Relationship Resolution

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# Romantic Relationships

Joe and Martha, an otherwise normal couple, had problems communicating. Whenever Joe would voice an opinion, Martha would interrupt him in mid-sentence because she felt she knew exactly what he was going to say. Then, she would go off on a wild tangent while Joe became frustrated and lost. He would retreat into his private world, wondering what had become of the woman he married. She, in turn, would see the shutters coming down in Joe's eyes and would feel lonely again.   
  
If this situation sounds familiar, it's because Joe and Martha are not unique. Have you ever spent time watching two people talking? I mean, really watched them closely and tried to follow their conversation? Did you feel that they were communicating well, or was there something missing?   
  
Too many people live in worlds removed from those closest to them due to poor communication skills. For these people, miscommunication causes problems ranging from boredom to break-ups to utter frustration and despair.   
  
The effects of poor communication take on particular intensity at the end of the year during the Christmas holiday season, largely because of a long build-up of expectations and undelivered communication over the course of a busy year.   
  
Learning to communicate effectively is probably one of the most important relationship skills to learn. Yet, very few of us have ever been taught how to communicate properly, and such skills as we do learn are more concerned with persuasively putting across a message. Thus communication is mostly seen as a one-way process. However, true communication is so much more than just learning how to get across your point of view.   
  
Real communication starts with knowing your own wants and needs, and it moves towards understanding clearly the needs and wants of those around you. Without these ingredients you cannot relate, and you cannot communicate. Instead of reality, your relationships will be built on tenuous expectations. Because there is no communication, these expectations are likely to remain unfulfilled.   
  
How does this work in practice in our relationships?   
  
The reality for most people is that throughout the year we are busy living our own lives, pursuing our daily activities. And because we cannot communicate properly, we spend most of this time living past each other - we are in effect stuck in the busyness of our own worlds, building differing expectations of our life and our relationships.   
  
Why does this situation get worse over the Christmas Holiday season?   
  
Matters always seem to come to a head over Christmas, with large increases in break-ups, as well as suicides being reported. There are two main reasons why things tend to get worse at this time of year. Firstly, people are generally sitting on a big pile of daily expectations that have been building up throughout the year.   
  
Secondly, because the end of the year is such a significant event, each person will have individual expectations of what the holiday will mean for them. Suddenly, when friends and families start spending more time with each other, the pressure of all the undelivered communication builds up and, since they lack the skills to communicate properly, the frequent results are arguments and break-ups. Without communication skills it is so much more difficult to build bridges again, and so the break-ups are likely to remain permanent.   
  
There are a number of ways, based on the Toltec Teachings, which we can look to in improving communication.   
  
**1. Always be Honest**   
  
Speak the truth - even if it is not what others may wish to hear. Saying honestly and clearly what is on your mind is the first step in improving communication.   
  
**2. Avoid Blame**   
  
In trying to be honest, just state the facts as you perceive them to be - as objectively as you can, and how you are feeling as a result. Avoid using language or tone of voice to blame or to score points, or to make the other person look bad.   
  
**3. Take responsibility for your part in what is happening**   
  
What is your role in creating the current situation - both past and present? We all have a part to play in whatever is happening in our lives. Acknowledging and owning our role in all the events of our lives enables us to change the situation within our own sphere of influence, and it also helps us to avoid falling into the trap of blame.   
  
**4. Do not assume that you will be understood**   
  
We tend to think that whatever we say is always clear and obvious, and therefore that we should be easily understood. But since other people don't see things the same way as we do, we need to make allowances for everybody's limitations - both our limitations of statement, as well as their limitations in hearing.   
  
**5. Make allowances for your own self-image**   
  
Our self-image forms part of our view of the world and is responsible for the way in which we filter our perceptions. So, if the self-image of the person we are speaking with is filtering everything we say to them, we can be sure that our own self-image will also be interfering with what they are trying to say to us.   
  
**6. Learn how to listen**   
  
If we accept that true communication is always plagued by difficulties in the way we express ourselves, as well as how we perceive, it is easy to see how important it is for us to learn how to listen properly.   
  
Total listening means paying full and complete attention to everything the other is saying; their choice of words, body language, being aware of their emotional state, where they are coming from and why.   
  
This is a different level of listening to the level we are normally used to. Normally, there are all sorts of other things going on in our minds when other people are speaking, even if we are just trying to figure out how to reply. Total listening means being fully open to what the other person is saying, without interrupting, without justifying our position in our own minds and without mentally formulating a response while the other person is still talking.   
  
