

Like

To like is to find congenial, to enjoy the company of. To like is different from to love. 'I like Chuck, cause it's always fun to play doubles with him, and then go down the road for a couple of beers, ' is very different from 'I love my wife because we have sweated out two decades together, and it's looking better all the time.' What is the difference? My interface with Chuck is tangential; we share a number of enjoyments, and may, in some cases, 'get one another's back.' But if fate pulls the plug on Chuck, I keep on going, find another tennis partner, and find someone else to have a beer with. All the pleasures Chuck and I have had together are still there, a foundation for me. I like/liked Chuck.

Examples

1

I like Rick because we can tease each other. Why this is true is hard to answer. It's like the question why friendship forms between two people. The answer is elusive. I am twenty years older than Rick, and we seem able to amuse ourselves with jokes about how young I'm getting and how old he's getting. He now gets a senior citizen rate on the bus, and I razz him about that. I prance around the track to keep up with my wife, who is thirty years my junior, and he razzes me about that. The razzing works, both ways. I find this rare. I share viewpoints with many of my friends, I enjoy the same things many other people do. But with most of my friends razzing comes dangerously close to home truths, and is edgy. I mean, X is really *not* amused at the fact that he is slowing down and taking on love handles.

2

When I studied at the University of Indiana I majored in Classics. I had good teachers, but became especially acquainted with a Classics faculty member who was not of my teachers. Aubrey Dillard taught me more than any of those teachers. He was a loner, a passionate scholar (of Strabo and the Greek geographers), and a tenacious student of the flora of Brown County State Park. Together we walked from one end to another of that park. We talked about the history of geography, the phalanges on the leaf of the oakwort, and the beauties of scholarship. We were drawn to one another in a quiet delight in certain complexities of the knowable universe.