

Three Foundations of Successful Relationship – *A Model Of Relationship*

By John Doan and Sharon Lewis

How can you be in authentic relationship with yourself and with the people in your life? From our work we've determined that authentic relationship with yourself and with others rests solidly on three critical principles; **intention**, **allowing** and **staying**. These are small words that pack a wallop. They are three words that can change your state of mind and set you on the path of healthy living and healthy relationships. Let's look at what those words mean in the context of developing a healthy relationship with yourself and with others.

Intention

While there is no fixed entry point, in many respects, it all starts here. And here is within you. Who do you want to *be*? How do you want to show up in your life? How do you want to be in relationship? Sometimes we operate on autopilot without being aware of what intention is driving us. One of the keys to cultivating an authentic relationship with yourself is being conscious about positive intent. What are your hopes for yourself and in relationship with others? *Positive intent is critical*. What is it you're trying to accomplish here? With all the concern about "low self esteem" we can easily forget to get out from under the negative self-talk to connect with the underlying positive intent. It is there. Sometimes it's as simple and as profound as I want to be calm. I want to be happy. I want to love and be loved. I want beauty. I want truth. Sometimes it's as complex as I want to discover what life work will fulfill me and how to create a livelihood from that. I want more out of my job or my relationship. You might think it's weird or impossible when you get right down to it but getting in touch with your own positive intent is the first step. Hold that intention in your conscious mind. Then move to step two.

Allowing

Allowing is about giving yourself permission to want, to dream, to intend something positive without judging yourself as silly, frivolous or selfish. And, extending the same to those you are in relationship with. Having positive intention is more than okay - it is nurturing and leads to growth. It is not weird. It doesn't matter what your mother thinks about it or what your friends will say or whether your boss will approve of it. This is YOUR positive intent. Let yourself dream. Give yourself permission to want. No one gets to be wrong, including you. And, because no one gets to be wrong, it is about giving the other person the same. This makes it a process of openness - giving others permission to react however they react. It is not about judgment or assumptions. It is about letting all the voices be heard, getting everyone's truth on the table. From this place, there is no exclusive ownership of the truth. You can allow what the other person has to say as valuable and true for them and you can still hold on to your truth - that your positive intentions are equally important and valuable. Allowing is not about agreement -

it is about being open and spacious. Allowing is not about giving up or giving in, it's about being courageous; about making room for positive intention on all fronts, even in the hard places.

Let's be really clear about boundaries at this point. There is a big difference between authenticity and abuse. Caring and safety are essential parts of this discussion. Authenticity involves empowered choice - not power over someone else. When you are grounded in real, positive intention and, through allowing, create the space for authenticity in yourself and in others, you have the foundation for healthy living; a foundation that neither creates nor tolerates any abuse. To this foundation we add one more crucial element.

Staying

This is where the work gets done. This is the space where the growth happens. By staying with self, continuing to allow yourself to dream and to hold on to your positive intent your authentic self gains the strength to be brought into the world. It is by staying that you learn to let the judgments of others wash over and past you while your intention remains. We propose that staying is a powerful choice to remain open to possibility for you and for others. Staying is not a commitment to things remaining the same. Staying is a commitment to honour what is important to you. There is no health, no growth, and no aliveness from a place where change is not an option. It may be necessary to have a situation change to honour your positive intention. Staying creates the space to allow that to happen. It "holds" the space for your relationship to self to continue and develop. When you can do that for yourself, you can do it for relationship with another or others. It allows you to re-connect with positive intention in the cycle. It also creates the space for new possibilities. By holding on to what is important to you, your dreams stay alive. By staying in a relationship conversation, you see it through to some resolution that creates the change called for in the relationship, whatever that may look like. The more difficult the issue, the more change involved, the more important is the staying.

As you can see these are three simple words with a lot of meaning behind them. Developing an authentic relationship with yourself takes time. Creating healthy relationships with ourselves, with others and with the world starts right at home - your relationship with you. These three principles operate in cycles. You will see yourself needing to bring your intentions into conscious focus, allow them to be and stay with them over and over again. It starts within, perhaps passively for some and then slowly moves outward. Some people find journaling about the stages helpful to track this journey. Many work with mentors or Life Coaches to connect to their intentions and help them with allowing and staying long enough to take the action that they want. Everyone who makes a commitment to creating authentic relationship finds that it pays incredible dividends. An authentic relationship with yourself helps create a healthier mind in addition to improved physical health and better relationships. Authenticity also boosts fulfillment for an overall happier life. The choice is yours. Remember these simple words, intention, allowing, staying. Let them create the space for authenticity in your life and watch what you create in your world.

Sharon Lewis and John Doan are Life and Executive Coaches as well as Accredited Facilitators in Emotional Intelligence. Together, they are the Co-Founders of “The Foundation for Intentional Relationship”. To integrate and personalize your learning, look for classes and coaching with “The Foundation” at www.foundation4relationship.com.