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3 Undeniable truths about your first love

3 hours ago



by Bethany Ramos

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Like it or not, your first love changed you forever

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Catch anyone in an honest moment, and they'll tell you that their first love was unforgettable. No matter what life stage you are in, that familiar song playing on the

radio, the smell of that old perfume or memories from that perfect summer when you were 18 can still catch you off-guard. Cheesy love songs are written about it for a reason.

My first love made a huge impression on me. I was 18, and he was 20. We were very much in love, but I broke it off because I felt like I had to date and experience the world. I was just too young.

I was right, but that didn't make it easy. I ended it and bawled my eyes out for weeks afterward. Typical first heartbreak. Now I'm fortunate enough to be happily married to my best friend from high school, and we have two kids. But that doesn't mean I've forgotten my first love.

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I'm not the only one. Cherilynn Veland, LCSW, MSW, psychotherapist and author, shares her own tale of young heartbreak, "I can still remember the heartbreak of my first love. His name was Dan. He had long black hair, wore Metallica T-shirts and tight black jeans. I loved him. I mean, I really loved him. I am 45, and I have never been more brokenhearted than that moment when Dan dumped me, standing there on my front lawn only a few months after I started back to college."

Why is it so special? Why does it make such an impression on the heart?

1. It only happens once

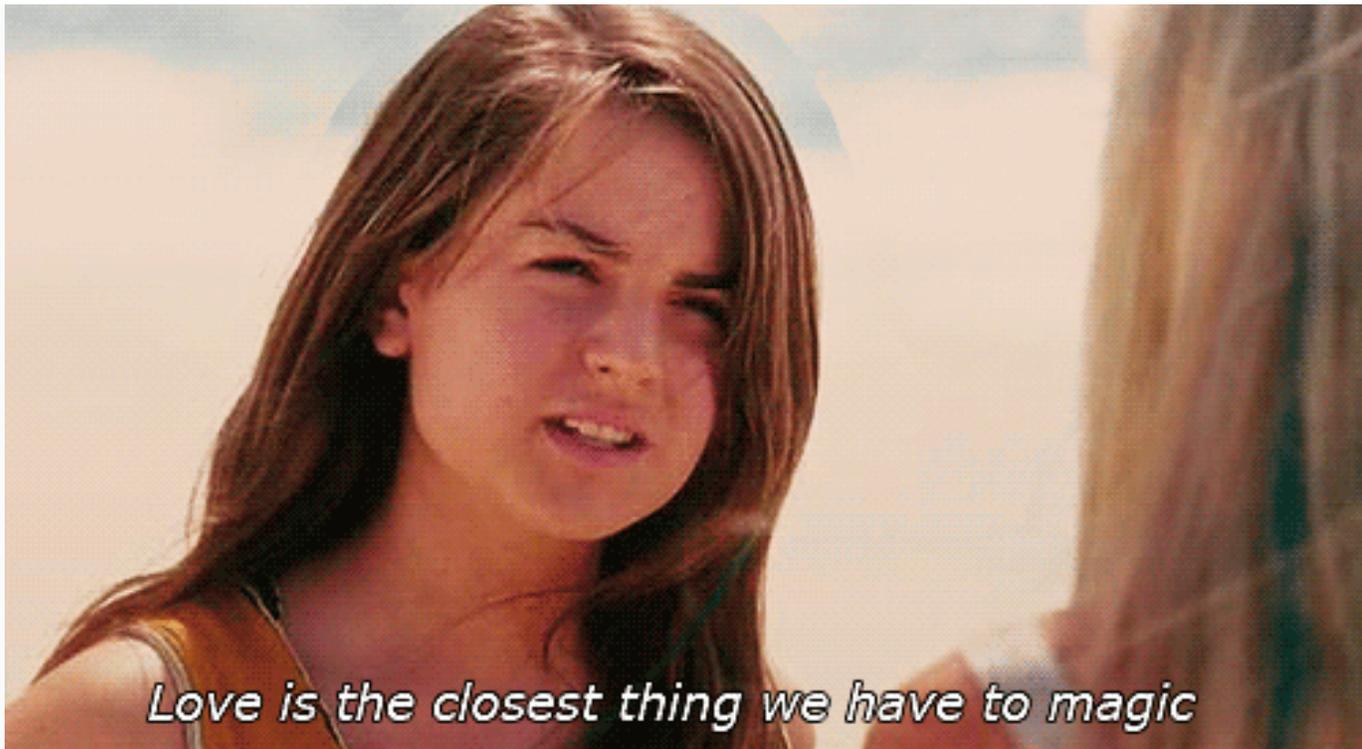


Image: giphy.com

After months of soul-searching, my non-expert theory is this: First love will always be special because it is doomed from the start.

April Masini of AskApril.com, relationship expert and author of four relationship advice books, explains, "First love is special because it's a first. Like most firsts, it will hold a place in your personal history. It marks the beginning of your articulation of romantic feelings. To be able to feel and show love is a big deal. Love is a catalyst for war, business and relationships. It shouldn't be underestimated!"

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Veland adds, "Rarely does first love survive more than a short time because it usually happens in our teens or very early in adulthood. [But] that is what makes first love so special. It is the innocence with which we go into the relationship. We don't bring the baggage of past experiences with us. We haven't been crushed yet, so we don't bring those negative experiences into the relationship."

2. You can't fight the feeling



Image: giphy.com

Once undeniable chemistry kicks in, you may be helpless against the pull of first love. "All relationships start with lust," says Dr. Ralph Diner, a psychologist in Los Angeles. "It's all about the chemistry and nature's way of assuring the propagation of mankind. Pheromones get it started; they are the secret ingredient in attraction. Oxytocin, known as the hormone of love, is the glue of love and Mother Nature is the culprit behind the affair. If pheromones are the secret ingredient in attraction of love and infatuation, oxytocin is the glue of the bonding. It's the couples' shared history and friendship that are the [keys to relationship longevity](#) and making it to that fiftieth anniversary."

Emotionally, first love magnetism is also inescapable, according to Diana Raab, Ph.D., contributor to Psychology Today and The Huffington Post, "First loves are alluring because their magic defies duplication. Before our first love, our hearts are a blank slate. Afterwards, they are inscribed with great memories, and those feelings are not easily purged."

3. It changes you forever



Image: giphy.com

With marriage and kids under my belt, I have a greater respect for firsts. For most of us, your first love is the person you leave behind for a hundred different reasons, yet they shape how you view love for the rest of your life. For those who marry their first love, long-lasting love is possible if it evolves and changes to support the relationship, as Dr. Diner notes. My husband is an example of someone who married his first love unsuccessfully and was divorced just a few years later from his high school sweetheart.

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Tina B. Tessina, Ph.D., (aka "Dr. Romance") psychotherapist and [author of *Love Styles: How to Celebrate Your Differences*](#), agrees, "First love sets the pattern for all loves to follow. We always thrill to physical looks that are similar to the first love, even when we wind up in a better relationship with someone who looks different."

Dr. Jane Greer, New York-based marriage and sex therapist, sums it up, "Everyone [remembers their first love](#), so everyone can relate to this. As all these movies show, it doesn't always end well... The challenge is to hold on to the thrill and excitement that the

romance brought you, and remember how you experienced yourself come alive with this first intimacy."

Fleeting first love is special because you only get it once, whether you stay together or not. It's the first chapter of your story that reminds you of who you were at a time when you were young and innocent. You were loved. You mattered to someone, and as Dr. Greer points out, that's reason enough to celebrate.

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