And pretty soon, we now have a big drama going on because I don't feel the way I thought I supposed to feel when I'm in love.

Can everybody relate to that?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes.

**JIM:** Okay.

**AUDIENCE:** Can you change the word observable to measurable, or do you object to that?

**JIM:** I probably could in some context, but I'd rather not go that way. Let's just say there's some things that you might not be good to measure that you can pretty well observe.

So I can't really measure the causal relationship between coaching and the score, but I can observe the coaching. Okay. Is that clear?

**AUDIENCE:** Yeah.

**JIM:** So I can't measure coaching, but I can observe it. Okay. Good. Anybody else? Yes.

**AUDIENCE:** When you say to me, can you learn love, I say to myself, how can you learn something that you already are intrinsically?

**JIM:** But there's just something preventing you from knowing that you are loved. So wouldn't it make more sense to get rid of that stuff? Well, or I could change the question. How can you learn to realize something that's already intrinsic to you?

**AUDIENCE:** But if the question is still, is it learnable?

**JIM:** Yeah.

**AUDIENCE:** I thought that, because...

**JIM:** I would argue that most of the time we don't live like something like love is intrinsic, and we just have to learn it, right? We live that we are the way we think we are, that we've objectified human beings, including ourselves to be a certain way. And we live our lives in a story that we are that way. A false self image, basically. Call it self-image.

There's a lot of languages and a lot of different structures that we think about this in, but psychology basically objectifies human beings. That's the foundation of psychology. And the question is what is the cause of the behavior of a human being? And so the whole field is trying to analyze causality of human behavior in a way that fundamentally is clumsy at best.

It's a phenomenological experience.

Psychology's a magnificent theory for explaining human behavior. It's not a very powerful theory for producing human behavior. And the reason it's not is because there's no theory of action embedded in the theory of psychology.

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So I'm proposing that transformation needs to have a theory of action embedded in the theory, or we simply become a lot of very experiential-oriented, positive-producing people, helping activities that lack a fundamental foundation upon which to transform, humanity's relationship with the world.

Because at the end of the day, I think that's where we're going for, is to, how do we change not just my relationship with the world, but how do I create a conversation? How do I invent a story that's powerful enough and compelling enough to transform the human relationship to the world? Okay.

**AUDIENCE:** I think this is related, even though it's back a few steps. I believe what I heard you suggest, Jim, was that it's the way to, in my words, shift behavior or belief is to put the focus on the shifting of the relationship to it.

**JIM:** Yeah.

**AUDIENCE:** Did I hear you say that that occurs, and I'm adding the word, simply through commitment.

**JIM:** I am saying the way you, the leader, shift your relationship to something is through commitment.

**AUDIENCE:** And is it your belief that that's enough? Because I consider myself someone who practices a high level of integrity, and I've had commitment to many things that I have not been able to shift, partially because commitment hasn't been enough. Like for me, commitment translates a lot to my will and, you know, the right use of will. So, can you just talk about that?

**JIM:** Well, it is interesting. As soon as you say 'will', you just shifted it from something I can observe to something I can't observe. I can observe your commitment. I can't observe your will.

**AUDIENCE:** So even if I keep the will part out for me, are you suggesting that my commitment to the shift is enough for the shift to occur?

**JIM:** I'm saying that your relationship with your own commitment is insufficient to produce what you say you're committed to.

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**AUDIENCE:** So what else? So what's the additional enhancement?

**JIM:** Well, first of all, my level of commitment. My level of commitment. The first thing is you gotta separate is morality from commitment. You gotta stop thinking it's good to keep commitments and bad not to keep commitments.

**AUDIENCE:** Well, we already know I have no morals.

**JIM:** No. The game here is to simply be a transformed observer that notices when you say, "I'll do something" and you don't do it. Your problem isn't you didn't do what you said. Now you either have a story to explain why you didn't do it.

**AUDIENCE:** Right.

**JIM:** I'm not valuable enough. I'm not strong enough. The circumstances were too heavy. I'm a bad person. Whatever you say is the story. But what you're blinded to is that it's the relationship with the notion of commitment that's missing in order for you to be able to live as your word.

**AUDIENCE:** I just don't believe that my commitment is enough to, um,

**JIM:** No, no. It's, it's not enough necessarily, because commitment is not a substitute for competency. Okay? By the same token, without the commitment, all the competency in the world doesn't make any difference.

