

reality Relationships

7 Essentials to Help You "Get Real" and "Get Right!"

Reality Relationships: Responsibility

by Dr. David H. McKinley

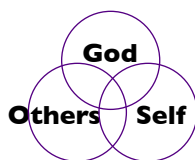
Old Irish Prayer:

*May those who love us, love us;
And those who don't love us
May God turn their hearts;
And if He doesn't turn their hearts,
May He turn their ankles,
So we'll know them by their limping.*

The Real Facts of Life:

1. Relationships are not optional.

There are 3 spheres of relationships:



2. Relationships help to make life full and meaningful.

"I am not aware of any other factor in medicine that has a greater impact on our survival than the healing power of love and intimacy. Not diet, not smoking, not exercise, not stress, not genetics, not drugs, not surgery." —DR. DEAN ORNISH

"With somebody to love, even the most severely afflicted can make it." —KEN DUCKWORTH

3. Relationships can be painful.

Too often we fantasize the wonders of relationships and under emphasize the work of building lasting and satisfying relationships.

4. Relationships require hard work to be successful.

You are the principal character in your own reality relationship series.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. 1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-3

Without love ...

- all I say is ineffective.
- all I know is incomplete.
- all I believe is insufficient.
- all I give is insignificant.

Positive: Love makes life matter.

Negative: Life - Love = 0

Essential #1:

I must accept and share the responsibility for the health and well being of all my relationships.

Love must happen in you to happen through you.

"In our relationship with ourselves, we should accept the unchangeable, and change the unacceptable." —BERNARD O'BRIEN

A-C-T-I-O-N Steps for Taking Responsibility in Relationships:

Adjust Your Focus (Eyes)

"Whenever you focus your attention on what the other person is doing, you take away your own power. You make yourself weak. In focusing on the other, you try to control things you can't control. For that reason, it's an exercise in total futility, inefficiency, and ineffectiveness. When you focus on yourself rather than on the other person, you vastly increase your odds of being able to enjoy some impact and influence over the relationship problem that bothers you." —GARY SMALLEY

"We have a picture of the perfect partner, but we marry an imperfect person. Then we have two options. Tear up the picture and accept the person, or tear up the person and accept the picture." —J. GRANT HOWARD, JR.

Concentrate Your Efforts (Mind)

Meet needs in the lives of others around you:

- Appreciation
- Encouragement
- Understanding
- Forgiveness

Tame Your Tongue (Mouth)

Turn conversations from the "me" monologue to the subject of "you."

Interpret Your Experiences (Ear)

Learn "Damage Control" when you record the experiences of your life with others.

Open Your Heart (Heart)

You can't play poker with the players in your life.

Notice Your Hand (Hand)

Your hand communicates many things. For example, your hand can express your need to take, but learn to use it in the expression of giving.

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Reality Relationships

7 Essentials to Help You "Get Real" and "Get Right!"

Part I

Reality Relationships: Expectations

by Dr. David H. McKinley

"When asked to discuss disappointments, frustrations, and other negative aspects of their lives, people were 28% more likely to say something negative about their relationships than they were when asked about the positive aspects of their lives."

—2002 STUDY, CAUGHLIN AND HUSTON

Failed Expectations:

- **Unavoidable** (We are all so different!)
People fail to meet expectations: forget birthdays, fail to return calls, etc.
- **Unrealistic** (No one can meet them!)
- **Unclear** (Make me feel good!)
- **Unfaithful** (They are self-focused!)

Essential #2:

"I must expect more from myself (in effort) than I expect from others (in response)."

"Relate" is a verb.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4 (NIV)

Practice the Positive Power of Patience

"People who get angry quickly experience more arguments in their relationships, and their arguments continue 81% longer than people who are prone to remain calm." —2001 STUDY, BERRY AND WORTHINGTON

The end of a matter is better than the beginning; the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit. Do not hasten in your spirit to be angry, for anger rests in the bosom of fools. ECCLESIASTES 7:8-9

I need patience because people ...

- don't cooperate with my plans
- don't fulfill my expectations
- don't share my concerns
- don't understand my schedule
- don't respond the way I desire
- interrupt my plans
- cost me money
- expect me to meet their needs
- cause me a lot of problems

"If the only tool you have in your toolbox is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail."

—A. MASLOW

5 Positive Expressions of Patience:

1. Patience is "keeping your head" when you feel like "flying off the handle."
2. Patience is listening even when you know the answers and can complete the sentences.
3. Patience is allowing others the opportunity to learn by experience rather than coercing them to learn everything from yours.
4. Patience is giving people room to make mistakes and finding ways to forgive them when they do.
5. Patience is being sensitive to the needs of others. The struggles they face may be greater than yours on any given day.

