



to Building Good Relationships

By: Philip Legge RNC, CH, CDMT

Last month in our article in *The Rural Route* we were talking about the “4 Pillars of Building Good Relationships”. These 4 Pillars of **Patience, Kindness, Unselfishness** and **Forgiveness** are essential to create and build caring, respectful relationships between people. We also talked about how the quality of our relationships with our family, loved ones, and friends is one of the biggest factors in determining our level of mental and emotional health.

In working with thousands of clients over the years with their fitness and health programs, we have also found that improved physical health has a positive influence on our mental and emotional health, and that improved mental and emotional health has a positive influence on our physical health.

RELATIONSHIP WRECKERS

If we don't actively practice the 4 PILLARS, of patience, kindness, unselfishness and forgiveness, we can find ourselves practicing the opposite which are the 4 ‘Relationship Wreckers’. The ‘Wreckers’ are **impatience, hurtfulness, selfishness, and revenge**. When we practice these attitudes, ‘roadblocks’ will develop, and we will not have healthy, happy and fulfilling relationships.

GUILT

The first problem that we experience when we practice the ‘Relationship Wreckers’ is guilt. Over time the level of guilt becomes uncomfortable, and the most common way to cope with guilt is by ‘blame-shifting’. What this means is that we will criticize and find fault with others

so we don't feel as guilty about our own behaviour. It has also been called ‘passing the buck’, where we think and say things like, “It's not my fault, because if he hadn't done that...”, or “It's because of what they did that I...”

ANGER

If we continue to practice the ‘Relationship Wreckers’, the level of guilt will continue to rise, and we will put more and more blame on others. The practice of criticizing and putting blame on others will result in anger towards other people, and this can eventually damage all of our relationships.

FEAR

As the relationships fail, we are left alienated and alone, and fear takes over.

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Left to right: Kenzi, Nelly, Tammy,
Bill, Rose & Tamara

Everyone wants to love, and to be loved in meaningful, satisfying relationships. When people are left alone with broken relationships, the level of fear can be overwhelming. All of this leads to poor mental and emotional health.

We can see that guilt, anger and fear do tremendous damage to our relationships, and to our mental and emotional health. However, when we decide to focus on building good relationships by practicing the 4 PILLARS, many good things start to happen. Practicing forgiveness and confession starts to lower the level of guilt. As the level of guilt declines, the level of anger declines as well. By practicing patience, kindness and unselfishness the relationships in a person's life will improve, and that lowers the level of fear. The result is that our mental and emotional health improves, because **guilt, anger and fear have been replaced with forgiveness, love and peace!**

PROTECTING OUR MIND AND HEART

There are influences in today's society that are damaging to our relationships, and to our mental and emotional health. It is important to guard our mind and heart from the negative effects of the news, and the media. Television programming and the Internet offer a steady stream of news from around the world that often shows people practicing the 'Relationship Wreckers'. Some of the common themes in television, movies, music, books, and video games can be violence, horror, lying, lust, anger, killing, deception and revenge. We should filter out these negative influences to **protect our mind and heart**. What we see, what we hear, what we think about, and what we talk about will have a strong influence on our character, and how we treat the important people in our life. If we expose ourselves to bad things, then bad things will come out of our life, but if we fill our mind and heart with good things, then good things can come out of our life!

REMOVING THE ROADBLOCKS

It is important to spend private time alone with each important person in our life every week in order to try and connect with them. Ask them to read this article, and the two previous articles on "Improving Mental and Emotional

Health", and "The 4 PILLARS of Building Good Relationships". If they are willing to work with you, there is a good possibility of improving your relationship with that person. Confessing our wrongs and asking for forgiveness is important because without confession and forgiveness there can be no reconciliation or healing. **Remember, to be forgiven ourselves we have to be willing to forgive others.**

If possible try and spend at least 10 minutes several times a week going 'eye-to-eye' and 'knee-to-knee' with your spouse, and each of your children individually. Sitting facing each other is a good idea if you are both comfortable doing that. In the beginning that might be a little tense especially if there is hurt between the two people. Rebuilding the family relationships is essential because they are the foundational relationships in a person's life. There will probably be more blocks, hurts and walls in the relationships than you imagined, but be patient and work through them by practicing the 4 PILLARS of patience, kindness, unselfishness and forgiveness. If all goes well, there will be humility

and closeness, and probably tears, and eventually unity and peace! **One of the main goals of life** is to lower the walls of division between people, and to promote reconciliation, so we can enjoy rewarding, fulfilling relationships with the important people in our life.

In the next article we will be talking about the supporting qualities for the 4 PILLARS, and how to "Put It All Together". ✨



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