**AUDIENCE:** So, but, but I'm hearing you say now, is that commitment alone is not necessarily sufficient.

**JIM:** That's correct.

**AUDIENCE:** Okay.

**JIM:** Commitment is necessary—and not necessarily sufficient. So it's a foundational piece, and then there's often more required.

**AUDIENCE:** Yeah.

**JIM:** Now, let's just finish this with love. Let me just get this last, this next piece in here a little bit. So how many of you believe that you have to love yourself in order to love somebody else?

**AUDIENCE:** Okay. No. These are good questions. Okay.

**JIM:** So, again, I'm not looking for the truth here. I'm looking for...notice the diversity. We could have a, what's called a dialectic interaction and try to get it right and figure out which way it is. But that's not the point of this discussion. The point is to notice that as a group of people, we aren't on the same page in terms of what we're talking about. Okay?

Now let me ask you another question. I said earlier is love learnable. Let me ask you a different question. Is love a choice?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes. Yes.

**JIM:** Love's a choice. Everybody sure about that?

**AUDIENCE:** Actionable? No. I believe loving, I believe loving someone is a choice.

**JIM:** I didn't ask that question. I'm not even talking about someone at all. I'm talking about love. You're the one that connects love to someone, or loving. I'm talking about the phenomenon of love. Just to expose my own colors here, I reject the notion that there are different kinds of love.

**AUDIENCE:** Woo. Okay.

**JIM:** I'm saying love is love, and it may get expressed in a hundred different ways. But I think love is love. It either is or isn't choice.

**AUDIENCE:** Pardon me? You personally believe there is a choice with your...

**JIM:** Well, my answer is yes. But I want to find out how many of you actually get that love is a choice.

**AUDIENCE:** Can I just add one more word?

**JIM:** Sure.

**AUDIENCE:** Conscious choice.

**JIM:** Okay. Is love a conscious choice?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes. Because there's like a difference between the conscious and the unconscious.

**JIM:** Well, but that's only if you believe in psychology. I can't observe the unconscious. The unconscious is a theory for explaining unexplained behavior. Okay.

**AUDIENCE:** Or when consciousness starts or ends. And if its, or if it starts, You can explain that too.

**JIM:** We're just playing here. We've only got a little less than 15 minutes left. So I just want to...Yes?

**AUDIENCE:** I find myself resistant to raise my hand and answer your questions. And I realize it's because you're asking the question in the context of love versus expression of love. I feel very clear that it's a choice whether to express love. Right? When you ask,

just love it feels like it just is. Yes.

**JIM:** Yeah. Well, I could accept that love is, but then I'd still want to be able to say, how is it as a distinction if I'm going to be able to do anything other than just acknowledge that it is choice.

**AUDIENCE:** In that case, it's evokes so that it is our natural state, and we may be separate from it...

**JIM:** But what if it isn't our natural state?

**AUDIENCE:** But what if it is?



**JIM:** I know. I'm not saying, look, listen. I'm not arguing for a point of view here. But I want you all to notice how attached we are that we get this right.

Okay. Okay. Whatever you say, I'll agree with. Okay?

Maybe that's the lesson, but let me clarify the objective here.

The objective of this inquiry is to distinguish love, not define it.

**AUDIENCE:** Hmm.

**JIM:** The purpose of this inquiry is to distinguish love as a distinction. In the same way you can distinguish balance. So in your life, balance is a distinction. You organize your life around that distinction, 24 hours, seven days a week. Yes, we might all have different experiences of balance, but we all share a common distinction. Balance.

So I just questions, I'm like, blah, blah, blah.

Um, so what is God? And is God observable? And if we could distinguish God as a distinction, there'd probably be a lot more of her available.

**AUDIENCE:** And a lot less separation.

**JIM:** And a lot less separation. Yes.

**AUDIENCE:** So it's similar, not the same.

If it's similar, how do we distinguish a distinction on something that may not be observable? It may not be, the effect may be tangible, the outcome may be tangible, but the actual...

Yeah. You can't observe distinctions. Yeah.

**JIM:** Right. That's true. You cannot. But everything you can observe is a function of one. It's a result of it.

**AUDIENCE:** Can you say that one more time?

**JIM:** I'm saying you can't observe a distinction, but without the distinction, nothing is observable. Okay. You with me? It's necessary.

