

Local Love Lady Leaves 'Em Hugging

A wise man once told Mary Calder she should never try to sell anything over the phone. Her warm, lively face and her genuine charm need to be experienced in person.

It's true.

What Mary Calder of Glendale is selling these days is "love." It's not the sort of love French courtesans sold, but a more universal, brotherly kind of love.

She sells her product in two ways. She hosts and produces a cable television talk show, "Lovers," seen locally on Group W Cable Fridays at 4 p.m.

And she hugs, having become quite an expert these past few years.

"It is said that you need twelve hugs a day to grow," she explained. "Four to stay alive, eight to mature, but twelve to grow."

A good hug, according to Calder involves the touching of the area directly below the chest, the solar plexus. She also believes a genuine hug involves an exchange of energy between the two people, via the solar plexus.

"The solar plexus is the center of receptivity in a person who's in an open-armed, pre-hug position," she said. The opposite position, crossed arms and/or legs, indicates a lack of desire on the person to receive or to give love.

Thus, good lovers are always good huggers, according to Calder.

Unfortunately, in our society, we always place romantic values on hugs," she went on. Calder's ideal has men and women, men and men, and women and women all hugging each other more frequently.

"To hug is to literally open yourself up to others," said Calder. "Hugging is an exchange of energy between two people that is essential for us as human beings."

Here are some facts about hugging Mary Calder has compiled:

- Hugging increases bust size for women.

- Short people can develop back troubles if they hug too many people

'Hugging is an exchange of energy between two people that is essential for human beings.'

Story by Ginnie Westmoreland • Photo by J.B. Lester



FULL OF EXCITEMENT — Mary Calder believes that all people can share their energy and love by hugging.

too enthusiastically (Mary's under 5'3").

- The positive energy exchange has the opposite effect if a person is hugged who doesn't want to be hugged. (Fortunately, everybody likes to be hugged sometimes).

- According to Leo Buscaglia, Mary's mentor and author of "Living, Loving & Learning," hugging increases the hemoglobin count in most people.

Calder's style and message have often been compared to Buscaglia. "The Love Doctor" also brings his message to the people via public television.

Calder has defined different types of huggers: "The Patter" — very parental, likes to "burp" his hugged ones on the back. "The Bear Hugger" — this is usually a large man who enjoys overpowering smaller people and nearly suffocating some in the process. "Slide Hugger" — a person who sneaks up from the side and usually only uses one arm.

Calder's bread and butter, however, is not hugging. It's her television show, which has been sent to several different cable companies throughout the area.

The show has a Phil Donahue-type of format. She interviews a guest expert in some field, then monitors questions from a live studio audience.

Some of the topics covered since the show started in March, 1983 include older women/younger men, black/white love, love and laughter, sibling love, and astrology and love.

"I get to meet all the people I want to meet, read all the books I want to read. ...I love doing this show!" she said of her role as producer/host of this distinctive television program.

Calder said she hopes the show is helping viewers understand more about love. "No one taught us to love." It's one reason she felt a show about lovers was needed.

How did Mary Calder, a housewife from Glendale, become a hug expert and the host of her own television show?

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