Reflection 1

From Chapter 1, "Clarity: Give Love Words" p. 4-5

The word "love" is most often defined as a noun, yet all the more astute theorists of love acknowledge that we would all love better if we used it as a verb. I spent years searching for a meaningful definition of the word "love," and was deeply relieved when I found one in psychiatrist M. Scott Peck's classic self-help book The Road Less Traveled, first published in 1978. Echoing the work of Erich Fromm, he defines love as "the will to extend one's self for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth." Explaining further, he continues: "Love is as love does. Love is an act of will-namely, both an intention and an action. Will also implies choice. We do not have to love. We choose to love." Since the choice must be made to nurture growth, this definition counters the more widely accepted assumption that we love instinctually. Everyone who has witnessed the growth process of a child from the moment of birth on sees clearly that before language is known, before the identity of caretakers is recognized, babies respond to affectionate care. Usually they respond with sounds or looks of pleasure. As they grow older they respond to affectionate care by giving affection, cooing at the sight of a welcomed caretaker. Affection is only one ingredient of love. To truly love we must learn to mix various ingredients-care, affection, recognition, respect, commitment, and trust, as well as honest and open communication. Learning faulty definitions of love when we are quite young makes it difficult to be loving as we grow older.

Reflection Assignment: In your journal, give an example of a person in your life that **exemplified hooks' definition of love.** How did they do it? What does this person's example mean with respect to your work this year and beyond?

Bonus Vocabulary Word - **Cathect (v), Cathexis (n)** - investing emotion or feeling in something or someone; infatuation; attachment; not the same as love, though people get it twisted, right?