

The Family Is A Precious Partnership

By: Philip Legge RNC, CH, CDMT

In our last article in the April issue of the Rural Route Magazine, we looked at how partnering with people and being a ‘team player’ is *essential* for our success in every area of life. In all successful partnerships or teams, there is a line of authority which means there is leadership to provide direction, to assign responsibility, to offer incentives which motivate, and to give correction when people step out of line or will not cooperate. To create a good partnership the first step is not to find people who can get along with each other, but to find people who know what it means to be part of a team or partnership.

The need for partnering is essential for success in business, on sports teams, and in the government and the military. In fact, in any organization of people, if we want to do ‘our own thing’, and go ‘our own way’ by resisting authority, we will soon find ourselves off of the team, or out of the partnership. Most of us have experienced being in a partnership or on a team, and we can understand the necessity for leadership and a line of authority in the ‘boss/employee’ relationship in business, or in the ‘coach/player’ relationship in sports, or in the ‘sergeant-major/private’ relationship in the military.

In any group of people who want to work together towards a common goal, there has to be leadership and a line of authority, otherwise people will do whatever *they* want, whenever *they* want to do it, or perhaps they will choose to do nothing at all! The result is disorganization, confusion and conflicts, and very little can be accomplished which means that everyone loses. Some people have the idea that if they are rebellious and disobedient they will find freedom and happiness. They think if they keep breaking the rules, and going against anyone who has authority they will eventually be free. However, what they will find is that all their relationships will be damaged, and they will eventually be left isolated and alone. Every time a relationship is damaged and broken we experience emotional pain. If rebellion

becomes a habit and the precious family relationships are broken in a person’s life, then mental and emotional health will quickly decline.

Let’s talk about the family now. How does all of this apply to parents, children and siblings? The family is a unique team or partnership, and it has a different focus than other teams or partnerships in society. The goal in business is to make money, and the goal in sports is to win games, and the goal of government and the military is to protect and provide for the country. The focus in the family should be on *unselfish love*, where the goal is for each person to be cared for, protected, and nurtured. The love relationship in the family is unique and very precious, but it doesn’t happen automatically. It has to be worked on and practiced for it to be successful.

To build the love relationship in the family, we have to practice patience, kindness, unselfishness and forgiveness. These four character traits were discussed a year ago in a series of articles we wrote in the Rural Route Magazine on building good relationships. These articles are still available if you contact ‘Legge Fitness Superstores’.

So, what are some of the other characteristics of ‘unselfish love’ in the family?

Humility – Honoring others above ourselves, and putting others first.

Controlling Our Tongue – Not arguing, fighting or saying unkind, hurtful words.

Forgiving Others Immediately – Not holding grudges, or trying to get even.

Being A Loyal, Loving Servant – Living to help and serve our family members.

Good family leadership is partly based on authority, but also by the example we set. The example that we set, meaning ‘how we live our lives’, is a more silent and gentle way to lead, but is often more powerful and more effective than leadership by authority only. The best long-term form of leadership in a love relationship is based on setting a *good example* of unselfish love in the family partnership. Relationships that are based on selfishness are going to fail. We all

know that there are influences in society that actually promote selfishness, pride and rebellion. These influences are very damaging to relationships in the family, and to all other relationships between people. In the family there can be no fighting or arguing because it is a love relationship. People who argue or fight are not acting in love. A good leader in the family should not shout, argue, fight, or be involved in a ‘power struggle’. A good leader in the family cannot be abusive, dictatorial, hurtful, critical or mean. If we want others to obey our instructions and guidelines, and follow our good example, we must show submission to all the authority figures in our own life. We must be obedient and submissive to our parents, older siblings, elders, teachers, spiritual leaders, employers, government, police, and others who are in a position of authority.

There are many different lines of authority, and most people are on multiple lines of authority throughout their lifetime. In some lines we can be near the top, and on other lines near the bottom. We can never escape lines of authority in our life. The choice we have is whether we want to be a good follower and leader, or a poor follower and leader. We have seen that everyone on a line of authority can be both a follower *and* a leader. A good leader must first be a good follower, and a good follower will make a good leader. Leaders can lead by example, and also by authority. Followers can also lead, but only by example. Good leadership is based on having authority, but also even more effective is the example the leader sets. It is interesting that *the person who makes the best leader, is really the person who sets the best example*. In some cases, followers can have an important and positive effect on the partnership by the example they set, even though they don’t have authority. Good leaders can learn a lot from their followers, and improve their leadership abilities by observing the good character traits of their followers. If we are not a good follower or good leader, we will eventually be pushed down the line

of authority, and sometimes way down. Probably the lowest position in society is to be locked up in jail, but even in jail people are on a line of authority.

