



SAMARITAN
Counseling • Guidance • Consulting

Beyond Valentine's Day Love (continued)

By The Rev. Dr. Graham Standish, PhD, MSW, MA, MDiv, Executive Director

During my first vocation as a therapist with teens and children in a psychiatric hospital, I took counseling classes as part of its continuing education program. What I remember most is watching a film based on a groundbreaking research study. It deeply impacted my future work as a therapist, spiritual director, coach, and pastor.

The film compared different kinds of therapies—Rogerian therapy, Rational Emotive therapy, Behavioral therapy, and a few others I don't recall. It was trying to determine which form of therapy was the most effective. The study and the film came up with a conclusive answer: **the most effective therapy was the one where the client felt the most loved by the therapist.** The type of therapy didn't matter as much as the sense the client had that the therapist valued and cared about her or him. That's the power of love.

At Samaritan our therapists are experienced in many different kinds of therapy. We don't seek only one kind of therapist. What they all have in common, and what has led them to serve through Samaritan, is that they want to provide therapy and care in a place where they are allowed to love their clients. I don't mean this in a salacious, modern movie way. I mean this in a Gospel way that Jesus spoke about in the Great Command: love God with all that we have, and love others as ourselves. We try to allow God to work through us to help people feel loved so that they can find hope and healing through our work.

This is the kind of love we hope you'll find this month. Valentine's Day is great day for romantic love. We hope even more that you'll find a transforming spiritual love that leads you to a healthier mind, body, and spirit, and to a better life.

Graham is the author of seven books on spirituality and congregational transformation. Visit his [website](#).

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