

Paul O'Moshnow

Erich Fromm 'The Art of Loving'

So, the text. Obviously, not the whole book but, in fact, the beginning. As a prelude to "*The Art of Love or the Study of the Nature of Love.* "

Can love be considered as art? If the answer is yes, it requires knowledge and effort. Although, perhaps, love is a pleasant feeling to experience, which is a matter of chance; something that happens to a person if he is lucky. This little book is based on the first premise, although most people today undoubtedly and truly believe that the second one is the case.

Not that people consider love as something not important at all. They crave for it, they watch a countless number of films with happy and unhappy love stories, they listen to hundreds of stupid songs about love; however, hardly anyone really thinks that there is some need to learn how to love. This particular thought is based on several assumptions which both separately and in combination have a tendency to contribute to the preservation of love.

For the vast majority of people, the problem of love is **to be loved** , but not **to love** and, more importantly, to be able to love. Hence, the problem for them is that they want to be loved, that they crave to excite a feeling of love for themselves. They achieve

this goal in several ways. The first way, which is usually used by men, is to become successful, strong and rich as much as the social situation permits. Another way, preferred by women, is becoming attractive, which they achieve by making themselves fit, carefully choosing their wardrobe, etc. Other ways of becoming attractive, used by both men and women, are to develop good manners, the ability to conduct an interesting conversation, the willingness to come for help, modesty and unpretentiousness. Many ways to gain the ability to excite love for yourself are the same as the general ways that are used to become successful, to find useful friends and influential connections. Undoubtedly, for most people in our culture, the ability to excite love is, in fact, a combination of sympathy and sexual attractiveness.