**AUDIENCE:** Yes. Yeah.

**JIM:** Okay. Now let me just get the last couple of questions on the table. So I said, is love a choice? Yes. Okay. Next question is, and this again, I'm trying to keep it personal to you.

Do you really absolutely, unequivocally love yourself all the time?

**AUDIENCE:** No.

**JIM:** Good. See no disagreement there at all. Now let's hear it for unanimous. Okay? It's not unanimous. So, here, a point.

If you don't love yourself all of the time, then the next question would be, why not?

Now, given we've got 10 minutes, I'm just gonna have to push this a little faster.

And I'll say, how many of you don't love yourself all the time because you have some set of negative judgements about yourself. Okay? So now let's just watch how this is falling together.

So love is a choice, but I don't choose to love myself all the time. Ouch. Because cause. Because I am not worthy of it, not enough for it, have these negative thoughts about it or about myself, I'm not valuable enough. I'm not this or that. And the other thing, yes.

So you have these assessments about yourself that you actually believe to be true, even though your intellect says, I know assessments aren't true or false, but these are really true.

**JIM:** Yes. And you are addicted to those assessments.

**AUDIENCE:** Mm-Hmm.

**JIM:** Now I'm changing the language here a little bit. I'm accusing you of being addicted

to the story you have about you, okay? And that story is what prevents you from being

lovable enough to experience love all the time. Are you with me?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes.

**JIM:** Now, hopefully that's beginning to open up a choice. Do you wanna stay attached to that story or do you want to effectively love yourself? Okay.

Now stay with me a little bit more because, and this is the hard part, and this is my sharing. I'm not preaching this, but in order for you to make that choice, you're going to have to get outside your historical story. Can you see that?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes.

**JIM:** And you can't do that from inside the story.

**AUDIENCE:** Yes.

**JIM:** Still with me. Okay. So you can't really make a choice by yourself. You have to have a relationship with someone outside yourself. Now, in Buenos Aires, I had this insight one evening, and I said it as a way of speaking, and you can take this or leave it, but I discovered it for myself.

I have spent my whole life trying to love myself from inside myself. And at the end of the day, that was pure ego. And that I really surrender to the idea that the only way I can truly love myself is to see myself through the eyes of someone who loves me.

Be yourself. That's gonna be a big question about the word self.

So let's hold. I grant your thinking, but I want us to consider that if you take that point of view, not because it's the truth, but what does it open up?

That I can really only love me if I can see myself through your eyes if you love me, and that when I love myself, there's more of me available to love you.

So who was talking about it's giving and receiving?

**AUDIENCE:** Mm-Hmm. Yep. Yeah.

**JIM:** So why is that? Because there's not enough me over here to match what's over there. But I can't get over here unless I see myself through that. You with me?

**AUDIENCE:** Yeah.

**JIM:** Now, last point, and this is a share. I have the idea of love now as action, as a granting space to the other that when I say I love you, what I'm doing is declaring that for me, you are absolutely perfect the way you are. And I grant you the freedom to change and be any other way you wanna be in words. I'm unconditionally committed to your freedom, to your autonomy, to your magnificence, and to who you are as a human being. Okay? And I grant you that.

That's my gift to you when I say I love you.

**AUDIENCE:** And if I'm seeing you, if I do that, I'm actually granting you being, am I not?

**JIM:** Yes. I'm granting you the space to be. And if you are loving me because I'm seeing you through my eyes or seeing me through your eyes, then you're also granting the space for me to be, and to the degree I'm loved, I have a lot of space to be. And to the degree I don't experience love, I probably don't feel a lot of space to be.

And I'm probably reacting and positional and all those things that we know too well.

So what we're beginning to do is create in the relationship between us as beings, a giving and receiving of Being. That as a distinction, love isn't about feeling. It isn't about experience. It's about space.

It's about the opening. Okay?

It's about the possibility of Being that until love occurs, there is no Being in my view.

That being manifests and occurs in the space provided now when I use language (I'm not using vocabulary). When I declare myself to be the space for you to be, and you declare yourself as the space for me to be, then we begin to get to that space that Martin Buber talks about where we truly are one and we're also simultaneously separate

We're both separate and one at the same time [such] that we begin to create a practice

for reconciling this age-old paradox between the individual and the community.

I am the community. I am humanity. And I love you, and I know and get you love me.

Yes. And together in that space, what game are we gonna play now?

And let's generate practices for coordinating our different views.

