

wanting to work on any resolutions or change. What I find happens when we direct the change inwards and work on ourselves is that we start noticing that the people around us and the world does NOT need to change anymore. It all seems perfect the way it is. When we speak of acceptance we must remember it cannot be forced. Acceptance can only be a natural feeling, not charged with anger or resentment. Acceptance is not expecting anything but simply accepting things as they are, not for what they will be once they are changed. Acceptance comes after we have emptied ourselves of all sadness, victimization, expectations and anger. Each emotions is an energy in motion and needs to be dealt with separately in its own way. Once that energy is released, the heart and chest have the space to be filled with joy lightness and love. This is when acceptance happens naturally, and as a result we also realize we are clear of expectations.

After several years of marriage, how can a couple save their love?

The marriage is a bond which requires constant work and dedication, to oneself as well as the other person in the couple. As Dr David Schnarsch (PhD), a clinical psychologist

and marriage counsellor, says 'nothing prepares you for marriage but marriage itself'. As we are all in constant change and growth the relationship needs constant work for it to also grow. All relationships have issues, and it is very healthy to always talk about the issues, face them early on, discuss them openly and find a solution together. There are many ways a couple can work on saving and re-igniting their love, I would personally say it always starts with working on the self then as a couple. It is very common for people to take each other for granted and we forget how precious

and fragile life is. Once we realize nothing remains the same we can start appreciating situations and people more. But all of that is difficult to realize if a person has bottled up anger or sadness within them as those are emotions we carry from our past. This emotional baggage always affects the relationship we have with others and most specifically our partners. We give ourselves the right to expect them to 'know us and care for us' the way we would or got used to be treated. What we need to keep reminding ourselves is that we all come from different backgrounds with different belief systems - those

belief systems are energies and that energy hangs around us like a filter through which we view the world and eventually judge it.

We grow up and mature, does love grow as well?

I believe love can grow if we mature in a healthy mental and emotional way. Otherwise love stays ruled by what we believe things should be and how people should be. That makes people turn away from friends and the outside world and into themselves because it becomes easier to be a victim rather than take responsibility for

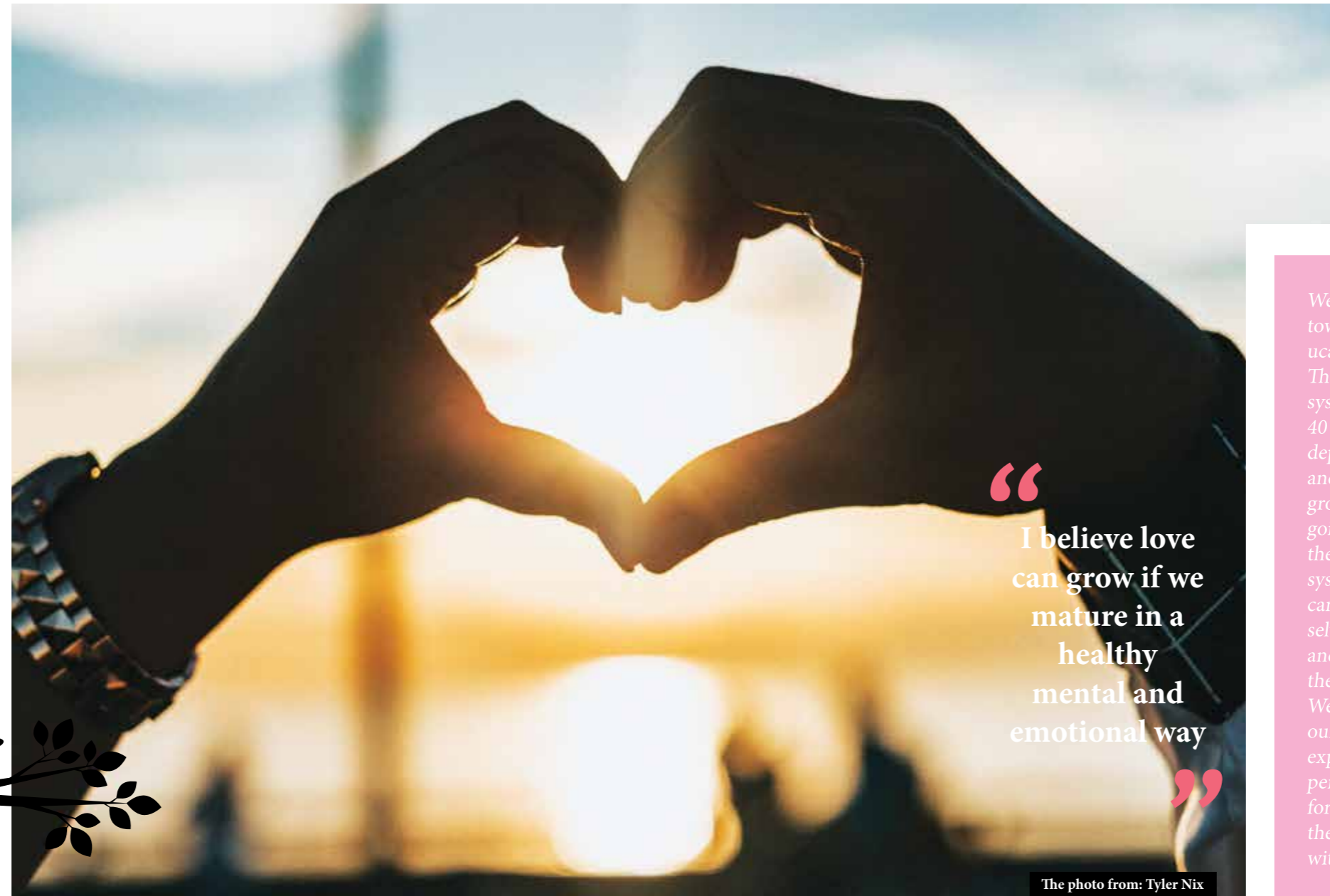
everything in their lives. They feel better within their comfort zone, but all growth happens outside our comfort zone. Once the individual realizes they have characteristics or expectations they want to change within themselves, they may seek a therapist or counsellor to help them go through it, then love can grow into beautiful bigger levels.

