



What do you want?

THE INDEPENDENT FORUM FOR YOUR WHOLE LIFE

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Hello from the Open Grove!

This month, we turn our attention toward the most basic aspect of relationships – relating. Many relationships fail simply because people lack the skills of relating. We plan on spending the month looking at ways to improve our relationships by improving our relating skills. We begin by exploring “what we want” and how what we want impacts our relationships. We then turn our attention to learning how to apologize. Our third mini-newsletter will discuss arguing. And finally, we take a look at learning to accept the people in your life.



What do you want?

It sounds like an easy question. Yet, between the media noisily telling us what we want and our own busy distraction, we easily lose track of what we want. The key to happiness and success in every relationship is knowing what you want. How do we begin to sort out what we want?

First, we must acknowledge that what we want is important. There is no higher priority knowing what you want for yourself and your life. It is the cornerstone to successful life. Let's take a look at some of the obstacles that might stand in the way of looking at what you want.

“I feel selfish if I focus on what I want!”

Many people believe that if they focus on what they want, they are being selfish. These feelings mask a deeper desire to be a “good person”. It's time to take this desire out of the cellar of your mind and into the light of day. What would it take to be a “good person”? Who do you know that is a “good person”? Whenever you find yourself worried about being selfish, turn it around so that you focus on your desire to be a good person.

“I don't have time!”

Life is filled with competing pressures. Yet there is nothing more important than knowing what you want. Give yourself the gift today of simply asking yourself what you want. Try it in

the car on your way to work or in the shower. This simple, yet powerful question will begin to reorient your mind, body and spirit toward what you want even if you do not come up with profound answers to the question. Asking the question is enough.

“I don't deserve to have what I want”

True happiness is achieved by knowing what you want and believing you can achieve it. If you find yourself feeling as if you don't deserve what you want, it's time to reach out for some help from a friend, therapist, support group or religious counselor. If not resolved, your lack of deserving will limit you in every aspect of your life.

“I want so many competing things”

Often when we make a list of what we want, we find competing things on the list. For example, we might want a committed relationship yet don't want to change our life. Start with where you are. Make a list of what you want. Look at what you are currently getting in your life. Most of the time, you are getting what you truly want. If you want to change your life, you must first look at what you are willing to give up. Look deeper at your list. Most people's list of wants can be boiled down to one or two statements such as “I want to be a good person”, “I want to be successful in my life”, or “I want to learn all of my life”.

“I have no idea what I want”

People who don't know what they want either don't take the time to ask themselves or don't listen to the answers. Most unhappiness can be solved by simply asking “what do I want in this situation?” and listening to the answer.

Knowing what you want is the cornerstone of every successful relationship. It's time to turn your attention to what you want.

Whose job?

Frequently, we know what we want, but we don't believe it's within our power to get it. We might believe that our partners “should” give us what we want. Our job, as adults, is to work toward getting what we want. It's not our partner's job to give us what we want. It is our job.

Many relationships are created under the guise that the other person will fulfill your wants. Both parties believe this fantasy. Yet eventually these relationships falter because it is impossible for someone else to give you what you want. Look at your relationships. Do you have relationships that are based on your belief that the other person (place or thing) will give you what

you want? It's time to clean up these relationships.

Your wants and desires are your responsibility. Other people can act as a catalyst to move you forward, but they cannot give you what you want. Period.

Feeling restless?

Feelings of restlessness are a symptom of not knowing what you want. Many times, we make significant changes in our lives based on our restlessness, not our wants and desires. Before you make a move, take the time to figure out what you want. Don't throw away a significant relationship simply because you are feeling restless.



It's all about relating!

Everything in your life is a relationship. You have a relationship with your work and the people at your work. You relate with your family and partner. You relate with your pets. You have a relationship with your capacity for success. You have a relationship with money. Every aspect of our lives is tied to some kind of relationship.

It's time to clean up those relationships by sorting through what you want for yourself and your life. The easiest way to start this process is to simply begin to ask the question: “what do I want?” Take the time this week to ask yourself this question every day. You'll be surprised at what you learn.

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