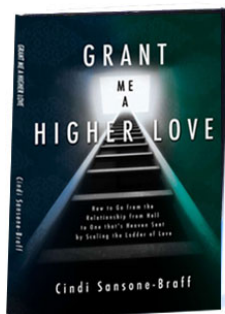


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Grant Me a Higher Love: How to Go from the Relationship from Hell to One that's Heaven Sent by Scaling The Ladder of Love

By Cindi Sansone-Braff

Questions & Answers

1. Your book, *Grant Me a Higher Love: How to Go from the Relationship from Hell to One that's Heaven Sent by Scaling The Ladder of love*, is about love and relationships. What made you write this particular book?

I believe I was born to write this book. Every life experience I've ever had seems to confirm this belief.

2. Could you be more specific?

For example, my own relationships made me painfully aware that the road to love can be a long, winding, rocky one, overridden with potholes and deadly ravines. I found myself having this almost obsessional desire to know why something that should be so simple becomes so difficult. Then I had this revelation, this cosmic awareness, that all the pain and suffering love inspired couldn't be in vain. My great need to seek answers, coupled with this deep inner knowing, became the catalysts that launched me on a painstaking quest to understand the true nature of love.

Besides my own relationship woes, as I did relationship Tarot readings for thousands of clients, I was able to witness firsthand the devastating consequences that all the misunderstandings and miscalculations concerning love had on their lives. One question began to plague me: Why is it that a topic as all-encompassing as love has had so little serious study? Yes, it's true the ancient Greeks took the study of love seriously, but that was light years ago, and not everything they professed about love has proven true. And so, in all due humility, I decided to take up where Socrates and Plato left off.

3. How did you research this book?

I read hundreds of books -- all kinds of books covering a wide range of topics including psychology, dream analysis, spirituality, philosophy, mythology, health, religion, and relationships. And, yes, as I already mentioned, I did draw upon my own love life in writing this book. I've experienced every kind of love relationship you can have, and I've tried to learn from each and every one of them.

For example, from leaving my own long-term marriage (twenty-nine years), I learned how difficult it is to sever the ties that bind, even when a relationship might not be serving our higher good. I struggled for years having one foot in my marriage and one foot out the door. Entering a marriage seems easy enough (especially when you're young). It's like you just open this one, little door. To leave a marriage, you have to close a thousand doors, and please, no slamming, and this can be an incredibly difficult thing to do. Learning how to end my marriage in a kind, fair, and just manner taught me many lessons. It is possible to remain good friends with an ex, and if there are children involved, then learning how to do this is of utmost importance. Among the many lessons *Grant Me a Higher Love* strives to teach people is -- how, when, and if to end a marriage, and how to do it in a morally correct manner.

In addition to the wealth of information my own love life provided, the intimate details of other people's love relationships, revealed to me from doing thousands and thousands of Tarot card readings, filled in any gaps in my knowledge.

4. Tell us a little about your professional background and how it helped you write *Grant Me a Higher Love*. For instance, you're a medium, how did that help you in writing this book?

Where and how do I begin to answer that? Communing with those who have crossed over has taught me a very important lesson: Say what you need to say, while you're still here on earth to say it. Tell those you love, how much you love them. If you need to say you're sorry, say it. This way, when you leave the earth plane behind, you won't be filled with regret and remorse. The deceased willingly confess, to those with ears to hear, how they wish that they could have loved others better, while they still had the chance. This has taught me to love fully without fear of outcome, and this knowledge has helped me to understand the true nature of love, making the task of writing this book just a little bit easier.

I've also been an entertainer all of my life, and I've performed more than 10,000 live shows for children of all ages and for people from all walks of life. Over the years, I learned not to see the differences between people, rather I came to understand that deep down inside we're all the same, and that the heart is a perennial child and the soul is immortal.

I also had to learn how to make my audiences fall in love with me in a matter of minutes. Learning how to do this taught me something very important. People really do respond to your kind words and loving gestures. People really do want to give and receive love, and this blending of energies is really what makes for a good performer. If you can make your audience feel that interchange of loving energy, be it through the vehicle of dance, music, singing, a movie, a play, whatever, you will send them away feeling that they are richer and happier from having had that experience. And the same holds for our everyday interactions. If you want love, then be love. Be willing to extend the invitation to love first, and await the other person's RSVP.