I don't have to defend anything anymore.

I don't have to justify anything anymore.

I just simply have to acknowledge the space that you grant me.

**AUDIENCE:** Mm-Hmm. And grant you the space as my gift in return to you.

**JIM:** Yes.

**AUDIENCE:** But you're implying that I can't be without you granting me Being as if you have the vote.

**JIM:** I am saying that, without other beings granting you the space to be, you cannot be.

**AUDIENCE:** I don't believe that. I think being is. I understand that's the way it is.

**JIM:** I grant that, I'm not trying to argue or even say I'm right. I'm just saying that's what I'm saying. And you're obviously saying something different. I want you to hear that my intention here is not the right answer, but to have an access to love that lets me give love. Then by looking at it as an act of commitment to declaration, to giving, I'm actually now making love actionable.

**AUDIENCE:** Okay. I agree with that.

**JIM:** And it doesn't mean it's the only interpretation. It doesn't mean it's the truth, but it means love becomes a practice and an actionable thing, rather than just a highly desirable instate or endpoint.

It becomes the context for who we are.

It's where we come from. It's the source of transformation.

I'm saying that in my view, transformation is the means by which we actualize and manifest love. And that we wake up to that phenomenon and, again, that space.

**AUDIENCE:** And I know you were gonna thread back to time. Do I want to invite you to put time into that equation then?

**JIM:** I would have to say that love is timeless, as all spaces are outside of time.

**AUDIENCE:** And the time manifests, how?

**JIM:** Time starts with the story. Now, the last point. There's one very difficult challenge that I offer, which is you've got to kill the belief that the past has anything to do with the present.

**AUDIENCE:** Mm-Hmm. Okay.

**JIM:** We live in this belief that I'm the way I am because of what has gone before, rather than saying, no, I live, I am doing whatever I'm doing in the context of whatever possibility is occurring. Okay? And the only reason I'm confused about that is I've gotten this habit of trying to predict the future or take the past and

project it in front of me. And then I think then I make decisions and actions based upon what I observe or what I predict. And then I live into the past, thinking I'm living into the future. But that's what produces more of the past.

So breaking free of this, in part, is to just simply set aside, or at least try to give up the idea that the past is determining anything.

And in that freedom, then the question is, what can we create together?

**AUDIENCE:** Mm-Hmm.

**JIM:** Couple of questions and then we'll call it a night. Yes.

**AUDIENCE:** At the moment you say that, I feel then called to become masterful in helping people see the maximum number of possibilities such that they're standing at choice and it's unlinked to the chains that are behind.

**JIM:** And this is our technology, right? This is how we do it. We just deliver that maximum choice.

**AUDIENCE:** Yeah. And that's, and you know, when people interview me and say, what's transformation, I say, basically it's about choice that people don't know they have, right?

**JIM:** All the time. Yes.

**AUDIENCE:** So, um, are you somehow saying that one of the most powerful or maybe the only ways to experience love is in reflection?

**JIM:** No, no. I'm using, you can think of this metaphorically if you want, but think about it is the only way for you to experience loving yourself is if you could surrender to another. You could surrender to God's love, say, or you could surrender to another's love. But get your self thinking out of the way to open yourself up to the possibility that you're absolutely loved.

So then how, if you could say it again, then how would you explain to someone how love is actionable?

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It's simply, I say I love you.

**AUDIENCE:** Oh, I love you.

**JIM:** It is not a description of my feelings. It's a declaration of who I am in our relationship.

What's actionable. Like I forgive you. It, you know, those are declarative acts that define us as

or declare our relationship to another person.

**AUDIENCE:** I think you're awesome, by the way. I love how you get outta the box too, by the way. But I have to say that, one of my favorite quotes and favorite sayings is to love another person, is to see the face of God. And I just felt like that's almost like what you're saying, right?

**JIM:** Yeah. But if you take that statement and add to it what I said about seeing myself through your eyes, then what's the god's face that I'm looking at?

**AUDIENCE:** Totally my own.

**JIM:** That's right. Very nice, very nice.

**AUDIENCE:** I want take a minute to plug in Milton's The Secret. It reminds me of, uh, one of the things that told us. Can I be the space for this? Can I be this person for who you are and who you are not—and embrace 100% what, how you arise in the space that I am providing for you to just self liberate in the moment of now?