Some people think a line of authority is burdensome and restricts their freedom. However, a line of authority is a blessing. It helps to set us free from the bondages of selfishness, pride and rebellion. Another blessing of a line of authority is that people can enter into a partnership with others, and experience the friendship and fellowship of working together for the benefit of everyone in the partnership. This is one of the great joys of life! Without the line of authority the partnership would fall apart. When family partnerships fall apart it causes serious mental and emotional pain and damage.

Let's consider now how our words can hinder our relationships. If we are hurting inside, we can use our words to hurt other people, and then they will often retaliate and say hurtful things back to us. This can become a hurt-for-hurt relationship, which is the opposite of a love relationship. Most of us realize that it can be hard to control our words at times, and words can do a lot of damage to the partnership. A talking 'fast', or a talking 'sabbatical' is when we take a break from talking for a period of hours, or perhaps a day. This can be an effective way to start gaining control of our tongue and what we say to people. However, it is not enough just to control our tongue, we must learn to control our thoughts and emotions as well. Words come from the inner person of our thoughts and emotions. So our inner person has to be kind, tender-hearted and forgiving if our words are going to be as well.

Getting back to the family, one of the most important things for parents to teach

their children is obedience and submission. It's impossible to teach obedience and submission if the parents are in rebellion to the authority figures in their life. So, by setting a good example of submission to our parents, to government, to employers, to teachers, etc. our children will want to respect and obey us in the same way. When we love and respect someone, we want to please them by cooperating and doing what they want. If there is a conflict and power struggle between the husband and the wife, the children can copy that bad example, and there can be conflict and disagreement between the children and the parents, and between the children and each other.

In some families there is deep-seated resentment, bitterness and anger which are the result of years of selfishness and conflict. Selfishness and hurtful words are like poison in a relationship. Confession, forgiveness and kindness are necessary to help heal the relationships. None of us live up to these ideals or goals all of the time. When we fail, we need to confess it, apologize, and admit that we have failed and ask for forgiveness. Selfishness, pride and rebellion destroy relationships, but forgiveness, humility and submission heal relationships. Confession and forgiveness were discussed in a series of articles in the Rural Route Magazine from a year ago. They are still available from 'Legge Fitness Superstores'.

Husbands and wives should not refer to themselves, or to each other as the 'boss', or the 'coach', or the 'sergeant-major', because that means they are looking at the rest of the family as 'employees', 'players' or 'privates'! After all, *the family relationship is not a business relationship, or a sports team, or the military.* The family should be a love relationship,

and that is why we have terms such as 'husband' and 'wife' and 'children'. After the husband and wife marry they are united, and become a unique and precious partnership. If they are blessed with children, those children are unique to them. Their children are literally from their own bodies, and share physical, mental and emotional characteristics of both the husband and the wife.

In summary, we should be thankful for the lines of authority in our life, because they encourage us to grow and mature, and get free from the childish demanding attitudes that we would otherwise have. We should also be thankful for the privileges and responsibilities that we have on the lines of authority in our life. The family should be the most supportive and effective setting to learn the value of obedience and submission. This is because of the environment of love and forgiveness that is the foundation of a good family. Out of all the partnerships or teams we may be on in our lifetime, the family team is the most important and precious of them all!

Next month in the Rural Route Magazine we will be looking at Nutrition, and how with a little bit of education, it can be a *key ingredient* for turning our health around. ✨



Legge Fitness Superstores is located in **Listowel & Fergus Ontario**. For more information regarding their Courses or Seminars call 1-800-695-7338 or email info@leggefitness.com. Visit their website www.leggefitness.com to view their full line of health and fitness products and services.

Past Rural Route Articles we've written that are available from Legge Fitness Superstores

Dec 2014/Jan 2015 - Improving Mental And Emotional Health

February 2015 - The 4 Pillars Of Building Good Relationships

March 2015 - Roadblocks To Building Good Relationships

April 2015 - Completing The Framework For Building Good Relationships

May 2015 - Cardiovascular Training For Fitness, Health And Youthfulness

June 2015 - Cardiovascular Training For Fitness, Health And Youthfulness – Part 2

July/August 2015 - Cardiovascular Training For Fitness, Health And Youthfulness – Part 3

September 2015 - Cardiovascular Training - Review

October 2015 - Cleansing And Detoxification With An Infrared Sauna

November 2015 - How Can Hydrotherapy Help Us?

Dec. 2015/Jan. 2016 - Is Gravity Our Friend?

February 2016 - Benefits Of Natural Health Care

March 2016 - Why Does Massage Feel So Good?

April 2016 - Freedom Through Partnering

May 2016 - The Family Is A Precious Partnership