

What am I doing with YOU, anyway?

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By Neva Howell

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Why do we choose the relationships we choose?

Relationship deja vu . . . Do you ever feel like you married your mother? Your father? Your own dark side? Does it feel like deja vu all over again, when you see your Grandmother's stern glare or your brother's bullying stance, overlay the face of your partner? Maybe you don't recognize those faces from your past yet. Maybe you are only aware that no one on earth (with the exception of members of your immediate family) can push your emotional hot buttons quite as quickly or intensely as your most intimate relationship.

If you look closely, and you are able to short-circuit the emotional roller-coaster of action-reaction long enough, you will probably see another face pop out, just like one of those 3-D pictures. The truth, as I see it, is that our most intimate relationships are those that most closely mirror either our own most challenging aspects of personality (the parts of ourselves that we try not to own), and/or the aspects of one or more of our core family group. We unconsciously choose these mirrors because our Soul knows that these unresolved issues from our past are the very issues that keep us from progressing and growing.

Our closest relationships offer us wonderful opportunities for spiritual growth, sharing, learning and healing the past. When two people come together with spiritual awareness that enables them to fully know and expect that each will trigger the other into looking at challenges that impede growth and acceleration, and when each is fully committed to healing themselves, the relationship can be a catalyst for transformation in both. On the other hand, if the ego maintains control, relationships deteriorate into battles of will which can distract both people from their spiritual path for years, or even for life.

Intimate relationships, in particular those involving a commitment of marriage, require a great deal of personal honesty to work to the highest potential. Since it is difficult for many of us to completely trust another human being, to the extent that we can allow ourselves to be completely vulnerable, the relationship becomes a symbol of our relationship to God. I believe that the extent to which we can

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merge with another is an exact indication of the extent to which we can merge with God. In developing trust, respect, honor, and faith with another human being, we are working out a deeper relationship with Godforce.

If you can consider the idea that relationships are mirrors, and that part of the responsibility of being in one is to clear and heal past hurts, release limiting beliefs based on past experience, and open the heart that has been closed by past damage, then it is easy to see why our closest relationships are the most challenging. If one of the partners doesn't want the lesson presented, it makes for a tedious path. If both resist, it is an exercise in futility and a choice to walk through life in chaos and conflict. Though it is hard to believe anyone would make that choice, the reality is that many of us find it easier to argue and defend our position than to get to the bottom of what is really bothering us.

In our most intimate relationships, many of us are finding that we can no longer insinuate, imply or suggest what we mean. At a certain point, telepathic communication between two people becomes so strong that any dishonesty or hedging will only add fuel to the fire of the ego and make trust harder to accomplish. If you doubt this, think how many times you complete each other's sentence or know when something is bothering the other person, even though they may have said nothing directly.

For healthy relationships, direct and honest communications ultimately become imperative, and nowhere are they more important than in our most intimate, close relationships. We must begin to say what we mean, and mean what we say.

Of course, the other side of communication involves listening. For many of us, the mental activities are so active that we have to re-learn how to hear what someone is saying to us. Listening is a fine art, almost a lost art. To complete the circle of clear communication, we must be willing to hear what our partner is saying, apart from any immediate response we might wish to insert.

Learning to let someone completely "have their say" without interruption is a challenge in this fast-paced, action-oriented society, but it is crucial to good relationships. It has been my experience that, as long as I am mentally defending my position, I hear very little of what the other person is trying to say.

Neva Howell is a spiritual lecture, workshop facilitator, wellness counselor and visionary writer. To visit her health and spirit portal, go to <http://www.healthynewage.com>

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