**JIM:** Yeah.

**AUDIENCE:** So as I was talking to Barnett, I was saying you are the space for Milton's secret to manifest into being. The vision landed on you. And now I want to bring into the space that we are the space for Milton's secret to come into being. We are here, the space for every heart that will beat, millions of hearts in the future, and their lives will be transformed, 'cause they're watching this movie. The tears will roll out of people's eyes in that they will be deeply touched by this art that he's creating. And all of us are the space for that to come into the world.

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**JIM:** Beautiful. And if we are the space of love, then everything that shows up in that space is actionable. I would propose that we are the space for whatever is occurring to show up.

**AUDIENCE:** Yeah.

**JIM:** So let's be the space for a miracle. Let's be a space for Milton's secret. Let's be a space for each other. Let's be a space for the resolution of the b\*\*\*\*\*t in Washington.

**AUDIENCE:** I just wanted to ask for your interpretation. Something someone here said about, being alone or being loving yourself independently. And I hold that the human experience is one of being social. We're a social animal. And what I love about your distinctions and the power of it is it gives us power and access with others.

I can just love myself by myself or be alone, and I don't have to play the game of seeing and loving myself through somebody else. We can do that. But it causes us to live in a world that closes in where we're just alone and by ourselves, where the power and the mastery and the beauty is all about connection with others.

**JIM:** Well, let me give you a thought. I'm offering this as a stepping off place, not as the answer. One of the things I propose is that only the individual can make a commitment.

That the one thing that's absolutely sovereign to you as an individual is the capacity to make a commitment.

The concept "we" commit is false.

We can align our individual commitments, but there's no such thing as, as we committing, as a phenomenon.

And yet I would argue equally that none of us can fulfill a commitment by ourselves.

Okay? So we're always in this paradox between the individual as a creator of something like possibility and us together as the manifestation or fulfillment of possibility.

Now, the idea, the concept of the individual is also pure interpretation.

Okay? There's no such thing as individuality in nature.

There's just individual is a distinction, just like group is a distinction.

Now, there's a guy named Charles Horton Cooley who once said the individual and the community are not different phenomenon. They're the collective and distributive aspects of the same thing.

So you as an individual expression of Being can act. And I as the collective being can respond. We're always in a dance in that way.

Now, when Nelly and I were talking at dinner last night, if by 'self' she means this, then yes, I can, I can take that as a conversation and I can understand it in terms of an individual commitment or individual loving themselves.

But it's not the same self that we usually traffic in every day when we talk about me.

I'm not loving myself from inside myself.

I may love myself by witnessing my larger being, but that's a different, that's a different individual speaking than me.

**AUDIENCE:** Yeah. Uh, yes.

**JIM:** This is the last one. Oh, okay. Two more real fast.

**AUDIENCE:** I just wanted to say thank you and that the space that is held here is precious. And it's my first time here. And I'm, oddly enough, quite euphoric by myself, being by myself. But something happens when a space is held like here, where I can, I actually feel my heart feel it expanding just while I'm in your

presence. And I don't know you, and I know you, and I think that's what you're talking about.

**JIM:** And, and can you allow yourself to let in how deeply and profoundly we all love you?

**AUDIENCE:** Mm-Hmm. That's that smile I think on my face.

**JIM:** And I'll bet you the next time you're alone in euphoric, you'll be more euphoric than you've ever been, I suspect. Okay.

**AUDIENCE:** Yeah. I think that's true. Yeah. Good. So thank you.

**JIM:** You're welcome. One more question. Yeah.

**AUDIENCE:** More like a comment. I honor your sharing and I honor the space of this enlightened and edgy kind of mindset here. And as a lover and fairly simple-minded person, I experience that my love isn't a choice. I love, even if I say I don't. Even if I say I don't love myself, I really do. I can be a liar, but not on purpose. I am a lover and that's not a choice. It's how I am and who I think we are. So, so blah, blah, blah and everything high minded. And as I drop in a lot of what you're saying, I really honor what you're sharing.

**JIM:** Well, thank you. And I just wanna suggest maybe you're making the biggest choice of all by being able to choose what is at the level you're speaking. It is a choice because you're choosing it to be all there is.

**AUDIENCE:** Right.

**JIM:** But to make that choice, you gotta get outside yourself to choose it. Otherwise, it's just a point of view inside your historical structure, inside your story.

**AUDIENCE:** I Accept it. Okay, great. Thank you.

**JIM:** Okay. Thank you.