

SCHOOL OF AUTHENTIC BADASSERY – Badass At Love Module

4) What does it mean to become Badass At Love?

So, we've spent some time now looking at why love matters to us as human beings, and we've looked at all the murky dark history to understand why we are getting this so fundamentally wrong. Then we looked at what is actually possible when we change the way we are doing things – so it's definitely about time we looked at how to create what it is we want.

The world renowned Gottman Institute after over 40 years of research have decided that the key to successful relationships is kindness and generosity. I'd like to add to that I fundamentally believe that you cannot truly love someone unless you first respect them. You can respect someone without loving them – like you might a leading industry expert or a politician. But unless you respect the person you love, it's hard to say you are truly loving them at the highest level of yourself.

Unfortunately, kindness, generosity, love and respect go out the window when you feel you have rights over your partner, and that they have to be obedient to your wishes and not break your rules for you to love them.

The Gottman Institute also consider the most important skill in relationships is not communication but the ability to restore connection after a breakdown. What you find when you choose to operate in a model of profound respect and privilege is that many of the things that so often trigger breakdowns cease to exist.

As a small example of this – I lost count of how many times I heard my parents argue and get upset with each other over my father not taking out the bins. When this thought occurs to me in my current relationship, I simply remind myself that I never expect my partner to do anything for me because I know that as a free human being he always has a choice and when I don't expect him to do a particular task, I find myself grateful every time he chooses to do it, as if it were the first time again – which is an infinitely better feeling than the frustration of my expectation not being met. And yes I will often choose to express gratitude for the times he does things without me asking him to – after all he never *has* to, and you'd be amazed at just how many thoughtful things he chooses to do – how many times he comes home from being out and brings me gifts – that again continue to surprise me every time because I never expect them. How many times he thoughtfully leaves a handwritten note where he knows I'll see it – I'm sure I don't need to tell you how far removed this is from any of my previous relationships where handwritten love notes just didn't exist!

It's not to say though that we don't have miscommunications and breakdowns in our relationship, or that we don't inadvertently trigger an unhealed wound, but we aren't at each other's throats dealing with our righteous indignation and superiority. When our break downs occur, our focus turns quickly to how can I reach toward my partner in love right now. How can I provide what the other person needs right now, like both of us, this isn't a one way street of one partner always getting to be pandered to. How can I take ownership of what happened, remembering I'm in a relationship with my partners nervous system?

One of the things I carry in my mind is that what I bring to our interactions is my energy, my energy has the capacity to either neutralise the situation or blow it up.

And believe me, we all have enough triggers and scars from our past, from our upbringings, from our childhoods to create landmines in our relationships for years to come, that if we don't choose to heal from, will go on to impact on future generations just like we had them projected into our lives.

If you are typically a person who's found yourself in a place where you spend the majority of your time catering to the needs and desires of your partners at the sacrifice of your own, I want you to know that I am not advocating subjection and a pandering to every whim of your partner at direct violation of your own truth. That's not what I'm talking about here and we will get into that more in the Bring Out My Badass module later. If what I'm saying feels scary right now I want you to know that what we do together in Bring Out My Badass is to ensure you know how to provide for your safety in the model of relationships I'm laying out – that's an absolute priority for me knowing my own experiences and the experiences many *many* other women have had coming out of the generations of relationships based on women not being respected and granted basic freedoms and human rights.

In the meantime, you'll not be surprised to know that the results of Google's extensive research into what lies at the essence of effective teams – effective collaboration, partnership, marriage if you will, was this one thing - psychological safety. And in case you were wondering what that means exactly it's that people feel safe to take risks and be vulnerable in front of each other.

So, to go back again, the more we think we have rights over someone, and to set the standard of what is right and wrong the more likely we are to violate people and cause them to live in fear. On the other hand, the more we can become calm with the splendid humanness of each other and our fuckups and learn how to speak in a way that lifts judgement and fosters respect, the more you able to create a physiologically safe space for yourself and your partner and loved ones.

The interesting thing is that in so many studies, the people who feel they fail in relationships put it down to bad communication, whilst those who see success in their relationships don't mention communication – they chalk it up to respect. If you consider it a privilege to be in a partnership with this wonderful human you have walking beside you through life, the things you say will inherently be filled with good intent.

On the very rare occasion I can feel myself leaning toward saying something nasty to my partner or a friend, I call it and say I need a time out. My desire to do no harm in respect of the other person reminds me to operate at my highest self. A relationship is over when too many mean things have been said. All the sorry's in the world don't take away what came out and so not saying those things in the first place is important. It's way easier to say 'I'm getting defensive and I fear I might say something nasty, I need 10 minutes,' than it is to say something you need to later apologise for.

You and I don't wake up thinking about how we are going to say something that gets under someone's skin today. Maybe the narcissistic toxic tyrants do but they also aren't the ones who choose to come and do this work either!

There's a part of us that wants to love beautifully, the heart, the soul, the body, the gut – everything below the throat. And then there's the mind that's acting out what it's been told to believe. And the bravest journey of all is that journey of 1.5 feet from our mind to our heart.

