Romantic Resonance in Deep Love and Long Life

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ABSTRACT

This current research deals with one of the important components for the development and continuation of deep love and long life, which many of us wish for ourselves, but to date only few have achieved. On the one hand, we are living in an era that sanctifies love as the major base for cementing a relationship. On the other hand, there is a rise in the number of couples both in Israel and around the world who divorce (Moshe, 2013), and many other couples who report feelings of romantic compromise and fading feelings (Sternberg, 1986; Fisher, 1992, 2010; Buss, 1994). Supposedly, it is possible to surmise that in our period of time romantic love will blossom and last, as so many wish for, and differing from previous periods in history, there are fewer social prohibitions blocking fulfillment. However, in fact there is a huge gap between the desire to attempt to develop a romantic and fulfilling connection and preserving it, and the fact that only few succeed in living fulfilling, exciting and beneficial love lives with the same partner[[1]](#footnote-1) over a period of time. This gap translates into the most annoying and disturbing issue in the study of love in our time (Lev, 2016).

This current study asks to touch upon this gap through the use of a relatively new term that has not been researched enough in the study of feelings and love – romantic resonance - while focusing on its theoretical conceptualization and the definition of the necessary conditions needed for its creation and development over time. The central claim in the study is that romantic love tends to deepen and intensify when romantic resonance exists between a couple, in combination with additional components that characterize healthy, developing love. The study deals with the romantic resonance feature in the interaction it has with additional important elements, and in the clarification of the importance it has in the analysis of the central questions that occupy the academic discourse today on the subject of romantic love, and the feasibility of its continuation over a long period.

Resonance is a physical term that describes a state in which a certain system reacts very forcefully to external arousal and draws energy from that stimulus with high efficiency. This phenomenon occurs when the frequency of the external energy is equal to or is very close to the natural frequency of a system, and thus the frequency rises in the system. Similar to a physical system that operates with maximum efficiency when there is a match of the frequency between it and the arousal factor, a couple relationship enables the partners to fulfill themselves in the best possible way, when emotions, characteristics and talents contribute to their advancement and they are nurtured by their “arousal frequency”, meaning, at the correct moment, in the correct manner and the correct amount. Borrowing the term for research about emotions and love, romantic resonance is noted as an extension and increase of the emotion of love between partners (Ben-Zeev, 2019); with built-in similarity and agreement they achieve spontaneity, simultaneity and synchronization that leads to the strengthening of characteristics, talents and emotions connected to their personal and mutual prosperity.

The prototype of romantic resonance in deep love is composed both of emotional resonance and resonance in activities. The emotional resonance is characterized by the partners’ authentic and natural conduct, in the experience of being mutually understood, frequently without communicating, in the feeling of “home” that is often present from the first time they meet and in a unique combination between the experience of being familiar and the experience of surprise, expressed among other things by the couple’s renewal, creativity, emotions, mutual ability to tease[[2]](#footnote-2) and by their mutual humor. The resonance in activities is characterized by multiple mutual activities that are considered enjoyable and developing for both of the partners, among which the presence of each one increases the enjoyment, the success and the excitement for the other from the activity. Romantic resonance makes the love connections more significant and deep, and assists them to develop, while preserving the mutual thrill experience.

The current study combines two central aspects of discussion, the philosophical and the psychological, and through them it asks to characterize deep romantic love and the conditions that enable it to continue and strengthen over time. In a previous study (Gruber, 2017), the foundations for the borrowing of the physical and musical term “resonance” was carried out through the reading of materials regarding resonance and through discussions with experts coming from the worlds of physics and music. In the current study that seeks to deepen the understanding of the term and to insert it into the academic and public discourse about love, in-depth interviews will be conducted with ten couples who are in long-term committed relationships for more than ten years and who testified about themselves as having between them active love, excitement and deep mutual joy – all of which are characteristics identified with the existence of romantic resonance. The goal of the interviews is to demonstrate the central theoretical assertion in the study, in the language of life itself, and to thus contribute to the understanding of the concept of romantic resonance and its unique expression in a relationship.

The pioneering understanding of the concept romantic resonance in relation to its various types – the emotional resonance and the activities’ resonance – and the understanding of its crucial role in long term love, seek to contribute to the study of emotions and of love. This study can be a starting point for additional quantitative and qualitative studies with regard to romantic resonance, its expression and its role in deep love and in longevity. Moreover, it is possible that this study has applications, as awareness of significant factors that preserve and encourage the personal development of each member of a couple and their love, can assist in more appropriate life connections, with deeper and wider potential for mutual prosperity over time.

The doctoral thesis has ten chapters: Chapter One is the Introduction which reviews the challenge facing romantic love in the modern age and the way in which romantic resonance can provide answers; Chapter Two presents the research methodology, as the current philosophical study combines the element of interviews; Chapter Three presents a literature review about the quality of romantic love (3.1), the influence of time upon its intensity and depth (3.2), and the romantic resonance and central models of love (3.3); in Chapter Four, the philosophical platform is presented for discussion in romantic resonance – with the dialogical philosophy of Martin Buber and the concept of “Middle Space” at its core; Chapter Five deals with the characteristic of romantic resonance and the innovation that this study wishes to contribute to the dialogue regarding the quality of deep, romantic love; Chapter Six characterizes emotional romantic resonance, which is one of two central types of resonance present in romantic resonance; Chapter Seven characterizes romantic resonance in activities, which is the second type that is typically present in romantic resonance, along with emotional romantic resonance; Chapter Eight discusses the place of romantic resonance in the psychological sense. This chapter suggests, among other things, an additional theoretical model for the understanding of the conditions influencing the extent of the prosperity and depth of love in romantic relationships; Chapter Nine relates to the story of one of the couples we interviewed in the study, a story which well illustrates the prototype of romantic resonance in deep love that lasts long - comprehensive and full romantic resonance that includes emotional romantic resonance, from the first meeting and also romantic resonance in many activities considered significant for both members of the couple; Chapter Ten is the Conclusion that includes the directions for the continuation of the study.

1. In this study I used, for the sake of ease, pronouns that refer to heterosexual couples – but the intent is for partners of all sexual and gender orientations. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Mutual arousal that is not explicit in a negative way and is accompanied by humor, mutual understanding, and spontaneity. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)