Only by listening in this way can we start to get beyond the words, to discover what others are really trying to tell us.   
  
**7. Remember the bigger picture**   
  
The small details are always important in life, and this is especially true whenever we are trying to communicate properly.   
  
However, we cannot afford to get hung up on all the little details to the detriment of the bigger picture. Therefore determine what the bigger picture is for you, and keep that at the front of your mind. If you are trying to build a real relationship, then by focusing on this as the bigger picture, you will be able to be more objective and avoid getting caught up in pettiness. By developing the ability to be objective, it will be easier for you to view everything that happens, both bad and good, as simply opportunities to grow together.

# Sex

**Question :**   
  
Théun, I am really struggling with my approach towards sex. I just cannot see how we can forgo sex altogether without suppression. Also, why is it so bad to speak about making love? Is making love not an expression of compassion for one another?   
  
**Answer :**   
  
My friend, if you wish to drive a BULL into an absolute FURY, wave a red flag in front of him! If you wish to drive me into full flight, feed me the words, "compassion" and "making love!"   
  
WHAT is COM-PASSION? And HOW do you MAKE love?   
  
But, yes, I DO grasp what you are asking! It is simply NOT possible for humanity at THIS point in time to simply forgo or forget about sex! Why? Simply because it IS at THIS time humanity's GREATEST challenge! But it is precisely HEREIN that lies the rub!   
  
Will humanity continue to INDULGE itself in this challenge? Or will humanity start to FACE this challenge? So far the record is not too good, for even though the Guardians of the Race have in the past introduced venereal disease to CURB humanity's INDULGENCE, medical science simply found a CURE! Admittedly, medical science DOES have a vested interest in having done so! But even in spite of the Guardians' most "recent" attempt at CURBING this indulgence with the introduction of AIDS, for which there is NO cure, men and women would rather DIE than relinquish their indulgence!   
  
Furthermore, you by now well know that suppression is not the answer! So this is all the MORE reason to FACE this challenge! Sex in itself is not wrong. On the contrary, it is exceedingly BEAUTIFUL and therefore SACRED! But it is HEREIN that lies humanity's GREATEST CHALLENGE to date, for people do not today see sex as being a sacred act, but instead see it as a fun act which is their right!   
  
But to return to your question about making love. If a couple make love, as it were, as opposed to merely giving vent to their sexual lust, then the act is an emotional and creative act, irrespective of whether it results in PHYSICAL conception or not. In this case making love is an expression of the drive to inclusiveness and, as such, is not life-destructive in any way. Also, always remember that sex is a very powerful energy and that in having sex the creative energy is called forth, resulting in conception of a kind that MUST and WILL come to birth sooner or later. When the creative energy is released in having sex it is EXACTLY the same as when it is released in EXPRESSING UNCONDITIONAL LOVE IN ACTION! Therefore humanity's challenge lies in finding the DIFFERENCE between HAVING sex and USING the creative power of the Void! In the first you FORE-GET RESPONSE-ABILITY! In the second you RE-SPECT RESPONSE-ABILITY!

# Marriage

**Question :**   
  
Théun, although you have already given my wife and I excellent guidance on our marriage, my wife and are still struggling with our relationship. It is not that we do not try, but rather that whenever we DO try to meet one another we only end up fighting and blaming one another. Our sexual life is also not good, for often when I want sex my wife doesn't, which makes me extremely upset to the point of having thoughts of violence. This then makes me dislike myself and I end up feeling like my wife's doormat! Can you please give us some more guidance to work with?   
  
**Answer :**   
  
I once before pointed out to you the LACK of any REAL warmth between the two of you! I point it out again, not so as to make you feel BAD, but simply because this IS the underlying problem in your marriage. Neither of you feel any REAL warmth towards one another! All you have is sex. So, yes, when the going is good between the two of you, and you feel sexually drawn towards one another you both ASSUME this means warmth! But, my friend, this is NOT true warmth, but rather what I term LURVE.

# Divorse

**Question :**   
  
I need some guidance on how to handle my wife now that we are about to be divorced. She is resisting the divorce like crazy, and trying every trick of the trade to manipulate me back into the marriage. But in my heart of hearts I know that our marriage can never work, for it has never been the kind of relationship which is life-supportive to either my wife, myself or our children.   
  
