

Quality Relationship Connections

Increasingly, people have less and less connection with others and are living overly isolated lives. The Washington Post recently reported that a quarter of Americans say they have no one with whom they can discuss personal troubles, more than double the number who were similarly isolated in 1985. We have closer connections with our Blackberry or iPod than we do with many of our friends or lovers. Our society, for all of its technological and scientific advances, has helped foster a culture of people who are less and less connected with one another and with themselves. I so often find, working as a Life & Health Coach, that many people are more and more isolated, and feel disconnected from one another.

It doesn't matter how physically attractive you are – within your nature you have the need to be with and share with others. The problem is, many people try to fill their need for relatedness by external means, and finding ways to create a false connection (addictions, many acquaintances, unstable friendships, over-isolation, over-work). Often, people don't take the time to get to know others past the superficial level. However, as you get to know people and experience who they are on the inside, you have a real opportunity to enjoy life in ways you had not experienced before.

In my work as a coach, I find that many of my clients, especially younger people, just assume that life is always going to be great, and that the excitement will continue forever. One day, though, you wake up, and your previously fulfilling behaviors and friendships are not quite as fulfilling as before. So you either stop these behaviors, or you do them more and more just to get the same high you had initially. When your life is lacking in quality relationships, you are more prone to find other ways to feel temporarily fulfilled (overworking, oversex, denial, poor diets, and other addictions). Life isn't just about having the next best thing. You need quality in your life. The more you can create connectedness with yourself, by doing things that you truly enjoy, and the more you can truly connect with quality people, the better your life becomes.

I am not suggesting that you need a committed relationship to be happy. I think you should trust what works for you, and do what makes you really feel alive and inspired. If that is an open relationship or even if it means being single and developing really great friendships, so be it. A lot of us, though, never stop long enough to get to know one another better, or we are very quick to judge. If someone isn't as hot bodied as you like, you may dismiss him/her or never give them a chance. However, not everyone you meet has to be a potential sex partner or significant other. There is more to a person than their outside, you really cant judge a book by it's cover. I've met many "attractive" people who have the emotional maturity of a teenager. Who is to say that the "average" looking person who flirts with you at the party couldn't end up being a new friend, or could one day introduce you to your next boyfriend/girlfriend or help you find your next job.

Relationships are the basis for connectedness and unity. How we "relate" with one another says a lot about how we truly relate to ourselves and the world around us. When relationships and friendships are handled well, they bring us great joy, and help us feel more fully alive. But when they are handled ineffectively, we can feel incredible pain, upset, or conflict.

You are alive because two people came together, had sex, and gave birth to you. What happened after you came out, on the other hand, is another story. You learned at an early age how to relate to the world, based on the way your parents and other influential people in your life related to you and to each other. This article is in no way a means of blaming it all on our parents. They did what they did, good or bad. Regardless, you are in control of the actions you take in your life, and you have the ability to examine your relationships, and determine if you feel supported and cared for, or if you feel undervalued and ignored.

I find that many people, regardless of sexual orientation, go thru life being unaware of how their friends and lovers affect them. Many want relationships to just be “handled”, and don’t want to have to put effort into it. This isn’t effective, though. If you don’t have to work at something, you’d really have no sense of appreciation for it. No one said it would be easy. Ultimately, the goal for every human being is to live a life you enjoy and that makes you happy. And since you can’t do it alone, it makes sense to take actions to create and reinforce relationships that will keep us on track.

So take a moment to reflect on the status of your relationships, romantic and plutonic. Do you feel that you are supported, and that your friends are really there for you, through thick and thin? Or do you sense that there is always an underlying jealousy, or some type conflict that seems to linger. If you meet that hot guy at a party, is your friend happy for you, or jealous and makes snide remarks? When you come home from a long day at work, and need some extra attention, does your significant other listen to you and give support, or is he/she too wrapped up in their own drama to be full present to you and your life?

You have to give thought to where your life is now. If you are doing well, then keep up the good work, continue to grow and learn and nurture your relationships. If your friends are all a mess and don’t have their crap together, then make a plan to get new support people. Find a good life coach to help you if you need extra guidance.

And lastly, realize that we are all in this together. The next time you meet someone, stop for just a moment to see past their external features, and actually begin to notice who they are - living, breathing, feeling and thinking people. Again, what you give out is what you get back. Just because someone isn’t your type doesn’t mean you have to be rude (or allow yourself to be treated rudely). Put yourself in his shoes – how would you feel if you were he? What goes around comes around. If you want to be treated with respect, if you want to be attractive to others, and if you want validation, think about giving a little more to others. We have to stop judging each other and only seeing what looks good on the outside. One day we all get older, and looks fade. So when you are 70 and your six pack is gone, will you be alone sipping your bottle of ensure and taking a vicodin? Or will you have taken time to develop deeper, lasting friendships and relationships. The point is, we are all trying to get through life and create happiness, whatever that means to us. So, keep moving forward, and be more supportive to yourself and to others in your life. If we can’t be there for each other, who else will be?

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If you are interested in learning more about life coaching, and how to take steps to improve your life, please contact Robert.

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