

Union between a man and woman happens at three levels. From the gross (physical), to the subtle (mental) to the ethereal(soul connection). Often in life, we settle for one of these unions. Union at all the three levels is found only in the rarest of rare cases. Most common is the physical union. It mainly depends on the hormone push which wears off as familiarity increases. Novelty recharges the hormone rush. That is why even couples who are in a comfortable and a committed relationship, indulge in the occasional amorous escapade. Physical union always demands novelty and variety.

Next comes the mental union. Here the man and a woman may share great intellectual and mental affinity. In rare cases, this can be found together with the physical affinity. In such cases, usually there is harmony throughout life. In any case, the physical relationship become less important at the later stage of life and if this mental union is present, then the relationship becomes abiding. However, affinity does not mean that we have to agree each other on everything but rather a total acceptance of the differences; not only acceptance, even enjoyment of the differences.

And finally, soul connection. This is very difficult to put into words. The physical element could be there or could be absent, the mental union may be there, may not be there - but there is a distinct union at a much deeper level. Something deeper than the body and mind connects you to that human being, a bond

beyond selfishness and possession. A relationship in which there is more giving than taking. Expressions like platonic love are too inadequate to express it.

But the tragedy of modern marriages is that there are plenty of couples who share no physical, mental or soul connection. But still they are trapped in such cold, love-less relationships because it gives "security" or probably "for the kids".

Explore the dynamics of love in the essay THE INNER EMPTINESS from my book AN ODYSSEY OF THE MIND – Journeys in the Modern Mindscape.