

Quality #1: Connecting with People

Partnership – the ultimate connection:

In preparation for practicing and mastering The Seven Principles of Intrinsic Validation, we would ask you to consider the principle of partnership and how this principle can assist you in more effectively connecting with others. We will consider two forms of partnership. First, partnership with a higher power and second, partnership with other human beings.

Consider four questions:

1. Is there a power in the universe greater than me?
2. What name do I assign to this power?
3. What is the primary mission of this power?
4. How can I be in alignment and congruent with this power and its mission?

If there is an abundant universe and we are to receive abundance, is it reasonable to believe that there is a power that governs abundance?

If you are struggling to give this power a name, know that we have no judgment around this question. We have asked this question numerous times and have received numerous answers such as God, Heavenly Father, Jesus, Jehovah, Elohim, Infinite Intelligence, The Abundant Universe, Energy, Mother Earth, and more. The name you choose could be the same as mine or could be different. If it is the same, we share a very similar belief system. If not, we still share similar belief systems.

When we ask the question about this power's primary mission, almost categorically we get the response, "Hmm, I've never thought about that before." However, after careful and deliberate reflection most conclude that this power wants us to be happy, to experience joy, to live abundant lives filled with meaning and purpose. I believe this to be true. Can we gain agreement regarding this conclusion?

If there is anything else you would like to add to this mission statement, please do so. It will be important for us to bring this additional insight into our conversation so that we can discover how this, too, can fit nicely into our discussion.

To become congruent with this power, we have two basic options. Option A: Hold our hands up to the heavens, call this power by name, and proclaim, "I am worthy to receive. Give me my piece of abundance." Option B: Hold our hands up to the heavens, call this power by name, and ask, "How can I actively partner with you in bringing abundance to the lives of others?"

Which of these two options is more likely to be congruent with this abundant power? Which option feels more like a desire to escape and avoid stress, pain, and frustration? Which option feels more like a desire to engage in life, embrace principles, connect with people, create value, and contribute to the world? What is the likelihood that Option B will result in a partnership and a more fulfilling, meaningful, purposeful, joyful, and abundant life?

Imagine approaching each day as an active partner with this abundant power in bringing abundance to the lives of others. How would we start our day? On what would we be more focused, us or others? Would we focus on all the things we have to do, or all the things we want to create? Would we be reactionary or proactive?

How would we proceed through the day? What would be different in our communications, the conversations and connections with those we love the most? Would we find the good? Would we listen for doors? How would we approach clients, customers, prospects, co-workers, employees, employers, managers, direct reports, and the strangers we meet on the street – every human being we encounter? Would we be a walking talking example of agape love?

What are the chances that we might look for opportunities to better serve others? What are the chances that we might be more focused on their needs than on our private challenges and burdens? How accountable would we want to be for how we invest our day? Would we waste our day lamenting past mistakes or worrying about future events?

How accountable would we want to be for how we invested our natural or acquired talents? Would we be slothful and unwise or good and faithful partners? As we learn to maximize our talents in the service of others, what are the chances that this abundant power will endow us with even more talent?

As partners who understand and apply these principles, how much more organized, focused, committed and productive might we “want” to be? How would we approach tasks that otherwise might seem difficult, or boring, mundane and repetitious? What impact would this have on our results?

How excited would we be to return and report the accomplishments of our day to our partner? What are the chances that we will feel more alive, more valuable, more trusted, more trusting, more capable, more committed, and experience greater results? What are the chances that this power will commute our life sentence and free us from our emotional and financial prison? As we become increasingly abundant, what are the chances that we will become an even more effective partner? And lastly, what are the chances that we will sleep peacefully in spite of the fiercely burning fires of life that may be raging around us?

Partners focus on how they can create abundance in the lives of others. They listen and Intrinsically Validate everyone. They engage, embrace, connect, create value, and contribute. They do not seek their “piece of abundance” but instead actively participate in the sacred process of creating abundance and eventually become abundant – giving and receiving freely. They bring value to the lives of others and receive value in return. No scarcity. No fear. For what would they have to fear when the power that governs all abundance is their trusted and trusting partner?

Parenthetically, in the second and third qualities of an Intentional Creator, Setting Realistic Goals and Achievable Expectations and Competing Task, we will discuss in great detail how this power participates in both mental and physical creation – albeit very differently in each. We will also discuss specific daily practices that engage this power so that this quality can be alive in your life. If we want to live our dreams in tangible reality, we will want to know how to become an active partner with the power that governs abundance.

