



How giving underpins all relationships

By John Hendry OAM

The basic elements of a quality relationship are trust, forgiveness, integrity, hope (optimism), and compassion. Each of these are important individually, but in concert they substantiate the relationship. Each is established upon “giving” for without giving, none authentically function. How does giving reside in each?

1. **Trust:** Trust directly means you give to another, you expose yourself, you become vulnerable, for to trust means that you surrender to another on the basis that it is safe to do so. You show faith in them. You are willing to give without caveat. This is done on the understanding that you will be respected and protected and that the person or persons receiving this gift will be kind, empathic and giving.
2. **Forgiveness:** Forgiveness enables trust to be re-established and for this to be done so with respect and dignity. Forgiveness simply means

that you “give-for” the relationship to exist and function, to re-establish trust. The capacity to forgive expresses an unconditional faith in the other person.

3. **Integrity:** Integrity means that each relational partner gives by behaving morally within the relationship. When mistakes are made these are acknowledged and accepted and the partners move to repair the relationship through forgiveness. Integrity is important for it is understood that the intention of each partner will try always to do the “right thing”.
4. **Hope:** Hope is the promise to actively give, to promote the mutual purpose of the relationship and to always care for the other. Hope implies that each party will give to strengthen the relationship and to enable the other to do so as well. Hope provides confidence to act and engenders a faith in the relationship.

5. Compassion: Compassion establishes “giving care”; it fosters giving through understanding the emotional state of the other in each and every lived context. Compassion registers the intention and action to follow The Golden Rule and The Hippocratic Oath which are also posited in Integrity (see 3. above).

Quality relationships are established upon contribution, giving. The relationship has value added to it by each partner giving to the relationship. When relationships are established upon taking rather than giving then value is subtracted from the relationship, and each party, and the relationship is diminished. Giving enables trust, forgiveness, integrity, hope and compassion to work in concert to appreciate the relationship. On the other hand, taking disables each of these and depreciates the relationship.

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