I've also been a playwright and the themes of my plays have always been concerned with some aspect of love.

5. You've said that this book took you more than four years to write. Why so long?

Like I just said, I'm a playwright. That was my major in college. That's the kind of writing I've always done. A good playwright knows that dialogue must contain a few, well-chosen words that move the plot forward, have hidden meaning, and that emanate from the heart, the soul, and higher consciousness. That kind of writing comes easy to me. I came kicking and screaming to the task of writing a nonfiction book. It took me a long time to find my voice as a nonfiction writer, to come up with the formatting of the book, and to figure out how to say all that needed to be said. It was at some level, biting off more than I could chew. It's also more than five hundred pages long.

6. How would you classify this book?

I call it a Bible of Relationships. It's more akin to a textbook than a self-help book because it's chock-full of information. It's also a very interactive book, since there are *Lovework Assignments* in which you have to write down your own experiences, and I make it clear from the start -- *the words you write are as important as the ones you read.*

7. Who could benefit from reading this book?

Anyone who wishes to manifest a more loving relationship, either within the context of the one they have, or in a new love to come. And it is for men and women alike. I truly believe this information should be taught to children and teenagers. It would save them a lot of angst later on in life, since it teaches you how to unconditionally love another with your entire heart, soul, mind, and body, and how to allow someone to love you the same way in return.

8. The entire name of your book is: *Grant Me a Higher Love: How to Go from the Relationship from Hell to One that's Heaven Sent by Scaling The Ladder of Love.* That's quite a mouthful! Could you explain why you chose that particular title?

That's a very good question. The main part of the title *Grant Me a Higher Love*, which is really quite a simple statement, implies many things. In saying, "Grant me," you're turning your love life over to God. You're admitting that you don't have a clue as to what you really need in a mate or how to go about getting it. In saying, "Grant me a higher love," you're acknowledging that you don't want what you've had in the past, a common, everyday watered-down version of love. You want something richer, deeper, and more meaningful. In other words, you're asking for a heaven-sent love known as a higher love. You're also acknowledging that love is a miracle that always comes from God, and you're asking God to grant you that miracle.

Now, the first part of the subtitle: *How to Go from the Relationship from Hell to One that's Heaven Sent* lets you know that by reading this book you will find the ways and means to manifest this higher love. This subtitle also acknowledges that there are different levels of love and relationships that you can have, and that you really do want

something better. It's admitting that there has to be more to love than what you now have seen, and please show me the way.

The last part of the subtitle, "*by scaling The Ladder of Love,*" is really the key to manifesting this higher love. The concept of *The Ladder of Love* postulates that love is like a ladder. The first few lower Rungs on *The Ladder of Love* represent common love, or *Cellmate* relationships which tend to bring out the worst in us. The "for worse" that is spoken of in traditional marriage vows.

The upper Rungs on *The Ladder of Love* are known as *Soul Mate* relationships, and these relationships tend to bring out the best in us -- the "for better and till death do us part" ones.

At the midpoint on *The Ladder of Love*, we come to what I've called *Razor's Edge Mate* relationships which can go either way. They can move up *The Ladder of Love* and bring out the best in us, or they can slide down *The Ladder of Love* and bring out the worst. At this stage of human evolution, the majority of romantic relationships fall into this borderline category. The old "sometimes I love you, sometimes I hate you" relationships.

In a nutshell, the title means, "*God, please, help me to manifest a more meaningful and intimate relationship.*"

9. Why do you think people are having so much trouble making relationships work?

For this simple reason -- we've been taught so little about the true nature of love on a conscious level. Most of what we've learned about love and relationships permeated our minds on a subliminal level when we were very young children. We saw a lot of unhappy marriages and dysfunctional relationships all around us, and we caught the drift that grown-ups in long-term relationships get to be mean to each other. We then watched way too much television and saw an endless stream of movies, and acquired what I call "celluloid delusions." For instance, we were fed fairytales with our formula, and came to believe that we'd fall in love and live "Happily Ever After." Then, as we got older, we watched sitcom marriages, marriage dramas, and romantic comedies that further filled our heads with all kinds of conflicting information. *Grant Me a Higher Love* dispels many of the myths, false beliefs, and *Errors in Thinking* concerning love and relationships that fill our heads. This way we can get off the merry-go-round of relationships in which we keep replacing one person with another and another, all the while remaining clueless as to how to make the next relationship significantly better than the one before it.