As we become an active partner, we will want to be become better partners with others, starting with those we love the most.

Loving Relationships:

Caution: Before we proceed down the relationship road, if you are living in an abusive relationship, these principles may not apply. Seek assistance and counsel immediately from a person qualified to provide guidance. You do not have to do this alone.

Are you married, engaged, involved in a budding relationship or just interested in finding “that one true love?” If so, consider the following. This relationship is or will also become a partnership.

As a partner in a loving relationship our sole mission is to bring abundance to our partner and then working together, to any children in that partnership. Every word and every deed will be designed to lift and build – inspire and encourage. Every thought will be about finding ways to bring out the very best in our partner and our children.

A couple of years ago, Ramona and I were standing at the front door of our home watching and waving as two grandchildren headed home. It had been an interesting weekend to say the least. Both grandchildren were boys and both under the age of four. Both had a sinus infection which put a little damper on the weekend but didn't really slow them down.

Earlier that day Ramona went to church while I held down the fort for a couple of hours. While on my watch one reached into his diaper and gave the couch a brown racing stripe. The other knocked over the popcorn and a glass of orange juice that spilled on one of my favorite Persian rugs. Oh well. I love them so much all I could do was laugh.

Weekend over there we stood at the door exhausted. I turned to Ramona while reflecting on our seven children who are all married and rhetorically asked, "How did we ever do it?" Ramona didn't miss a beat or turn her head. With a sly smile she responded, "WE didn't." She has an amazing sense of humor and an ability to speak the truth without it stinging – too badly. We both erupted into laughter.

One night while reflecting on how patient Ramona has been all of these years, I penned the following:

The Ladder

At times I am frustrated, angry, annoyed.

At times I am depressed and can't fill the void.

At times I am tired of working so hard every day.

At times I am withdrawn and have nothing to say.

At times I feel ill from living in fear.
At times I feel inferior, uncertain, unclear.
At times I feel insignificant, a dead fly on the floor.
At times I feel impoverished left wanting for more.

At times I am overconfident, overindulgent, and loud.
At times I am complacent, lazy, thoughtlessly proud.
At times I am wealthy at least as worldly things go.
At times I am undoubtedly the star of the show.

Then there are times when my awareness is heightened.
I climb out of the maze and my eyes are enlightened.
Oh, the price that is paid to live life next to me.
May I climb up the ladder more often and see!

Let's consider the following: What has it been like to be in a relationship with us? Have our thoughts been more focused on our needs or on the needs of our partner? In this form of partnership it is "easy" to become complacent, comfortable and/or controlling – three cancers that plague relationships. Is it time for right turns in our relationships – engaging, embracing, listening, connecting, creating value, and contributing so that our relationship can become a healthy, trusting partnership again?

How we treat our partner in public can be very telling. Following a recent speech, a man approached Ramona and shared the following.

“My wife is a little shy, but she wanted me to share that she could tell how much you loved Dave by how you looked at him while he was speaking. It was as if you were hearing him for the first time.” Ramona was sitting on the front row. I remember seeing her. She was encouraging me – adding to my heart. She wanted me to be my very best. She was pulling for me. She is the real deal. This was not an act and it was discernable.

In discussing this occasion with Ramona, she shared two other memorable experiences. The first occurred when one of our son’s former college roommates came to visit. He was sitting in the living room. Ramona entered and he graciously stood. Ramona said, “I wanted to call his mother and thank her. I felt so honored.”

The second was experienced one evening following a family event. A young relative and his two young friends gave Ramona a ride home. Arriving at our home, she waited in the car for one of these young men to open her door. One turned to the other and said, “I think she is waiting for you to open her door.” He glanced over his shoulder while continuing to walk, “We’re not on a date.” In deep contrast to the first experience we uncover a blight that is pandemic – a general lack of deference for women. Opening a car door is not about weakness or neediness, it is about respect.

I often observe how men treat their partners in public. Though often silent, the message rings loud and clear. Many treat their mate as a true partner, someone they admire, reverence, respect, and esteem. With deference they open doors, walk side by side or a few inches

behind. Their partner is the object of their focus. It is as if they are saying to the world, "This is my queen, my love. Isn't she amazing, beautiful, capable, and complete. I adore her." Imagine how valued this woman feels.