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Part 2

Reality Relationships: Expectations

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Essential #2:

"I must expect more from myself (in effort) than I expect from others (in response)."

Love is patient, love is kind. 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4a (NIV)

Practice the Positive Power of Patience

"For the friendship of two, the patience of one is necessary."

Consider the Constructive Character of Kindness

"Love looks for ways of being constructive."

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4 (Phillips)

"Kindness is a language the dumb can speak and the deaf can hear and understand." —CHRISTIAN BOVEE

How do we express kindness?

• Positive Communication

"I can live for two months on one good compliment."

—MARK TWAIN

There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, but the tongue of the wise promotes health. PROVERBS 10:18

The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, but the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness. PROVERBS 15:2

A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit. PROVERBS 15:4

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit. PROVERBS 18:21

"To speak kindly does not hurt the tongue." —UNKNOWN

• Responsive Action

"Relationships are like cars. They run out of gas if not refueled."

Which are you?

There are two kinds of people on earth today;

Just two kinds of people, no more, I say.

Not the sinner and saint, for it's well understood,

That the good are half-bad and the bad half-good.

Not the rich and the poor, for to rate a man's wealth,
You must first know the state of his conscience and health.

Not the humble and proud, for in life's little span,

Who puts on vain airs is not counted a man.

Not the happy and sad, for the swift flying years

Bring each man his laughter and each man his tears.

No; the two kinds of people on earth I mean,

Are the people who lift, and the people who lean.

—ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

• Sensitive Support

"The best way to keep from stepping on other people's toes is to put yourself in their shoes." —JOHN MAXWELL

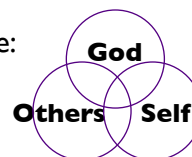
• Protective Care

• Forgive Wrongs

"He who cannot forgive others breaks the bridge over which he must pass himself." —GEORGE HERBERT

"Kindness consists in loving people more than they deserve." —JOSEPH JOUBERT

3 Spheres of Life:



Now the **deeds of the flesh** are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and the things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control.

GALATIANS 5:19-23

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Reality Relationships: Attitudes

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Attitude is Everything in Life

"Words can never adequately convey the incredible impact of our attitude toward life. The longer I live the more convinced I become that life is 10 percent what happens to us and 90 percent how we respond to it. I believe the single most significant decision I can make on a day-to-day basis is my choice of attitude. It is more important than my past, my education, my bankroll, my successes or failures, fame or pain, what other people think of me or say about me, my circumstances, or my position. Attitude keeps me going or cripples my progress... It alone fuels my fire or assaults my hope. When my attitude is right, there's no barrier too high, no valley too deep, no dream too extreme, no challenge too great for me." —CHARLES R. SWINDOLL

Attitude is Everything in Relationships

Essential #3:

"You will never build great relationships by indulging bad attitudes."

Examine the Attitudes that Destroy Your Relationships

Love does not *envy*,
love does not *parade itself*,
love is not *puffed up*. 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4b

• Let Envy Ensnare Your Thoughts

Latin Proverb: "Envy is the enemy of honor."

What is it we envy or resent in others?

Attention	Achievements
Appearance	Abilities
Awards	Associations
Acceptance	Age
Aptitude	Acquisitions
Address	Automobile

"Make not your thoughts prisons." —WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

"Resentment is like drinking a poison and waiting for the other person to die."

...*envy is rottenness to the bones.* —PROVERBS 14:30

• Put Your Pride on Parade

Pride comes before destruction, and an arrogant spirit before a fall. PROVERBS 16:18

• Inflate Your Own Importance

"Two men went up to the temple complex to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee took his stand and was praying like this: 'God, I thank You that I'm not like other people—greedy, unrighteous, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of everything I get.'

"But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even raise his eyes to heaven but kept striking his chest and saying, 'God, turn Your wrath from me—a sinner!' I tell you, this one went down to his house justified rather than the other; because everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted." LUKE 18:10-14 (HCSB)

Knowledge puffs up but love builds up. 1 CORINTHIANS 8:1

Emphasize Habits that Build Your Relationships (L-I-F-T)

Look at others through a telescope while looking at yourself through a microscope.

Identify something you admire in another and express it frequently.

Find ways to turn conversations from me to you.

Thank God for His goodness in your life.

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up. JAMES 4:10

"All that you achieve and all that you fail to achieve is the direct result of your own thoughts [and attitudes]."