Can you leave behind your mind and where all your fears and prejudices exist and say Ok I'm going to leave that alone for now and I'm going to relate to people from my heart the deepest part of me that actually knows best. Start relating to other human beings with as little thought as possible, because what shows up when we move beyond our fears & thoughts, is our innate generosity,

kindness, capacity to empathise, have compassion & understanding. Really provide a safe psychological space for people. And if you can do that, well you might just become the most important person, that person has ever met.

It's time for us to love our partners, like we would the most precious thing in our lives. Go back to that time before you were 'official' before your relationship had a name of boyfriend and girlfriend – before you fell into the societal expectations that gave you rights over your partner and love them like every day they considered and chose to be in a relationship with you again – because if you are doing this consciously, they are! Nothing is a given. I knew better than to promise my partner that I would be with him 'forever' I told him I couldn't promise him that as I didn't know what would happen in our paths, but I could promise him that we'd be together for as long as we were meant to be, however long that might be. It doesn't mean I continuously live with one foot out the door or one eye wandering around looking at the options. In fact, just conducting our relationship on the lines I've been sharing with you gives me absolutely no desire to do anything like that. It doesn't mean that we don't commit to future goals together or shared standards, dreams and values. It just simply means we refuse to make each other prisoners to some societal expectation that stemmed from ownership. It means that we hold great respect for each other and consistently consider how we can support and bring out the best in each other and provide a safe space for our greatest truths to unfold, whilst we commit to doing no harm. Because nothing gives me the rights over someone or the right to tell them what to do and how to behave. And when we are given the freedom to love beautifully it's not a task to do so, I don't need to be reminded or threatened or forced to be nice to him. In fact, if I was, it would produce exactly the opposite.

I'm not saying you can't have healthy boundaries. And if you are in a relationship where you are having to hold very firm ones – maybe it's a question for you as to whether this relationship is the one that fulfils your greatest desires, the highest version of yourself. In the same way that if you are having them constantly crossed the same question would arise. That would be for you to decide what your highest self wants – not your current self of staying in a situation because it's easier but what your future self would want of you.

Just as a very obvious reminder that when we change our belief system, our thoughts, words and actions change and so do the results. Of course, the first step is always to understand what our beliefs are in the first place.

Human beings have 5 core primal yearnings that are to be seen, to be heard, to be understood, to be unshamed/healed and to be made welcome. This runs right from our first breath as observed by midwives right through to our final breath as noticed by those studying palliative care. I remember figuring out before I escaped the cult that on my deathbed it wasn't going to be about my accolades or the money I did or didn't have – it would be about having those around me who I loved, and for them to be there without wishing to fix me or change me – just to see me and hold space for my unique place in this world. When you hold that sense of privilege of being in a relationship with someone you will find that who you are at the very essence of your being will begin to change.

And as you arrive at this, consider you own behaviours and those you've been happy to accept in a partner - you will no doubt realise that at there are many that are no longer acceptable to you because they are no longer appropriate for who you are at the core of your being. When you change how you choose to see things, what you choose to believe, everything changes.

One of my personal favourite realisations is that you and I never chose this defunct model of relationships – we inherited it from the generations that went before us, it was subconsciously handed down and moulded by the individual experiences our parents had had, the choices they'd made and the societal norms of their day.

So, the first part of why we struggle in relationships is mindset, the second part is your personal fluff – so your opportunities for healing and growth – those gems that we can either choose to excavate or not. Those parts of you that are inconsistent with loving beautiful that present themselves – if they haven't already. For me this used to be around frustration, I'd very quickly get frustrated by certain situations that were directly linked to the trauma of my past. As I chose to address and heal my traumas my frustration and fears dropped away like butter melting off a knife. Learn the lessons your soul yearns to learn. It will change your life and the lives of those around you.

There is a common narrative that every generation is growing up worse than the one before – that the good times were those gone by, that's when people were brought up properly. That relationships are getting worse and worse and effectively the world is going to hell in a handbasket. But the truth is this current generation is the smartest most informed, enlightened and in touch with their inner truth generation we've ever had in the history of all of mankind. But the evolution of the human race is now requiring of us, to start having love-based relationship from a model that's based on love. Which we are already seeing popping up all around us already, it's happening and now you can be a part of it too. All the top researchers all over the world are all pointing to this being the way forward. No one on the cutting edge is coming up with the solution being obedience, doing what you are told, not breaking any rules. The research is coming up with profound respect, gentleness, kindness, treating your partner like they are sacred, with reverence, ensuring they feel seen, heard, understood, unshamed and that all of them is welcome. And knowing that when you fuckup and slip back, it's nothing to be ashamed of, it's just you having a human experience and whatever the reaction is to it it's an opportunity for you to mine that next gem.

Believe me, I'm bringing this to you because I know the repeated pain of getting relationships so painfully wrong. And I also know that putting these exact concepts that you've heard today into practice has let me to being happier than I ever believed was possible to sustain – even though I longed for it.

I, just like you, wasn't brought up in an environment where these new model concepts were practiced. I've had to learn them, just like you.