Sadly, I also see a few men callously walking ahead, mate in tow. They enter a theater and walk down a row and sit. It is as if they are saying to their mate, "Come on. Keep up. Don't slow me down." It is as if they are saying to the world, "I may be stuck with her tonight, but I am still available." Or, "I'm cool even if she isn't. She used to be beautiful. I am embarrassed to be with her." This may seem harsh and may even offend some. That is not my intent. We would hope that all can become increasingly conscious of their partner's needs.

Remember Dr. Hartman's report that people hold back 40%+ of their cooperation and productivity until we have valued them as human beings? Our partner may be the most important human being in our life. If we want more out of our relationship it may be time to make it more about our partner.

Far too many relationships are plagued with hurtful and often harmful innuendo, sarcasm, the need to be right, and unnecessary competition. Some actually believe that criticism improves performance. Others view their mates more like providers or housekeepers instead of partners.

In our relationships, have we been a giver or a taker? Have we been a peacekeeper or scorekeeper? Have we ever insisted on being

right? Have we ever needed to be in control? Have we ever sent one of those little verbal jabs across the family airwaves? Have we ever gone to bed angry? Have we ever let our partner go to bed angry due to a challenge we could have resolved but stubbornly clung to? How often have our thoughts centered on our needs versus the needs of our partner? If so, what impact have these challenges had on our relationship? If we were to make a total commitment to be a partner with the power that governs abundance in bringing abundance to our mate what might change?

What was it like when we first fell in love? Want to rekindle that passion? Let's explore the three principles that are foundational in turning a relationship into a partnership - commitment, trust, and intimacy.

Commitment is required in four areas of our life – financial, physical, emotional, and spiritual. Often several areas of commitment are addressed in a single action.

A financial commitment includes a shared vision regarding buying decisions, investments, bank accounts, debt management, planning and budgeting, wills and trusts, and insurance. What resistance, if any, do we give or get when these topics are in need of attention?

A physical commitment includes taking care of our body by eating healthy and exercising. After all we want to live a long life together. Are our thought processes supporting or sabotaging our objectives and efforts in this areas of commitment? How hard is this one?

An emotional commitment involves a total commitment that this is the person for whom and to whom we will give all of our attention, passion and romantic love. No trap doors. No escape hatches. This commitment requires that we keep our eyes, mind and heart focused solely on our partner. It is amazing how much more beautiful or handsome a person becomes in reality when we faithfully practice this principle.

A total emotional commitment demands monogamy. If you have any concerns about how to sustain romance in a monogamous relationship go out and buy the book, *Hot Monogamy*, by Pat Love, and read it out loud with your partner.

If partners only knew the impact that wandering eyes have on commitment, trust, intimacy, and ultimately their partner's self-esteem, they would immediately choose to be chaste. The deadliest form of wandering eyes is pornography. It negatively impacts our ability to connect with others by objectifying human beings. It promotes deadly and destructive fantasy that artificially creates arousal and counterfeits the heightened feelings reserved for intimacy - self-centric satisfaction, one of the most harmful of all left turns. It can drive a person deeper into an emotional cocoon supporting reclusive tendencies and isolating a person from reality. It can destroy self-trust. Avoid it like the plague that it is.

This is a very difficult addiction to break. And it is an addiction. Recent studies show that this addiction physically and chemically alters and damages the brain - Shrinkage of dopamine receptors creating a

craving to meet ever decreasing functionality of our pleasure centers in the brain. The release of oxytocin and vasopressin can create the bonding a person to a virtual mistress of sorts. Pheromone confusion that can impact a decline in birthrates and population has already put several countries at serious risk.

An article published in January of 2008 in *The Journal of Adolescent Research* describes 87% of young men and 31% of young women viewing pornography, with half viewing weekly and one in five daily or every other day. This is not just a moral or character issue – it is a harmful addiction and it is crushing connection with people especially in committed relationships.

If you are struggling with pornograph, measured by making promises to yourself and/or your mate and then breaking those promises, it is time for professional intervention. Here is the truth. Until addictions such as these are conquered we cannot expect our relationship to become a partnership. Everything about pornography is antithetical to the quality of Connecting with People.

The roots of a spiritual commitment begin when we sit down with our partner and answer the “four questions.” It is very helpful when both share the same answers – same belief system. However, this is not always possible. For now seek to find unity with questions 1, 3 and 4 (is there a power greater than me, what is it’s mission and how can I be congruent with that mission?). When we reach agreement on the existence, primary mission, and choosing to become partner with this power, we can begin to build a strong and lasting partnership. However,

we may need to liberally apply The Seven Principles of Intrinsic Validation to accomplish this feat. Let us be a good listener and validate our partner's opinions.

