

*There is hunger for ordinary bread, and there is hunger for love, for kindness, for thoughtfulness; and this is the great poverty that makes people suffer so much.*

– Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Our modern civilization is so physically oriented that when we hear the word hunger, we immediately think of vitamins and minerals and amino acids. It seldom occurs to us that just as the body develops problems when it does not get adequate food, the person who is deprived of love – or worse, who finds it difficult to love – becomes subject to problems every bit as serious.

This doesn't mean just emotional problems, which of course are included. More and more evidence indicates that lack of love not only leads to loneliness, despair, and resentment, but also contributes to the deterioration of physical health.

When spiritual figures like Mother Teresa talk about our need to love and to be loved, the need is not metaphorical. She is not talking about some vague spirituality; she is talking about good nutrition. Resentment, hostility, alienation, and selfishness are deficiency diseases. You can have all the essential amino acids, vitamins, and minerals known and unknown but if you cannot love, you are not likely to remain in good health.

