



## **Liquid Love: The Fragility of Relationships**

*Liquid love.* It's possible that you have heard about this interesting concept explained by sociologist Zygmunt Bauman who uses this poetic but distressing metaphor to convey the reality that seems to come up rather frequently nowadays: the fragility of relationships.

It's not all that surprising that relationships have become more fleeting, given the broader social tendency toward one-time consumerism and the quest for satisfaction of our momentary needs.

We are not just talking about interpersonal relationships, but also the relationship that we establish with ourselves, what Bauman himself called “the liquidity of self-love.”

For example, are you aware that in order to love another person in a mature way, you must start by loving yourself? This presents a constant problem in our society because many of us do not have a solid foundation of self-love.

Let's dig deeper into this interesting concept.

### **Liquid love and individuality**

At times, establishing a strong, committed relationship is not such an easy thing for most people. Fear and immaturity can make it impossible to imagine an authentic, solid relationship, stable and with future prospects.

Bauman himself explains to us that many relationships today are “connections” more than “relationships.” We are no longer talking about just the predominance of new technology and social networks; this concept goes a bit beyond all that. It is something that seems distressing, no doubt about it. We live in a dynamic world where the real sometimes mixes with the virtual, a liquid modernity where many things seem to slip right through our fingers.

We establish unstable relationships because our society in turn seems to sing the praises of more flexible human relationships. And no, we are not just talking about relationships with a partner; let's also think about the education of the young ones.

We offer them countless toys and gadgets, we establish a game of blackmail where we reward them with a new gift if they pass a test. We let them fall into a consumer society with lacking values, almost without meaning to, creating individuals who seem to become tyrants, who do not recognize where the limits lie, and who, in some way, also end up offering conditional, fleeting love.

Their friendships are born on social networks, and to put an end to one of these that no longer interests them, they need do nothing more than click the “block or report” button on that person's profile.

## The importance of self-love in fighting “liquid love”

People are not consumer products, nor do we have a planned obsolescence like any electrical appliance. We think, we feel, and we love. But we must always start with ourselves, seeing ourselves as people who deserve to be loved.

A liquid love always leaves us with an empty heart, and that is something that nobody wants. The consumer always remains hungry and deeply unsatisfied. What is the point of living with such great uncertainty?

Sometimes, behind a liquid love is personal insecurity. Not seeing ourselves as capable of maintaining a relationship that is strong enough to prosper, strong enough to build a future with the other person. Insecurity is a reflection of self-esteem that has not developed adequately, and that causes us to seek only occasional satisfaction in a relationship from which we will later resign. Basically, any and every commitment can reveal our lack of suitability, our immaturity.

Nothing is sure in this life and we are all fumbling about in the fog. If I start to trust myself, I will slowly start moving forward with more security, banking on stability. Through authentic commitment to myself and to the people around me.

Bauman tells us that in order to be happy, we must take into account two essential values: freedom and security. Security without freedom is slavery, but freedom without security is total chaos. We all need both dimensions in order to find balance in our lives.

