

Pathwork on
Relating and Relationships

Quote from Pathwork Lecture 106 Sadness Versus Depression – Relationship

18	Every affliction of the psyche hinders living. It does so because it prevents you from relating to others. We began discussing, working on, and understanding the importance of relationship. You have learned that fruitful relationships can exist only to the degree your soul is healthy and free. But we have to understand more profoundly what relationship and relating are.
19	Life is relationship, my friends. "What is life?" is a question asked by many. Many answers can be given, they may all be truthful. But above all else, life is relationship! If you do not relate at all, you do not live. Life, or relationship, is relative -- relative to your attitude. You may relate positively or negatively. But the moment you relate, you live. That is why the person who relates negatively lives more than the person who relates little. I cannot say not at all, for then that person would not live. Destructive relationships lead to a climax that is ultimately bound to dissolve the destructiveness, while non-relating, even under the guise of false serenity, is further down the scale.

23	Now, by contrast, let me immediately go to the highest form of human beings. These are people who relate beautifully; who are deeply involved with others; who are unafraid of involvement; who have no protective covering against experience and feeling. Therefore they love. They permit themselves to love. In the last analysis, the ability to love always involves the inner willingness and readiness to do so. People belonging in this category love not only abstractly and generally, but they love personally and concretely, regardless of risk. Such people are not necessarily saints, or holy, or anywhere near perfect. They may have their faults. They may be wrong at times. They have negative emotions too. But, on the whole, they love, relate, and do not fear involvement. They have freed themselves from defense. Such people, in spite of occasional disappointments or setbacks, have a life full of fruitful, meaningful relationships.
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27	It is often not clear to you what constitutes a profound and meaningful relationship. At times you think that mutual exchange of ideas is the criterion, while at other times, it is the mutual exchange of sexual pleasure. Both may indeed be present, yet their presence will not necessarily make the communication very deep. The only true criterion is how genuine you are, how open and undefensive. How willing are you to feel, to involve and expose yourself and all that really matters to you? How many people do you know to whom you can express your real sorrows, needs, worries, longings, wishes? Very few, if any. To the degree you permit yourself to become aware of these feelings, to that degree will you find a few others with whom you can share and
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	whose life you are capable of truly understanding. If you shy away from yourself, how can you be willing to relate to others what you do not dare to acknowledge to yourself? Thus you live in isolation and unfulfillment. You fear death because you let life pass by in the pseudo-safety of solitary confinement.
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29	Often, real relating and communication is confused with the childish compulsion to tell everyone everything. Thus you may share your feelings indiscriminately and jeopardize yourself, in the misunderstood idea that foolish candor, or unwise exposure, or cruel "honesty" are proof of your openness and willingness to relate. In reality this merely covers up your withdrawal, which exists on a much more hidden level and in a more subtle manifestation. Thus you provoke the "proof" that it does not pay to involve yourself.
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34	In the past we have discussed the wall that you keep around your heart. We will investigate it further, so as to gain more comprehension about it. This is very important and necessary. Without comprehension and awareness of this wall in you, you cannot understand your loneliness. You cannot understand how you affect others. Often you do not even understand how others really affect you, because you do not permit yourself to feel the real effect, due to reasons we have discussed in the past. Thus you color your real impressions and experiences, and you are no longer in truth. You have to become much more acutely aware of what you experience and how others affect you in truth. Your continuous work along this path in private sessions in addition to the group work is most important. This will help you greatly toward self-awareness in understanding your relationships.
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