

How to Project Love at a Distance

By: Brooke Allen

When I was a child my dad taught me how to project love at a distance.

One day he brought me into his workshop and said, “I want to show you something.” He handed me two hacksaws and said, “Examine these and tell me how they are different.”

I looked at them for a minute or two. I concluded that they are identical and I told him so.



My dad said, “OK, now use them.” He clamped a pipe into a vice and told me to pick a saw and cut an inch or so off of the pipe. I did that, and when I was done, he told me to do the same thing with the other saw.

Then he said, “Now, which saw do you like better?”

I said, “I like the second one better?”

He asked, “Why?”

“I don’t know,” I said, “It just *feels* better.”

“Precisely,” he said, “it feels better to me too. I’ll show you why.” He pointed out that on the handle of the hacksaw we didn’t like there was a little burr that irritates the skin that stretches between the thumb and forefinger. There had once been a burr on the other handle too, but it had been filed off.

My dad said, “The hacksaw that you like was made by someone who loves you. The other one was not.”

My dad said that most people talk about loving their work or hating it. What they are talking about is how their work makes them feel. More important is the question of how your work makes other people feel.

Care about the people who will experience the consequences of everything you do. That’s how you project love at a distance. If you put love into making something useful that lasts then it might be used far and wide, and long after you are gone. People you will never meet will feel loved, and they won’t know why or how it happened.

But, you will know.

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