—JAMES ALLEN



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Reality Relationships: Language

by Dr. David H. McKinley

Love... does not behave rudely. 1 CORINTHIANS 13:5

Essential #4:

**Love is a language you speak every day
in the expressions you choose
and the things you say.**

Consider the Different Levels of Communication

Spiritual • Emotional • Intellectual • Verbal • Physical

Contemplate Common Causes for Communication Breakdowns

- Culture
- Nature
- Gender

"...male and female made He them..." GENESIS 1:27
AM / FM Frequencies = Male / Female Traits

- Behavior/Demeanor

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good and necessary for edification, that it may impact grace to the hearers. EPHESIANS 4:29

Concentrate on Developing Good Communication Skills

A-B-C's ...

Acknowledge your need for assistance

Be a good listener

"Talking (communicating) is like playing the harp. There is as much in laying the hands on the strings to stop the vibrations as in plucking them to bring out their music."

—OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil. PROVERBS 15:28

He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him. PROVERBS 18:13

"Lord, let my quest be to understand rather than to be understood." —ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Choose your words wisely

"Effective communication comes down to listening and speaking with your heart. When people feel understood emotionally, they feel cared for. This is very different from listening to someone from the head—that is, looking merely for the content of the person's words, without paying attention to the emotion. The goal of *effective communication* is to understand the emotional message of the speaker. You have to ask yourself, *What is this person feeling?*" —GARY SMALLEY

Discern the difference between honesty and brutality

...speak the truth in love... EPHESIANS 4:15

There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, but the tongue of the wise promotes health.

PROVERBS 12:18

Establish positive patterns of expression

Focus on what you know about others rather than what you know about yourself

5 Love Languages by Gary Chapman

- Words of Affirmation
- Quality Time
- Receiving Gifts
- Acts of Service
- Physical Touch

Guard your temper

Help others "get to know you better"

Identify the difference between *agreement* and *acceptance*



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Reality Relationships: Irritability

by Dr. David H. McKinley

Love... does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil.... 1 CORINTHIANS 13:5

The word **provoked** is translated various ways in different Bible translations:

- touchy (TLB)
- irritable (NLT)
- quick tempered (CEV)
- quick to take offence (NEB)
- easily angered (NIV)
- doesn't fly off the handle (MSG)

Essential #5:

People of irate and irritable dispositions do more to cause damage in their personal relationships than any event, circumstance, and problem.

"How much more grievous are the consequences of anger than the causes of it." —MARCUS AURELIUS

"He who restrains his anger overcomes his greatest enemy." —LATIN PROVERB

"People who fly into a rage seldom make a good landing." —WILL ROGERS

I. Identify 5 Common Sources of Anger and Irritability in Your Relationships

• Anger rises out of insult.

The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, and his glory is to overlook a transgression. PROVERBS 19:11

• Anger rises out of impatience.

Love is patient... 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4a

When the other fellow takes a long time, he's slow. When I take a long time, I'm thorough.

When the other fellow doesn't do it, he's lazy. When I don't do it, I'm busy.

When the other fellow does something without being told, he's overstepping his bounds. But when I do it, that initiative.

When the other fellow overlooks a rule of etiquette, he's rude. But when I skip a few rules, I'm original.

When the other fellow pleases his boss, he's an apple polisher. But when I please the boss, that's cooperation.

When the other fellow gets ahead, he's getting the breaks. But when I manage to get ahead, that's just the reward for hard work.

—JOHN MAXWELL, *Be a People Person*

• Anger rises out of injury.

"Hurting people, hurt people." —JOHN MAXWELL

• Anger rises out of inferiority.

"Half of the harm that is done in this world is due to people who want to feel important. They do not mean to do harm. They are absorbed in the endless struggle to think well of themselves." —T.S. ELIOT

"A man is as big as the things that make him angry."

—WINSTON CHURCHILL

• Anger rises out of iniquity.

Negatively: the evil within us.

Positively: *Be angry and sin not, do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.*

EPHESIANS 4:26-27

"He who would be angry and not sin, must be angry at nothing but sin." —REV. WILLIAM SECKER

II. Investigate Ways to Diffuse and Deal with Anger in Your Relationships

1. Pace yourself. Don't panic.
2. Pinpoint the source of your anger.
3. Plan a confrontation conference or a peace summit.
4. Pray for self control.

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Reality Relationships: Tell the Truth

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Essential #6:

You have to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth if you want to build healthy, happy, and harmonious relationships.

[Love] does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth... 1 CORINTHIANS 13:6

[Love] is never glad about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. 1 CORINTHIANS 13:6 (NLT)

"Love cannot find satisfaction in wrong."
—GEORGE SWEETING

"Truth" and "Trust" operate together like the pedals of a bicycle. They move together in balance and cohesion.