**Answer :**   
  
My friend, I well know that your marriage is NOT life-supportive, and therefore it is time to get really TOUGH! To not do so is to encourage your wife in behaviour which is not only life-destructive to herself, but also for you and the children!   
  
Write your wife a LONG email in which you RUTHLESSLY make it ABUNDANTLY CLEAR to her WHY you CANNOT be together as husband and wife, let alone REMAIN friends! In doing this, do NOT pull the punches, but USE the HAMMER to GOOD effect! Drive HOME the nails! If you pull your punches NOW, your wife will be encouraged to continue with her madness and will eventually bring about some form of DESTRUCTION that she and you will live to REGRET, but it will be TOO LATE to UNDO the damage done!   
  
So it is best to drive HOME the nails NOW! If this is the first time you are having to use your sword to give someone a shave, then DO it as IMPECCABLY as you can, but WITHOUT worrying if perhaps it is too HARSH! In this respect it will HELP you GREATLY if you remember that you TOO are an instrument of power, and in this situation, your wife is calling forth a lesson from power, but power shows NO MERCY and grants NO QUARTER! Such is the Law of Economy!   
  
It takes a lot of love to let someone go! But, my friend, it takes even MORE love to beat someone whom one loves to an inch of his or her life! How much do you love your wife? How much do you CARE for her? This is another aspect of the Law of Economy, namely, giving someone a beating can be transactional, or it can be an act of love! In the first you give the person concerned what is rightfully theirs! In the second, you INFLICT upon your-SELF a wound that only TIME It-Self can heal, for you must NEVER forget that whatever you do to others you do also to yourself! Such is the interrelationship of life, and such is the group-consciousness of the SELF, one of the Dreamers of man-kind!   
  
By the way, I said write an email. I did not say phone your wife. Phone calls can become VERY personal and messy, whereas emails can be read again and again and serve in putting things straight for the record.

# Parenting

**Question :**   
  
I would like to ask for some guidance on the relationship I have with my children. As they now live with their mother ever since we became divorced I am finding it more and more difficult to relate to my children when they do come and stay with me. Somehow they don't even feel like my children, and yet I know that deep down inside I love them.   
  
**Answer :**   
  
Do you actually LIKE your children?   
  
I know that somewhere deep down inside you DO love your children, or to be more precise, you FEEL that you ought to love them! But, right now, right here, do you even LIKE them, much less LOVE them?   
  
I take this approach with you, my friend, for I can see that you feel guilty because you do not love your children like you feel you ought to. But loving our children is socially conditioned bullshit, for as with ANY relationship it takes TIME and a great DEAL of blood, sweat and tears to BUILD that relationship!   
  
Children are INVASIVE STRANGERS that find their way into our lives in one way or another! Your children are NOT your children! Instead they are ancient beings, STRANGERS that have chosen YOU as their father! Do you get my point?   
  
If so, then drop the socially conditioned crap, drop the sense of guilt, and above all, drop the ROMANTICISING, and take a good, long and HARD look at how you TRULY feel about your children! Do you even WANT a relationship with them? If so, why? I ask you this, because unless you can answer such fundamental questions, we do not even know WHERE to start addressing your relationship with your children.   
  
Do you still love your ex-wife? No, clearly not, otherwise you would NEVER have gotten divorced! And so why should it be different between you and your kids? Or are you so arrogant as to believe that you fathered little angels with whom you had an INSTANT bond?   
  
Am I being harsh? No! I don't think so! I am just being REAL! This is something I believe you do grasp quite well, even though you still swing violently between feeling highly pissed off AT your kids, and then almost immediately feeling terribly guilty for not being a good and loving parent!

# Relationship with Parents

**Question :**   
  
Théun, I am feeling a revulsion towards my father. He disgusts me. He is so fat and ugly and does not take care of himself or have any self respect. He tells lies constantly and shovels sentimental crap at me about when we (siblings and myself) were kids (mostly remembered in some fantasy not truth). Dad was a real bully and has always been quite nasty. He did have a wicked sense of humour and made us laugh a lot too. But I cannot abide the lies. He is always living in some dreamworld of winning the lottery, he feels sorry for himself, I could go on.......and on.........   
  
Now maybe he is reflecting my 'excellent' qualities back to me. I shall address this.   
  
Then I am feeling pity for dad, none of his family speak to him except me. Poor old git all alone in the world, etc. That is an unhealthy way to feel for sure. Guilt is not supportive to the heart.   
  
Then I am thinking well, he is my dad and I have a responsibility towards taking care of him.   
  
