



## *What Love Is*

It was a busy morning, approximately 8:30 a.m., when an elderly gentleman, in his 80's, arrived in the doctor's office to have stitches removed from his thumb. He stated that he was in a hurry as he had an appointment at 9 a.m., so the nurse took his vital signs and had him take a seat, knowing it would be over an hour before someone would be able to see him. She saw him looking at his watch and decided, since she was not busy with another patient, that she would evaluate his wound.

On examination, it was well healed, so the nurse talked to one of the doctors, got the needed supplies to remove his sutures and redress his wound. While taking care of his wound, she began to engage him in conversation. She asked him if he had another doctor's appointment this morning, as he was in such a hurry. The gentleman told her no, that he needed to go to the nursing home to eat breakfast with his wife.

The nurse then inquired as to her health. He told her that his wife had been there for awhile and that she was a victim of Alzheimer's disease. As they talked, the nurse asked if his wife would be upset if he was a bit late. He replied that she no longer knew who he was, that she had not recognized him in five years now.

The nurse was surprised, and asked him, "And you still go every morning, even though she doesn't know who you are?"

He smiled as he patted her hand and said, "She doesn't know me, but I still know who she is."

The nurse had to hold back tears as he left. She had goose bumps on her arm, and she thought, "That is the kind of love I want in my life."

There are many ways to define love, but a bedrock principle of it is this: True love is an acceptance of all that is, has been, will be and will not be.

--Beecher Hunter