How can a couple avoid growing into different paths?

There aren't any guarantees, as people are different. It is a matter of being mindful of our lives, relationships, situations



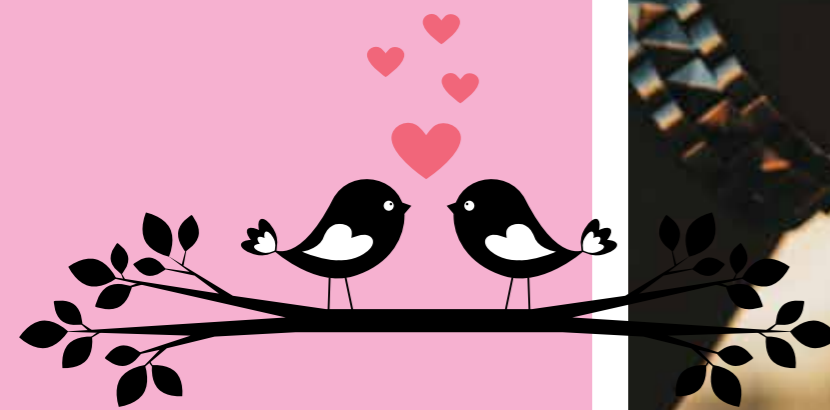
and ourselves. Living in the present moment and taking things for what they are, people for who they are without using our expectations to judge them helps us. Nobody can guarantee things and people stay the same or have the same path, but what we can do as a couple is keep an open line of communication, learn to express and talk things out with no fear or expectation. To voice ourselves and express our needs and desires. Being undefended in front of another who loves us attracts beautiful results because things happen when people want them to happen not because they are expected to happen.



“ I believe love can grow if we mature in a healthy mental and emotional way ”

The photo from: Tyler Nix

We each love in our own different ways. Our love towards others is based on our upbringing, education, expectations and cultural backgrounds. The way we treat others is a reflection of a belief system within ourselves. Whether it is at 20, 30, 40 or later on - at any age of life - the relationship depends on the individual's emotional stability and growth. We are all in constant change and growth, so imagine being with someone also going through constant change and growth, with their own emotional baggage, upbringing, belief system, expectations and backgrounds. The two can either clash or learn to look within themselves and ask what it is that they want to change and make the relationship work by working on themselves. That change always starts with us. We cannot change the world but we can change ourselves. By dealing with our emotions, releasing expectations and learning to 'accept' the other person as he or she may be and really loving them for who they are - as opposed to whom we want them to be - we can find peace and happiness within the relationship.





What are the holistic ingredients for a successful aging relationship?

Focusing on oneself, loving oneself, accepting oneself. Releasing all past sadness and anger issues, cleansing ourselves of 'filters' with which we grew up and view the world,

which distort the way we view the relationship we are in. We need to learn to stay in the moment and not live in the past or future. We need to accept the other for who they are not the image we have in our mind of what a perfect person or relationship should be. There are no rule books in nature or creation about how people or relationships should be, those rules are only set by society, religion and culture. Once we accept that each one of us is special and unique and not bound by any rules of how to 'be', we are free to love with no expectations. One of the lines most people use around the world is 'oh nobody is perfect' - yet all of us are perfect and that's what we need to learn to see in order to simply love ourselves and the other in order to find happiness.

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