



**Sue and Jeff Allen**

# The True Purpose of Relationships

---

## **We're better together**

We help you connect to other people, learn about yourself and develop honest and mutually fulfilling relationships.



visionworks

# The True Purpose of Relationships

---

Life is a journey and we are here to learn and to grow - we are here to evolve. We believe that one of the best and fastest (though not necessarily the easiest!) ways to do that is through a relationship. We are all drawn to seek happiness with another person, but there isn't a formula for a great relationship and many fail in misery. What then is the central purpose of relationships?

Here in 4 topics are what we believe to be the true purpose of relationships:

## Purpose #1: Getting Past the Ego

We build up our ego structure as we grow up from tiny, innocent babies, from being 'nobodies' to becoming 'somebodies' in the world. This ego structure firms up throughout our formative years to become functioning, 'rational' adults – and in the process, that ego structure gets skewed and adapted to compensate for the pain of our unmet childhood needs.

A healthy sense of self is essential for day-to-day functioning; we need to have a good sense of who we are; know where our personal boundaries lie; what we are prepared to do for others and where we 'draw the line.' This is especially true in parenting! Anyone who has brought up young children will tell you that without firm yet fair boundaries, children will keep pushing to find out where the limits are.

The thing about the ego is that it believes in separation. When it gets out of hand – as it often does in situations like cut-throat business dealings – it gets competitive, ruthless and obsessed with its own importance. This is one reason why reality TV can be so entertaining; people enjoy watching egos collide and the drama that ensues.

It is our ego selves who fight our partner to get our needs met, to be in control and therefore not have to feel our painful buried emotions. It is our ego selves who believe in win-lose, rather than win-win in our relationship dramas. It is our ego that is confronted every time we get upset.

We spend much of our adult lives unpicking our skewed ego structure. Born a blank slate, eventually we will die and merge back into the mysterious place from whence we came. Our growth as human beings – especially once we have survived a mid-life crisis – is a process of unravelling, of returning to our 'original goodness', our original innocent state. It is also about understanding the falseness of the skewed ego structure, and meeting and resolving the pain that caused it to form its unique constellation within us in the first place.

Feeling our feelings is not the most popular leisure activity. People spend their whole lives avoiding having anything to do with their emotional selves (something the British are particularly good at).

We numb out with all manner of addictions, compulsive and obsessive behaviours. blissful experience to hang out here for any length of time. We would, generally, much rather zone out in front of the TV than feel our aching loneliness or address our unexpressed grief. However, once you have the courage to feel whatever comes up, you will, in time, get to experience what we call your original 'shining light', the part of you who is connected to the whole of creation. This is what we call oneness or 'big love'; and it is a blissful experience to hang out there for any length of time.

We fall in love blind to the fact that love will not save us from our pain. Quite the opposite. Love will, eventually, bring up all that pain, in order for it to be healed and resolved. Love will, if we allow it, dissolve the skewed competitive, separate ego self. It is our opinion and experience that true love pushes you out of your unhealthy ego structure, out of separation, and, ultimately, into partnership, oneness and the understanding that we are all but separate expressions of one unified whole.

## Purpose #2: Reflecting Back Your Unhealed Self

Our ego minds are complex animals. Our conscious, rational self is the smallest part of who we are. But in this age of science and reason, our subconscious self goes largely overlooked. Much of the academic, scientific world bases itself on the concept of an impartial observer. But is it even possible for anyone to observe anything impartially?

Most of us act as if our conscious world is solid and based on absolute truths. But if ten people witnessed an accident, would they all come up with the same eye-witness report? No, the reports would differ. When siblings and parents recall family events, their accounts can differ wildly too. Who is right? Is anyone right?

We cannot see the world around us as it actually is, we can only see it through the filters of our minds. And we certainly do not see others for who they actually are. An off the cuff remark from our partner that might seem 'insensitive' or hurtful to us, can often sound perfectly reasonable to the next person. Our unique positive and negative reactions to other people give us constant clues about ourselves.

We can never fully see ourselves – we need others to reflect ourselves back to us and your partner is the perfect person to do that. The chemistry between you is about your subconscious selves meeting and clicking. There is no logic or rationale to it; you just feel it, you just know that you want to be with this person.

In fact, if you ever want to know what is buried in your subconscious mind (and therefore automatically driving you on a deeper level) then take a good look at your partner – they will be acting it out perfectly.

