



The following lessons and exercises are from *Rethink Love*, by Monica Berg

YOU COMPLETE YOU

Many bright people throw themselves wholeheartedly into understanding the world while neglecting the endeavor of understanding themselves. I went to my doctor for my annual check-up. Knowing how much I travel, he asked me if I had any trips coming up. I told him I was preparing to give a lecture on meeting our potential. "Our potential in what?" he asked. "Our potential in life," I responded. He looked at me with a confused expression, and it dawned on me that most people don't think of life in these terms. In our society, we tend to think of our goals, not our potential. Our primary focus is on finding our soulmate, getting married, having children, getting fit, losing weight, saving money for retirement, and on and on. Don't get me wrong. Goals are essential, but we tend to place too much emphasis on them while losing sight of the bigger picture: manifesting our life's purpose.

So how do I figure out my purpose? That's a big question!

It starts with introspection and identifying your beliefs. The journey of self-discovery is lifelong, and your purpose is ever-evolving. You can find clues to your unique purpose by contemplating what you enjoy doing and what gives you a sense of satisfaction. Then, extrapolate that by asking yourself how you can share this with the world. Leading a purpose-filled life means taking your gifts and sharing them. It is through this process of lifelong self-discovery that we find true fulfillment.

We are accustomed, as individuals and as a society, to look outward for fulfillment. So begins the tale of every troubled relationship because unless you know and understand yourself, your relationships happen *to* you instead of *through* you.

KABBALISTIC PRINCIPLE:

Every situation in life has an external and an internal aspect, and they are rarely, if ever, the same. Our body and all of its desires represent the external aspect, and our soul represents the internal aspect.

What you seek can never come from an external place. Not from a job, not from a relationship, not from beauty, or wealth. Not from anything you can see or touch. The deep longing, we feel to connect to something larger than ourselves can only be satisfied by exploring our inner aspect. This is our link to what kabbalists call the "Light of the Creator," the "Light," the "Source," and what most call "God." Disconnection from our inner aspect results in feelings of unhappiness, depression, anxiety, emptiness, and a



constant need for validation. When we bring our focus back to our inner aspect, we rediscover the happiness and fulfillment for which we long.

This is also true in relationships.

The external aspect is expressed as the physical things our partners give us. Conversely, the internal aspect of the relationship is the joy you take in discovering the unique imprint of your partner's soul. When you can connect to their internal aspect, your connection with them will continue regardless of physical hardships or obstacles. You are connected to their soul, which transcends the physical.

I've come to find, in my journey, that being centered in yourself is the foundation of being strong. The more I'm in touch with what's inside me, the more I can do for others. If I'm understanding and compassionate with regard to my own body, thoughts, and emotions, then so too can I be compassionate towards others. We can't give what we don't have. You can never do all these things for somebody else first and then get to yourself.

It's not easy to create this shift, but it's the only way to create a strong sense of self. I'm not asking you to become self-centered but instead to be centered on yourself so you don't become reliant on your partner for that strength. The difference is crucial. I'm not saying to be self-centered; I'm saying to be "centered" and self-interested. It's about being in touch with your inner self—tending, supporting, and strengthening the soul aspect of you.

When we are connected to our internal aspect (the Source), we are not waiting for someone to fulfill us. Love is never outside of ourselves; love is within us.

Becoming Aware is the First Step

Kalonymus Kalman Shapira was an inspiring kabbalist whose work has profoundly affected me. His words are as fresh and relevant as if he'd written them today. His life was taken in the Holocaust. He buried his journals in the concentration camp where he was being held. In one writing, called *The Student's Obligation*, he posited that a child must be imbued "with a vision of his potential greatness" and be "an active participant in his own development."

Kalman looks at the differences between the soul and the body. The latter represents the tangible world—you can see it, you can feel it, it's what's left behind when you die. But the soul is invisible and intangible. Emotions, thoughts, and feelings are only apparent to the soul, and the starting point for coming to know it is introspection. In Kalman's words, "Each person needs to take an honest evaluation, by honest self-awareness, of the intricacies of his unique soul."



Rethink Moment

1) How do you feel when you wake up in the morning, and what excites you?

2) What is your intention for each day?

3) When you make decisions, what are they based on? Outside influence? Comfort? Or deep self-awareness?

Only you can be true to yourself. No one else can do that for you.
This is your work in this lifetime.