As a partner, our primary responsibility is to assist our mate in becoming all that they can be. This starts by creating a safe place for growth, one that is honest, nurturing, positive, and supportive. What would our relationship – our partnership – be like if both partners, starting with us, made a total financial, physical, emotional, and spiritual commitment?

Trust includes self-trust, giving trust to others and being worthy of trust. Much has been written on this subject including my favorite book in the topic, Stephen M. R. Covey's seminal work, *The Speed of Trust*. Bottom line: Trust is the natural outcome of making and keeping commitments. As a partner, we will never want to do anything that would cause our partner to question our intentions or actions.

When I think about the principle of intimacy I reflect on an event from a few years ago. While driving home from the office I was listening to Og Mandino's Ten Scrolls – specifically Scroll II: *I will greet this day with love in my heart*. I had one of those awareness moments - one of those "I should have been paying more attention at the time" moments.

Earlier that morning Ramona and I were having a conversation. I was so pre-occupied at the time with my pending schedule that I missed the significance of her commitments for the day. As I listened to Scroll II,

I suddenly wondered, “Is she as exhausted as I am and in need of support?” I got an idea.

With the scroll still playing in the background I called home. Ramona answered.

“Hi, Sweetheart. What are we having for dinner?”

“I’m so sorry. I haven’t had time...”

I interrupted,

“Would it assist you if I brought dinner home?”

“That would be great,” she responded with the relief I had anticipated.

“Done. Love you.”

“Love you, too.”

I stopped at a local restaurant and picked up dinner. I then went next door to the flower shop for a bouquet of spring flowers. As I walked into the kitchen Ramona turned around. There I stood, dinner in one hand and a beautiful bouquet of flowers in the other. Ramona starting crying. I remember silently saying, “Thank you, Og, for raising my awareness! The Scrolls are working.”

Intimacy includes far more than just sex, albeit sex is magnificent and frankly celestial when experienced between true partners. Intimacy also includes a gentle touch, a soft kiss, a warm hug, a kind and

encouraging word, an inspiring note, and taking time to listen and intrinsically validate. We have vivid imaginations. Let's use our imaginations to create more intimate moments in our partnership. When we get an impression trust it and go with it.

There may also come a time when we will have to step up in a loving relationship and carry the majority of the load due to illness. This was driven home last year when the wife of a dear friend contracted a serious illness. They had been married for forty years. Her symptoms were similar to a severe case of rheumatoid arthritis and it was debilitating. Recently we were discussing how he used to occasionally do the dishes or make the bed thinking that he was doing a favor for his sweetheart. "It was as if I didn't eat food or sleep in my own bed," he shared. Now he has assumed all household duties. He concluded, "All of that nonsense is out of my system now. We are in this together. We have always been in it together. I just needed a wake-up call to see that more clearly so I could do my part."

The Quality of Connecting with People requires that we become partners with the power that governs abundance in bringing abundance to the lives of others. This may require holding our negative life experiences in a different way – engraving them on our hearts and owning them instead of dragging them behind us – so we are emotionally available to be a partner.

When we make the commitment to be a partner we will be given clarity. We will know what needs to be done. We will create deep and lasting relationships. We will be more focused and productive, creating

different results in our own lives and the lives of others. Most importantly, we will create lasting, loving partnerships with the ones we love the most. All of the other qualities of becoming an Intentional Creator rest on the quality of Connecting with People.

Go to the end of this chapter where it is written, “Dear _____,” That’s the name you’ve assigned to this power. I would like you to write a letter to this great power. In this letter, explain why you may have been resisting, holding back, resenting, angry with, or whatever might be the case for you. What has been your relationship or lack of relationship with this great power? What has happened in your past that has caused you to want to take this journey by yourself?

Speak boldly. Speak honestly. It’s been my experience that this power is our greatest cheerleader and does not take offense by our words. In my life, this would be my Father in Heaven and his Son, Jesus Christ.

What is the name you assigned to this power? Talk openly. Talk candidly. Trust that there is a power greater than you that wants nothing more than to bring abundance and joy into your life as you bring joy and abundance into the lives of others. We recommend being a partner in every way, so that you can learn to trust this power and this power can trust you.

We’re about to move to Quality #2: Goals and Expectations. I will share how this power manifests when we are consciously engaged in

constructive visualization. We will want to be connected to this power, working to bring abundance to the lives of others and, in so doing, actively participate in this process called abundance, in which we become abundant.