

It would be fair to say that the subject of relationships is of enormous significance as far as our personal growth and expansion as a human being. I have been doing a meditation on relationships for some months now and have to say that I have most definitely reached a place of deeper awareness about my relationships with others and how valuable they are to me.

Are you someone that from time to time finds that most of your relationships with others are oftentimes challenging? There is no doubt our interaction with each other certainly helps us define our own personal preferences and therefore becomes the foundation of our individual expansion.

Many years ago, I used to believe that only pleasing relationships had value and I now realise that nothing could be further from the truth. The relationships we have with those who push our buttons and with those we feel most uncomfortable with, are also contributing significantly to our growth and understanding of who we are as individuals - way more than we realise. They are helping us define the aspects of relating and of ourselves, that are wanted and unwanted, that feel good and that don't feel good.

There is no denying that the benefits from contrasting differences that are apparent within our relationships are the cornerstone of deeper understanding and solution, resulting in an improved situation (if we allow it).

For me, when I can make peace with those who differ in desire and belief and behaviours from my own idea of what is appropriate or not, then I stop perpetuating what I consider to be wrong. Instead I am aligning with the solution side of the equation. I become an allower.

I am reminded in my meditative process that when it seems like others have the power to negatively affect my experience, it is never true. It is only ever my response to them that has the power to pinch me off from the naturally good-feeling person I am.

Once any of us can clearly understand this and grasp it, then we intuitively bless each and every experience, all human encounters, and especially human relationships, for we finally see them as constructive, in the highest sense.

The other side of this coin is where there is a belief that our happiness depends on the response of another. It is that approval 'thing' we develop as a

child trying to win over our parents/teachers and feeling happy when we receive the pat on the head for being a good boy or girl. We glow with happiness! Of course, when others are pleased by our behaviour it feels good! Sadly though, if our behaviour is influenced by the desire to keep another person happy we have lost our connection to who we are.

When any of us are feeling discomfort from seeing other people in a place of neediness, distress or torment and from that place of discomfort try and make right or fix the situation, there is no lasting value. Firstly, we are unlikely to be heard because if the other person is so focussed on the unpleasant details of their current situation then they will not even be able to catch a glimpse of what we are trying to offer and secondly, we are amplifying the situation by feeding the energy around it.

One of the most significant understandings I have come to fully feel and know is being able to discern what is my business and what is not. The same can be said for when others lash out at me in anger with words or some other sort of action, simply put, their battle is not with me but with themselves. The opinions that anyone has regarding others has far more to do with how they are feeling in any given moment. It is nothing to do with me. If we can release all concern about how others feel about us, and focus only on how we feel about them, then we will find an abiding happiness.

At our core, we are all more alike than different, we all want to feel good, to be of value, to feel progress, to be engaged with life, to learn new things and to feel love. Yet so many of us are looking for love in all the wrong places.

At the end of the day the best relationship we can ever have is the one with Ourselves so we can come to know Who We Really Are. Then it is certain that we will find the splendour and richness of every relationship that we desire.

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