Then I am sad, he will not live for much longer, he has had his moments when he has taken care of me and after a fashion does love me - I think, I feel, I dunno.   
  
Then I get mad at him for being such an energy leech, as if he is using my life to live his. But I am choosing to let him, so why get mad?   
  
Then sometimes we actually have a good time together.   
  
Blinking Hell, I am going round in circles. Help.   
  
**Answer :**   
  
My friend, what I am going to say now is NOT going to be what you want to hear! LOL! But here goes anyway, and then you can shout at me all you want to.   
  
We ALL, even you, choose our parents for a reason! Now we do not yet know why you chose the father you did, but choose him you did! So as a warrior it is now YOUR responsibility to learn why you chose him to be your father. Having said this I must also add that there is NO reason as to why you should accept your father's behaviour. From what you have shared it appears that he is very lonely and with no real purpose within life. Perhaps all he really needs in order to pull himself towards himself is to have a REAL friend spelling out for him what he himself is trying to avoid. So what I would suggest is that you sit your father down for an HONEST chat, and then be totally ruthless with him. Don't spare his feelings, but be totally FIRM as well as GENTLE in telling him what you think of him, how you see him, and how you feel about him and his behaviour. But in doing this you must take CARE to FIRST spell out to him that you DO want to have a relationship with him because you CARE about him.   
  
I am not saying this is going to be easy, but you do not have too many options open to you. You either CONFRONT him, or you choose to do nothing and let him go to pot completely. I myself had to do something similar with my own father many years ago, but my father would not listen to me beyond the face value of my words. As a result he stormed out of my home without even saying goodbye and left. I let him go, knowing that there was nothing more for me to do at that time. I did not hear anything from my father, or see him, for over a year. But then one day he contacted me again as if nothing had ever happened, except that he had changed totally towards me. From that day on until his death we had a very close and meaningful relationship. :) And in looking back upon my life I CAN see that he had been the very best possible father for me!

# Relationship with Self

**Question :**   
  
I feel so ashamed of my past behaviour, but I have also come to realise that if I am going to save my marriage I cannot continue to indulge in my feelings of unworthiness because of my past actions.   
  
**Answer :**   
  
It is good to see that you are FINALLY standing up and fighting for yourself! It is impossible to win the respect of others, including your wife's respect, if you do not have SELF-RESPECT! Neither can you have any form of MEANINGFUL relationship with another person until you CAN and DO have a relationship with yourself! Whilst you continue to look outside of yourself for value and worth, you will merely continue to call forth one failed relationship after another!   
  
Also, you CANNOT base a relationship upon GUILT and REPENTANCE! If you try, you are merely ASKING to be beaten up again and again! Therefore grasp with BOTH HANDS everything you have learned about YOURSELF in this relationship with your wife, for it is THIS knowledge that you are going to be NEEDING in order to pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and move forward! Your wife CANNOT forgive you, my friend! Only YOU, through your OWN learning, through your OWN actions, can learn to forgive yourself! Therefore to crawl around on all fours at your wife's feet will only serve to turn you into a BEGGAR for that which your wife cannot give you, namely, forgiveness!   
  
Remember also that there is NO DISGRACE within the act of learning! Our behaviour can be disgraceful, but KNOWLEDGE gained cannot possibly be a disgrace! Therefore you can choose to INDULGE in your feelings of having acted in a disgraceful manner, or you can choose to take OWNERSHIP of your behaviour and say, "Yes! I have screwed up badly, and right now I feel terribly ashamed of my behaviour. BUT I am going to LEARN from this mistake, and WITH the knowledge gained I will UPLIFT myself and thereby also uplift those around me!" That ACT, my friend, is the act of TRANSMUTATION that leads to death of the old, TRANSFORMATION!   
  
So lift your EYES, my friend, and look the world SQUARELY in the face! YOU are not a disgrace, even though your behaviour cannot be condoned! Take your COURAGE into both hands and FIGHT like a warrior! Now is your chance to PROVE to yourself that you do have what it takes to be a warrior, and that you DO have value!

# Friendship

**Question :**   
  
Théun, am I correct in my thinking that friendship is an act of the heart, and therefore we cannot think about friendship in the same way as we think about a business contract, or about buying a house or a car?   
  