10. In your book you mention the old archetype of marriage that you refer to as the "Old ball and chain thing," -- and the new archetype that we can strive for -- truly a state of "Holy Matrimony". Can you tell us a little more about these two different kinds of marriages?

The old archetype of marriage is pretty much what we saw all around us as we were growing up, and I liken it to a sitcom marriage. For instance, most of us have seen a

million reruns of *I Love Lucy*, and we've all laughed at Fred and Ethel Mertz and their less than storybook romance; or more recently we've all related to *Everybody Loves Raymond* as we've watched and laughed at the endless bickering and backbiting between Frank and Marie Barone. These long-term married couples seem to treat the rest of the world much nicer than they treat each other, and in fact, their relationship for the most part, brings out the worst in them. They may appear to be committed to each other, but they're really not. They may come home to each other every night, but their heart, souls, and minds are elsewhere. It's like that old joke about the couple who have been married for fifty years. When asked, "Have you ever thought about divorce?" And they answer, "No, we've never thought of divorce. Murder, yes, plenty of times, but divorce, no, never!"

In the new archetype of marriage, two people are truly committed to each other, heart, soul, mind, and body. They love each other unconditionally, and treat each other with kindness, respect, and admiration. If you want to see a good example of the new archetype of marriage, you can watch a very old movie that was really way ahead of its time -- *It's a Wonderful Life* -- and see the deep love that George and Mary have for each other, particularly by the end of the movie. So, it's your choice -- do you want to settle for a sitcom marriage, or do you choose to have a wonderful life?

11. What keeps people from being truly intimate with each other?

Fear -- our fear of getting hurt has caused us to fear real intimacy. When we're truly intimate with another, we're not fully in control of our emotions, and this can scare us to the bones. And remember, there are only two paths in life -- the path of fear, which is the path of the illusion of safety; and the path of love which can actually terrify us at first, since it asks us to heal our issues. Once again the choice is yours -- to hide your head in the sand and stay in a static state of fear, or face your issues, heal them, and live in the vibrant light of love.

12. In *Grant Me a Higher Love*, you mention your own experience with Enlightenment. What exactly does that mean?

Enlightenment is spiritual awakening. For me, the first flashes of Enlightenment came like a lightening bolt that jolted and altered every fiber of my being. Suddenly, I started to see life with new eyes. I had this clear vision in which I began to recognize that the light of God is not only within you, but within everyone and everything as well. In all honesty, I didn't know what hit. It wasn't as if I were sitting under a Bodhi tree waiting for the experience. In fact, God and I hadn't exactly been on speaking terms for more than twenty years. It was only when I began experiencing tremendous stage fright that I started to turn to God. At the time I was performing over 500 shows a year, and this paralyzing sense of fear was making my life a living hell. Since food had to be put on the table, and because this was the only way I knew how to scratch a living out of this earth, I began asking God for help, whispering, "I need a miracle in my life," and wham, Enlightenment struck. I had to backtrack and try to figure out what had happened to me. Then, I asked God point-blank, "Why me? I'm not going to be Mother Teresa." Next, I heard great cosmic laughter and the response, "I'm not asking you to be Mother Teresa."

I'm asking you to be you -- the real you. Be a beacon of light right now, right where you are. Don't be frightened. Many are here to show you the way."

13. You mentioned in the book, that "For the first time in history, we're asked to be "mystics" and "monks" in everyday life." What do you mean by this?

God doesn't ask that you go off to some remote area of the world to offer your services to humanity. God just wants you to talk the talk, walk the walk, and take your spiritual show on the road. God doesn't need you to go off and live on a mountaintop and renounce your current way of life. God needs each and every one of us, right here and now, to make our life an everyday ministry.

14. In a few sentences, could you sum up what the main theme of your book is?

Oh, the one minute Hollywood pitch! The theme of *Grant Me a Higher Love* is simply this: Only love matters. Only love is real. All else is an illusion. And, if you wish to have a higher love, you have to know yourself, love yourself, and heal yourself enough so that you can truly say what you mean, mean what you say, without being mean about it! ***Remember -- by unconditionally loving others and showing this love through great honesty, tempered by kindness, you can become the living embodiment of the highest evolution of a human being.***