Love is holding the space for your partners greatness and deepest truths to unfold. This is the place at which you get to have a soulmate because you effectively do actually have a relationship with their soul. It's about providing a large space in which they get to be human, to make mistakes, to have learning experiences – I don't much like the word mistakes because I view them as learning experiences – they were all meant to happen to teach us something.

This is a place in which you can openly communicate about your struggles, own when you are being triggered and let your partner know what is going on so that there is understanding as to what is happening, because now you are in a safe environment in which you can do that and communicate that you are struggling with this thing right now, it's due to whatever happened in the past and you'd appreciate xyz support. Set them up to win by sharing what it is they can do to best support you rather than making the situation worse, if they so choose.

A love-based model of relationships is designed to:

Promote connection, acceptance, growth, authenticity, respect, love, psychological safety, happiness, mutuality, nurturing, acknowledging, intimacy of body and soul, conscious thinking, forgiveness, trust, safe vulnerability, fun, freedom.

It's a place where each person is seen, heard, understood, unshamed/healed and welcomed

Foster and reveal each other's natural skills and talents for direct benefit in the relationship and in the world at large.

Give an expanse in which the greatest version of each of you is able to unfold humanly and beautifully, in accordance with your own individual truth.

It encourages behaviours such as:

Trust, empathy, personal responsibility, kindness, generosity, caring, openness, compassion, communication, invitation, flexibility and being able to speak your truth.

Two partners choosing to enter into partnership agreeing that if you do this right, you are consciously choosing growth over conditions and that neither of you have any idea what the future may hold other than you are committed to honouring your individual and shared truths.

That I genuinely know I have no rights over you. That your life is yours to choose at every given step and that you are free to be who you are, and I'm interested in who you are, and I want to hold the space for who you are to show up. And... you do not need to be perfect.

There's this sense of walking along side you as we travel a journey together and that this journey is unfolding exactly as it's meant to, which may include our paths separating and that's ok and all part of it too. Because it would be foolish for anyone to try to stand in the way of how our paths are meant to unfold. Which would ultimately be to go back to the old belief system of ownership and control.

It's utterly fascinating to me that our fear of giving people full freedom of choice actually brings out the worst in both us and them. Our FEAR of giving them that. Not the actual doing of it. Which incidentally actually brings out the best in everyone. Because the default position of good well-meaning benevolent people when given freedom is to act beautifully, to bring out the very best in themselves and live their truth, not overnight turn into narcissistic maniacs.

No one runs into the arms of a prison warder. What I mean by that is it's not our job to have to keep law and order and insist that we must be obeyed in our relationships. It's exhausting to have to keep that role up. It's our job to afford our partners the dignity to choose their life. I, for one know that I have enough to do in my own life not to need to control what happens in my partners! I have enough work to do on healing my past, my generational traumas, learning new mindsets and harvesting the gems that life has in store for me. Beside me in my relationship it's my desire to have a fellow human who is invested in doing the same, without me needing to have a particular role in it.

People who love without fear, hold this wish that their partner gets to experience the richness of their life as it shows up for them. They don't want them to be denied life's rich experiences – positive or painful. And when I say painful, I mean that the other side of the coin is sometimes we want to stop them from having to learn a particular lesson but we aren't meant to, that's not our job.

In the new model there is such an effortlessness. All the hard, heavy emotions that accompany the old model are no longer present. The shame spirals, the breakdowns, the implications of these for years to come. Generations.

The new model isn't just slightly better, somewhat improved, really great. It's literally another whole stratosphere. It's still you, wearing the same clothes, brushing your teeth each day, making dinner, but your internal dialogue is a world away from where you are right now.

In the short term, you remain you, your needs are the same, however you now consciously choose your behaviour, if you get upset you know it's your doing and you take responsibility for both your upsets and your happiness. Someone may have done something that you perceive to have a certain meaning, but you now know that that is YOUR reaction to it. And you get to choose if you have those emotions or not.

Every day, all the time, in every communication – you are either injecting love or fear into your partner.

Why is it so important that we continue to change our relationships into one based on the model of love? So that we break cycles, we undo generational traumas and bring up our children in a new model of safe, loving relationships.

QUESTIONS:

And for the last time grab the workbook and journal a few notes on the following questions:

Consider the question – how would loving your partner as an exquisite and highly precious being improve your life?

As always remember – this isn't a time for judgement – just get curious and if the emotions want to flow let them but remind yourself you came here to heal and grow and move forward.

Now it's your time to start with a blank page and choose what is authentic for you in this very conscious creation of your own blueprint of a love-based model of relationships that works for you.

What does an authentic model of relationship look like for you at this stage in your life? Because remember this can well change as you progress through your journey of life.

What do you value in a relationship now?

What beliefs do you choose to live by in your relationships now?

What intentions do you hold for your relationships now?

What do you commit to doing in your relationships now?

What other areas would you like to study further in order to grown into the best version of yourself?

What were the most important concepts you took away from this program?

What learnings are you most committed to working into your life moving forwards?

Who are you committed to now being in your current and future relationships?

