

## MUTUALITY

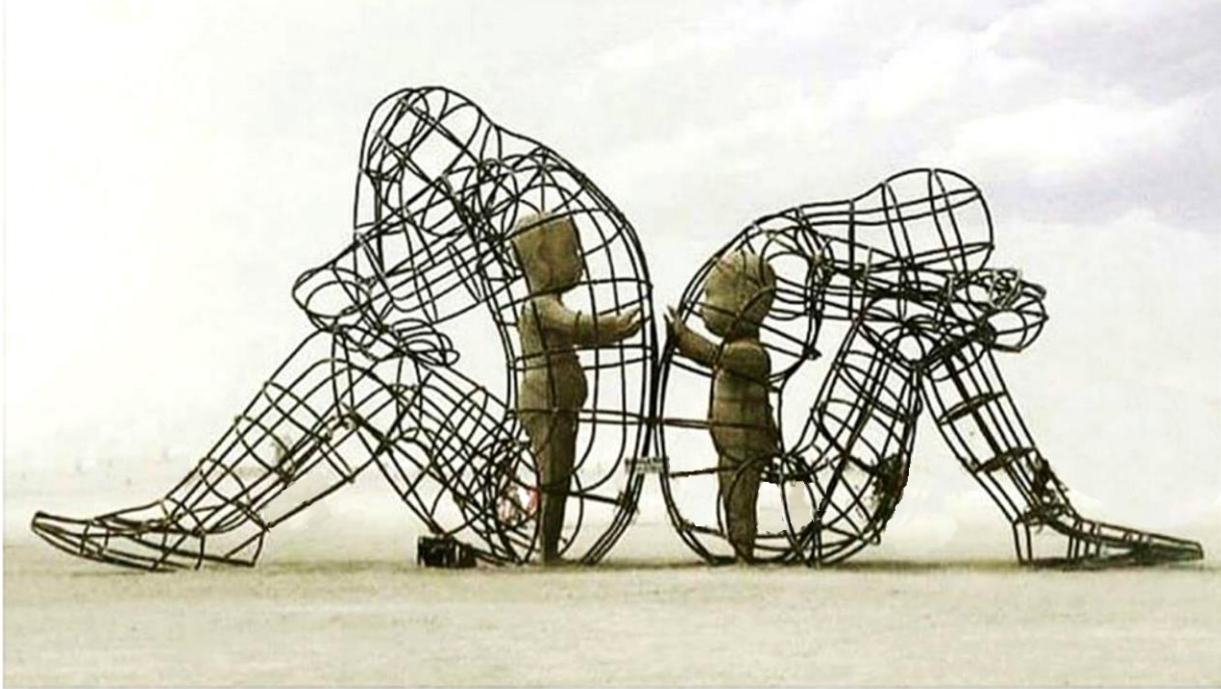
Relationships Matter: God is relational, He made humans in "our" image (Genesis 1:26-27). The simple gift of human interaction at an intimate level is the single most significant factor in determining life satisfaction. No matter how much you desire an intimate relationship with another person, it will only be as deep, true, loving and intimate as dictated by the person who wants it the least.

Freud said that man's core nature was hedonistic, that is pleasure seeking and avoidant of pain, which can cause problems with addictions. That may be true of our self-centered fleshly side; but in the spirit, once we have been saved, our core nature is relational. Only one relationship that you will ever enter into will always be deeper, more intimate, truer, and more loving than you can go, and that is your relationship with God. In any relationship with God, it isn't Him who wants it the least. Jesus died so that we could come into relationship with God. It is also true that your relationship with God will always be reflected in how you treat others. John 14:6/1st John 3:15-24/James 1:17 & 4:8(a)/2nd Corinthians 5:21/Hebrews 4:12-16/John 15:13/1st John 3:16

According to Murray Bowen's Family Systems Theory, Triangulation is the smallest stable emotional relationship. It tolerates dissonance well as it shifts around as needed to diffuse tension through the three-part relational system, necessitating that one or both partners in a significant relationship bring another person into the couple's emotional bond, either covertly or overtly violating boundaries between the two.

Ironically, a triangle is a lot more stable than a dyad but creates an *odd-person-out*, (*outsider*) which is an *uncomfortable* position that produces anxiety. Triangle patterns change with increasing tension, fluctuating between the "comfortable insiders" and the excluded or rejected *uncomfortable outsider*. Someone is always *uncomfortable* in a triangle and causing or instigating change. As tension arises in the dyad of "comfortable insiders" the most *uncomfortable* person in that relationship will move closer to the previously excluded or rejected *outsider* in a never-ending dynamic of conflict versus harmony, creating significant distress and exacerbating mental health and/or relational problems. In periods of increasing tension or conflict, (those issues listed in Galatians 5:19-21) the *outsider* is the preferred position being furthest away, creating distance from the problem until tensions subside.

However, there exists a healthier (more optimum) triangulation, that is one between each relationship partner and their relationship with God. Instead of creating dissonance, it creates stability, harmony, and peace (and produces the fruit of the spirit as listed in Galatians 5:22-23). It also creates more compassion, and acceptance for each other, allowing the couple to see each other as equals, and themselves as an "us" instead of falling into a polarized and self-centered - me/them mentality.



OneHeartTLC: May your hearts be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery that is Christ Himself (Colossians 2:2).

(We express and mirror our relationship with God in our relationships with others)

**IBMeUBUWeB1NChrist**