

## **Love Begins With Me – Essay For Global Love Day 2018 By Hilary Canto, Greece/UK**

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Within me is a spark of knowledge that connects me with the greatest love of all, our creators love. I live as one with humanity on a beautiful planet within a great universe of life, all part of that same creators love, interconnected and interdependent.

I am born into a world of struggle where I learn to navigate my way through life, its ups and downs, its twists and turns, forever seeking my relationship with love and how to understand and be that love.

Sometimes the love within me gets hidden away and forgotten with life's challenges and difficulties, until something or someone reignites the spark. Then I look at myself again and how I love myself, others, and everything in my life.

If I do not love myself first, accept myself and forgive myself it can be hard to love another unconditionally, for I may have needs I want fulfilled which clouds how I give and receive love. If I do not accept and forgive another with understanding and compassion, I also deny love for myself, sacrificing my love and not fulfilling the unconditional love within myself. The greatest love within me requires a journey into myself, to understand and respect who I am, the diversity of life around me and my planet.

The journey where "Love Begins With Me" allows me to become the living spark of love of my creator. My unconditional love grows stronger and brighter as I discover who I am, as I allow love for myself, and as I share the universal bond of love out into the world, embracing its diversity of life through compassionate actions, loving words, caring thoughts, respect and appreciation for all of humanity, life on my planet and in my greater universe.

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When a friend, family member, community, nation or the whole world is troubled and fraught with fear and danger, inside me is the spark of love that never dies. It listens, watches, protects, discerns, gives me strength, wisdom and supports me unconditionally to reach out to those in need with empathy, sympathy, compassion and tolerance, inspiring me to help in whatever way I can.

With love flowing freely from myself to others in this way, hearts unite in love which reaches out to my community, my nation, my global world and my universe.

If I take just one step each day to think about my feelings, my thoughts and what I am about to say or do in any situation, to see if it is from a loving intention or not, I can grow ever deeper and stronger with unconditional love and shine my love to everyone and everything outside of me.

From within, where love begins with me, I am one with all humanity, life upon this planet and in the greater universe. I co-create a loving world where together we make a difference to live freely in unconditional love and peace.