"Trust is like a bank account. You have to keep making deposits if you want it to grow. On occasion, things will go wrong, and you will have to make a withdrawal. Meanwhile, it is sitting in the bank earning interest."
—MIKE ABRASHOFF

"It is a greater compliment to be trusted than to be loved." —GEORGE MACDONALD

Three Strategies to Help You Build Healthier and Happier Relationships:

1. Tell the Truth—Be Credible

A good man is guided by his honesty; the evil man is destroyed by his dishonesty. PROVERBS 11:3

Ten Great American Business Lies:

10. Your table will be ready in 10 minutes.
9. This offer is limited to the first 100 callers.
8. This sort of thing never goes out of style.
7. One size fits all.
6. I'm sorry I'm late. I got stuck in traffic.
5. It's not the money, it's the principle of the thing.
4. Open wide. This won't hurt one bit.
3. This car is in "mint condition."
2. We have unbelievably low prices.
1. I'm from the IRS and I'm here to help you!

2. Tell the Whole Truth—Be Careful

Someone who does not tell the truth causes trouble.
PROVERBS 10:10

3. Tell Nothing but the Truth—Be Considerate

"It is the thought of man...by which man works all things whatsoever. All that he does and brings to pass is the vesture of thought." —THOMAS CARLYLE

[Love] thinks no evil. 1 CORINTHIANS 13:5

And now, dear friends... Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. PHILIPPIANS 4:8 (NLT)

- T** rue?
- H** elpful?
- I** mportant?
- N** ecessary?
- K** ind?



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Reality Relationships: Yesterday's Issues

by Dr. David H. McKinley

Essential #7:

**What you invested in your relationships
yesterday will not be sufficient to sustain
your relationships tomorrow.**

Gender Differences:

- A man will pay \$2 for a \$1 item he wants; a woman will pay \$1 for a \$2 item that she doesn't want.
- A woman worries about the future until she gets a husband; a man never worries about the future until he gets a wife.
- A successful man is one who makes more money than his wife can spend; a successful woman is one who can find such a man.
- To be happy with a man you must understand him a lot and love him a little; to be happy with a woman you must love her a lot and not try to understand her at all.
- Married men live longer than single men, but married men are a lot more willing to die.
- Any married man should forget his mistakes—there's no use in two people remembering the same thing.
- A woman marries a man expecting he will change, but he doesn't; a man marries a woman expecting that she won't change and she does.
- A woman has the last word in any argument; anything a man says after that is the beginning of a new argument.
- There are two times when a man doesn't understand a woman: before marriage and after.

—JOHN MAXWELL, *Winning With People*

"Promises may get friends, but it is performance that keeps them." —BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

"When a relationship has a successful history, some may imagine that the work has been accomplished. But that is no more true than imagining that successful gardeners can skip watering and fertilizing this year because of their good track record. The fact that you have experience and confidence in your relationship

means that you know what needs to be done. It does not mean that you can ignore things that need to be done because you have done them before. The task of a successful relationship never ends because the point of a relationship is to build toward the future, not the past." —DR. DAVID NIVEN,

100 Simple Steps to Great Relationships

- Some Relationships are for a REASON
- Some Relationships are for a SEASON
- A Few Relationships are for LIFE

"You cannot neglect your relationships and expect them to grow." —JOHN MAXWELL

[Love] bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. 1 CORINTHIANS 13:7-8

Four Active Ingredients to Keep Your Relationships

1. Bears All Things—to cover with forgiveness

"People with long-term relationships have a distinct habit. When asked about their partners, they don't bring up a long list of complaints. It's not that their partners are perfect, but their tendency isn't to dwell on faults. In fact, people in long-term relationships not only spend much more time thinking about the good traits of their partner but also tend to see redeeming features even in their faults. These people see the complex reality that is another person's and recognize that within everyone are both admirable and regrettable qualities, but that within most us the admirable qualities predominate.

—DR. DAVID NIVEN

100 Simple Steps to Great Relationships

2. Believes All Things—to invest time and energy

3. Hopes All Things—to offer encouragement

"Encouragement is the greatest value you can add to another life."

"Satisfaction in a relationship is eight times more reliant on recent feelings and the ability to perceive improvements than it is based on the history of the relationship."

—KARNEY & FRYE, 2002

4. Endures All Things—to continue with reliability

Every long-term relationship requires the following:

Wade through a few things that are difficult.

Work for many things that are needed.

Wait on some things that take time.

Watch out for those things that can be harmful.

Wave good-bye to personal things that are selfish.

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