

Connections

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(Be sure to see LETTERMAN'S TEN REASONS NOT TO JOIN THE ISSUES FORUM at the end of this issue).

Namaste without Naïveté: Part II

In our first two issues we described the mission of Singlestosoulmates which included the value of approaching others with an attitude of the Hindu greeting, "Namaste" - the God in me welcomes the God in you. However it can be dangerous to approach strangers, those we're dating, or even those with whom we've been in a long term relationship with naïveté.

Some reasons why - at one extreme, destruction, exploitation and deception DO exist. There are killers, rapists, and single people who don't tell their partners about their venereal diseases, about forgetting their birth control pills, about their unspoken intention to end the relationship as soon as they are sexually gratified. Naïveté can also show up in couples, when a secret affair or even secret resentment is exposed, or when one's partner of six years unexpectedly leaves.

There are no guarantees to protect us from all the surprising psychic or physical hurts in relationships. Isolation or paranoid wariness seems too expensive as alternatives to naïveté. Further, it is our understanding that the VAST majority of hurting that we do to others, and that is done to us, is done unintentionally, i.e. without conscious intent or even awareness that the other will be hurt. When people hurt others, MOST often the perpetrator's intention is simply to protect themselves from perceived or anticipated harm, criticism, rejection, etc. Sometimes, the effect of the other being hurt is dimly realized by the perpetrator, although the intention is still exclusively self-protection. So what can we do?

First - We do believe there is evidence of evil. (See Scott Peck, M.D, *People of the Lie*). We also are familiar with the scientific evidence regarding the efficacy of prayer, (See Larry Dorsey, M.D. - Healing Words). We therefore recommend some form of intercessory prayer for God's, for Truth's protection, against evil both from without and from within ourselves.

We also believe that one of the best protections from naïveté, while maintaining a healthy attitude of Namaste, is simply voiced by George C. Scott in the movie "The Flim Flam Man". His character, a proficient con-man declared, "You can't cheat an honest man." Paradoxically, if we are willing to take our own moral inventories fearlessly and continuously, we'll be less likely to be vulnerable to the moral deficiencies of others.

There are many reasons why this is true in relationships. One is that if we demonstrate to our date, our wife or our teenager that we are willing to hear how we make it difficult for them to tell us their truth, they will be less likely to hide their truth and later surprise and hurt us. They'll be less likely to fester with unspoken resentment and abruptly leave the relationship. They'll be less likely to secretly betray us or even their own values - IF we make it safe enough for them to be open with us, **if** we're willing to invite their telling us how we make it less than safe to tell us their full truth.

This way of promoting our own safety by becoming ever more a safer person to tell truth to takes courage. But as you invite and hear ways in which you're less than perfect, remember that it's your own foundational goodness that is making it possible for you to invite such critique.

TRY IT OUT!

- ✚ Invite your relatively new dating partner or your spouse of 10 years to tell you what you do that makes it difficult for your partner to tell you about his or her complaints, about your partner's different opinions, or secrets.
- ✚ Be sure to mirror your partner - try to repeat accurately what your partner says in detail.
- ✚ Be sure to validate your partner - tell them how you can see the sense in what he or she is saying. Deeply consider your partner's words. Tell your partner how what he or she is saying is true. At least tell your partner of your willingness to explore how it might be true.
- ✚ Be sure to empathize with your partner – tell her or him how you imagine your partner's experience of your perceived behavior makes him or feel.

LETTERMAN'S TEN REASONS NOT TO SIGN UP FOR CONSCIOUS DATING AT SINGLESANDSOULMATES™

10. I already know all there is to know about love and relationships.
9. Besides, if they aren't shrinks or haven't written a book, what could I possibly learn from other Forum members?
8. (See #10) And as far as sharing my wisdom on the subject is concerned, let somebody else do it. I'm too busy with more important things.
7. I hear they talk about prayer and spirituality, so they must be some kind of rabid evangelicals or other right-wing religious nuts.
6. Too much work for me. Unlike any other resource I know, they actually want me to demonstrate that I understand the previous comments, before rebutting them or offering my comments.
5. They even suggest that I outline the sensibleness of the other's comments before offering mine or rebutting theirs. No real relationship would involve that kind of thing.
4. There's just no time - Letterman, Survivor, EBAY, CSI, etc.
3. If a relationship takes a lot of work and intentionality (i.e. isn't spontaneous), you have the wrong partner- **period**.
2. I'd rather find out the rules to get a better lover, than do the work necessary to become a better lover.
1. I do fine with my friends who agree that they too **can't believe** that he/she saw it that way.

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