

No Strings Attached

How important is it to offer our love, especially to those closest to us, with no strings attached?

Wiktionary tells us that the origin of the expression *no strings attached* may go back to ancient times when documents were written on parchment that were rolled up and secured with a string. The *Babylonian Talmud* in *Tractate Bava Metzia* tells of a man who gives his wife a bill of divorce on such a parchment, but holds onto the string so that he can snatch it back, should he choose to do so. The divorce, therefore, is not considered valid since he will not give it freely.

Similarly, love, forgiveness or friendship that is given with strings and conditions attached are a sham and not valid, since they can be snatched back at any time.

An unknown author beautifully portrays the possibilities of no-strings-attached love in this heartfelt story entitled *The Rock*:

As she grew older, her teenage daughter became increasingly rebellious. It culminated late one night when the police arrested her daughter for drunk driving. Mom had to go to the police station to pick her up.

They didn't speak until the next afternoon. Mom broke the tension by giving her a small gift-wrapped box. Her daughter nonchalantly opened it and found a little rock inside.



She rolled her eyes and said, "Cute, Mom, what's this for?"

"Read the card," Mom instructed.

Her daughter took the card out of the envelope and read it. Tears started to trickle down her cheeks. She got up and lovingly hugged her mother as the card fell to the floor.

On the card were these words: "This rock is more than 200,000,000 years old. That is how long it will take before I give up on you."

This mother is not saying, "I will love you IF ...". Instead, she says that she will love her daughter forever and nothing can change that. No strings attached.

I'm proud to say that our associates have learned to love like that, and it shows in the attention and service provided to our patients and residents.

The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith (1 Timothy 1:5 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter