

## How To Create A Conscious Relationship: 7 Principles, 7 Practices

### **The First Principle**

Relationships thrive when each partner commits to total union with the other person and total creative expression as an individual.

### **The First Practice**

Make a heartfelt commitment to your partner that you're willing to go beyond all your ego-defenses to full unity. At the same time, make a commitment to going all the way with your own individual creative expression. Then, observe the emergence of your defensive barriers every day. Communicate about them honestly, but don't take them seriously. In fact, ego-defenses disappear quickly when you turn them into play.

### **The Second Principle**

Relationships thrive when each partner learns from every relationship interaction, especially the stressful ones, instead of running programmed defensive moves. Some popular defensive moves: criticizing, lying, sulking in silence, making noisy uproars, numbing out with food, drink, smoke, TV and other habit-forming drugs.

### **The Second Practice**

Make a heartfelt commitment to learning something new from every relationship interaction. Notice your defensive moves as they emerge, and gradually transplant wondering and truth-speaking in place of defensiveness.

### **The Third Principle**

Relationships thrive in a climate of absolute honesty -- no hidden feelings or withheld truths. All feelings -- anger, sadness, joy, fear, sexual attraction -- are okay to discuss with the other person, and each person is able to listen, free of listening-filters, such as listening-to-find-fault and listening-to-fix.

### **The Third Practice**

Notice your feelings and thoughts, and speak about them to your partner. If there are things you've done or feelings you're afraid to talk about, make sure to speak about those to your partner. Get familiar with your habitual listening-filters, and practice summarizing what the other person is saying, with no distortion, and acknowledging the feelings embedded in communication.

### **The Fourth Principle**

Relationships thrive when people keep their agreements impeccably. It doesn't matter whether an agreement seems trivial ("Sorry, honey, but I forgot to take the trash out") or significant ("Sorry, honey, but I slept with your twin sister and the maid of honor the night before our wedding"). There is no such thing as a minor lapse of integrity.

### **The Fourth Practice**

Monitor each agreement you make very carefully, making sure you want to make it in the first place. Once you make an agreement, fulfill it impeccably or change it consciously by communicating with the relevant person.

## **The Fifth Principle**

People thrive in a climate of 100 percent accountability, where nobody blames or claims victim status. Hundred percent accountability is the shift from "I was wronged" to "I take full responsibility for events occurring the way they did." From this empowered position, problems can be solved quickly, because time and energy are not squandered in a fruitless attempt to find fault.

## **The Fifth Practice**

In any situation, claim responsibility for having created it the way it occurred. Wonder about how and why you might have wanted it to occur that way. Speak in empowered language rather than victim language ("I choose to go to the dentist" rather than "I have to go to the dentist." Or, "I take responsibility for eating so that I have a healthy body," rather than "Why did you buy that huge bucket of buttered popcorn? You know I can't resist it.")

## **The Sixth Principle**

Relationships flourish when partners appreciate each other liberally. People grow more beautiful through our appreciation of them. Relationships take a quantum leap when each partner practices appreciation of the other person as a daily art form.

## **The Sixth Practice**

Invent new ways to appreciate the other person every day, and speak appreciations frequently. Live inside questions such as, "What is my partner's true essence and how can I invite it forth?" And "What could I appreciate about my partner at this moment?"

## **The Seventh Principle**

Everything can be resolved with willingness and love. Love is the ultimate healer and liberator, because only love is vast enough to embrace its opposite. In other words, you can love yourself even when you hate yourself, and the hate will melt in the larger presence of love. Whatever emerges in a close relationship is the next thing that needs to be loved.

## **The Seventh Practice**

Love as much as you can from wherever you are.

The last practice is a major key, because sometimes in the heat of human relationships, you come to places in yourself or your partner that seem so hard to love that you feel the urge to give up. That is the moment when love and only love can heal. In those moments, you simply love yourself and your partner as much as you can from wherever you are, and the miracles come flowing back in.