**Answer:**   
  
Yes, my friend, you are quite correct. How will you measure true friendship in terms of what you THINK about friendship? If you wish to have only those relationships which measure up to your thinking, your preconceived ideas and your prejudices surrounding friendship, you will most certainly have relationships, perhaps even a great many! But you will never know the meaning of true friendship; you will never know the meaning of unconditional love in action.

# Business Relationships

Business partnerships present a great challenge for many people. Even though the idea of sharing responsibilities can seem attractive, the reality of everything that a partnership truly involves also raises a lot of fears. "Will this partnership really work?" "How can two people actually run the business?" "Will I end up doing all the work?" These are just some of the questions that can worry each of the people involved, and, if not addressed, can end up destroying their common dream.   
  
The Toltec teachings show how all of life revolves around relationships. Therefore, when we consider partnerships, the first issue is the relationship between the parties. If this is always kept in mind, many of the pitfalls can be avoided.   
  
How does this work in practice? Take the example of John and Peter. John is a builder, with a lot of experience in building houses, while Peter is an engineer, with skills in draughting and finance. They are successful in their own right, but would like to expand their businesses by offering a comprehensive service. Both see a partnership as a good way to grow and to use their skills in a complementary fashion. However, having seen many promising partnerships founder through a lack of focus, goals or clear leadership, they are also wary.   
  
What else do each want out of the partnership? Both John and Peter want their business to prosper, but they are also keen for the partnership to grow upon a solid foundation of trust and mutual support that will deepen as their business grows.   
  
Because it is the long-term relationship that is important to them, John and Peter decide to look at their partnership in a new way. This new way involves looking afresh at their business and defining for themselves what they believe is the purpose of their business. Then they will need to look at what, for them, is the meaning that lies within that purpose. Purpose and meaning - these are two vital ingredients that determine whether anything in our lives becomes a mission, or whether it brings us joy and fulfillment. After some consideration and discussion, John and Peter conclude that the purpose of the business is to support them financially, while for them, the meaning lies in the heart which they both can put into making the partnership.   
  
Keeping it simple, the question each has to answer is "Do we just want to make money? Or do we want to use earning our keep as an opportunity to build meaningful relationships?" From their own experience both John and Peter know that focussing on making money alone soon results in everything becoming a heartless burden. On the other hand, looking at the business as providing the framework for building meaningful relationships will enable them to embark upon a new journey that they have chosen to fill with heart.   
  
Life is a system of relationships. Therefore, any career or business is firstly about relationships in general, but also, more specifically, about that particular relationship with the world which provides you with your livelihood.   
  
Looking at the world around them, John and Peter know that if the business relationship is going to meet their needs, in terms of succeeding, it must also meet the needs of its clients - for any relationship must be reciprocal in order for it to be a relationship.   
  
In addition to this, when it comes to looking within the business itself, it is also necessary to take the other primary relationships into account. These are, first and foremost, the relationship that we each have with ourselves. This is vital, for if we do not know how to relate fully to ourselves, we cannot relate in any effective or meaningful way to another.   
  
The second relationship is that between the partners or employees in a business. The third is how this important relationship is being reflected in the relationship between the partnership/business and its clients.   
  
By approaching the partnership in this way, John and Peter will always find the heart in what they will be doing together, for instead of simply seeing the business as just providing their bread and butter, and instead of having vague and unexpressed expectations, they are sowing the seeds for a future of flexibility, of growth, and of joy, through the process of learning to build meaningful relationships.   
  
Another issue that plagues many partnerships, and which had surfaced often in their discussions, was "who would be the boss in their partnership - John or Peter?"   
  
Having decided that their focus is on developing relationships, John and Peter saw that a partnership is different to a normal employer/employee relationship, in that it concerns two people with a mutual love for what they are doing. Therefore, in their partnership, John and Peter will not be looking at who is boss, but at the joint responsibility that they share, and then ascertaining who will provide the lead in terms of that joint responsibility in any given area. Who provides the lead in any given activity may depend on many things, including the experience and the technical expertise of each. For example, John will provide the lead when it comes to the construction side, while Peter will provide the lead in relation to looking for new business and implementing financial controls. The important point for them being that providing the lead in a partnership does not equate with being boss.   
  
In all of this, the overall focus of John and Peter will remain that of using their joint venture as a means to build a relationship with themselves, with each other, and with the world around them. In this way they will be choosing for a partnership and a way of life that is based around quality and real opportunities for growth and fulfillment. Their business will still need to support them, but it will do so in a way that has for them, meaning and heart. In this way too, John and Peter make their business and their dreams real.