



Moby | DJ, PRODUCER & PHOTOGRAPHER

One of the reasons why music in particular is so ubiquitous and so universal with love is that it reaches people on a very profound emotional level. Often times, I feel like music can reach people on an almost softer, deeper, and more vulnerable level than people might normally experience on a day to day basis. I think to understand music's ability to foster love and forgiveness, it sometimes helps to look at their opposites. To me, the opposite of love isn't necessarily hate. The opposite of love is judgment, and the opposite of forgiveness is bitterness and resentment.

I feel like music in particular can open people up to a more honest, vulnerable, softer side, which is really where love and forgiveness arise. A theory I have about human emotion, is that in a very broad sense, there are two emotional states that human beings have – there's a state of defensiveness and a state of openness. You could use other adjectives – you could say there's hard and there's soft and there's defensive and there's vulnerable. I think that love and forgiveness, they come from that place of openness, softness, and vulnerability. The harder emotional states; anger, bitterness, defensiveness, and cynicism are usually masks for the softer states. My experience is that for the majority of people, myself included, it's really easy to succumb to the harder emotional states – the anger, defence, bitterness, without looking at what's underneath.

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I think that forgiveness – really true forgiveness – needs to come from the softer emotions that lie under the hard emotions, but most of us don't have much training in looking behind the harder emotions. A lot of our culture reinforces these harder emotions. We have a culture that glorifies anger, bitterness, and retribution. One thing that art and music can do is enable people to access these softer emotional states from where true love and forgiveness arise.

Forgiveness can really only be truly meaningful with self-awareness. Forgiveness should not involve judgement or retribution or bitterness. When I'm forgiving of someone, it's because I'm looking at them and I'm hopefully filled with a true sense of compassion. I don't see them as a completely separate other being, I see them as being a human similar to me and whatever that person has done, I see that I have probably done similar things as well. I can see that when I've done bad things it's usually because I've been insecure or afraid. I can look at that other person and say, "Oh, they're insecure and afraid as well", and create a much deeper sense of forgiveness.