# Psychological Insights into Unrequited Crushes on Unavailable Individuals



A 50-year-old gay man in a long-term relationship has expressed distress over developing deep feelings for a married, straight male colleague who is ten years his junior. This man has acknowledged this pattern has repeated throughout his life, starting from his school days at age 14. Philippa Perry, in her response, suggests exploring the psychological roots of these intense crushes on unavailable people. She describes the concept of “limerence,” a term coined by Dorothy Tennov in 1979, which refers to obsessive infatuations that are distinct from simple sexual desire and can be recurring. Perry hypothesizes that these feelings may stem from unresolved issues in the man's infancy or childhood, potentially related to attachment patterns. She recommends consulting a therapist to discuss these feelings openly, as secrecy might cause the obsession to persist. Perry emphasizes creating a personal narrative to separate oneself from these obsessive thoughts and manage them effectively, turning them into manageable experiences rather than overwhelming ones.