### Client Story:

Jennifer was a good-looking woman in her thirties who sat for two days in one of our workshops, saying very little. Eventually she got to speak and her composure went. Breaking down in tears, she recounted how her relationship had recently collapsed. Her partner just walked out and left her.

After listening to the story, we asked her to set her conscious mind aside and answer the following question with the first response that came to her mind: 'Why did she want the relationship to end?' The reaction of other participants in the workshop was shock, for we had obviously not been listening. But Jennifer's face told a different story. It lit up with a huge smile (which often happens when a subconscious aspect is brought to light). She went on to say how she felt this relationship had been holding her back. It dawned on her that on some level she had left the relationship first. Her partner had actually reflected her own doubts perfectly.

The bulk of our actions and behaviours is powered by our subconscious drives, that vast iceberg of complex feelings and emotions that glides around with us throughout our lives, until we are willing to look at it head on. It is hard to accept that as mature, logical beings, often with high-powered jobs, PhDs or other successes under our belts, we are not the rational creatures we thought we were. It is hard to admit that we actually don't know ourselves at all.

The best way to know yourself, as we have said before, is by accepting that your partner is reflecting all those hidden subconscious complexes back to you, in the magic mirror of relationship.

### Try this:

Think of two situations you consciously believe you didn't want to happen in your present relationship, or in your last relationship. Now ask yourself, in relation to each situation, the intuitive question, 'If I were to know, why did I want this situation? What did it allow me to do or say? How did it suit me somehow?'

Trust the first answer that pops into your mind, however unexpected it may seem.

## Purpose #3: Learning to Give and Receive Love

The Vietnamese Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh once said:

*'When you plant lettuce, if it does not grow well, you don't blame the lettuce. You look for reasons it is not doing well. It may need fertiliser, or more water, or less sun. You never blame the lettuce. Yet if we have problems with our friends or family, we blame the other person. But if we know how to take care of them, they will grow well, like the lettuce. Blaming has no positive effect at all, nor does trying to persuade using reason and argument. That is my experience. No blame, no reasoning, no argument, just understanding. If you understand, and you show that you understand, you can love, and the situation will change.'*

We treat plants with thoughtful kindness and loving support, why not our partners? Why not our families? No one around us is going to get any better unless we give him or her our love and understanding; the world out there is only going to shift, if we are willing to shift. Only by changing ourselves will we make a difference. That is the power of love; it changes everything – and the place we learn that is in our relationships. If love is what makes the difference, then when you become bored of your partner, when you know their habits, likes, dislikes and sexual preferences, is the answer to change them? If we go down this path, we will hit that bored point sooner and sooner – and our relationships will have shorter and shorter time spans. Over the years we have heard thousands of people complain about their partner's shortcomings. But after some self-examination, they discover the thing they are complaining about is what they are also doing to some degree.

It is essential that we use our partner as our barometer, our own personal reflection of what we are secretly doing. When they are happy and doing well it is because we have been giving and the reverse is also true: If your partner has a problem then you have a problem – and at the core of every problem, there is something we are not giving.

### OUR STORY: Learning to Give

#### Sue says:

In our relationship, an area of friction was around handling money, paying bills and keeping records. After we got back together again I felt it was Jeff's turn to take care of our finances. He agreed as he was eager to please me, but within six months we were in all kinds of trouble: the phone was cut off, there were red electricity bills, no cheque stubs had been filled out and we were overdrawn.

Part of me wanted to gloat that he was so irresponsible, but then I realised that I could give this practical help to our relationship. For me it was no big deal. I obviously found it easier than Jeff to manage our finances, so why wouldn't I just do it? As I did so, I saw there were lots of other ways Jeff gave to our relationship and I could appreciate them better. It also changed how we discussed money. Instead of being an area to be avoided, there was more teamwork. Because the truth is Jeff can make (as well as spend) money easily, and since we have combined our talents, there has been much more abundance and success.

As we give truly in our relationship, things will change and move forward. If you believe you are giving and nothing changes then that is sacrifice; giving with an agenda is not true giving.

If you ever notice a 'significant other' around you – especially your life partner – failing in any way, then it means you have stopped giving and started taking from them. Either that or you are competing with them. The answer is to give up our judgments on them and instead extend ourselves to them, reach out to love and support them. As we give what we have in the relationship, they will give back to an equal extent – they will bloom and change before our eyes.

All of us want a great partner and we may spend hours fantasising about one; if only we did then how happy we would be, living the romantic dream life that is the stuff of our great love songs. But if you really want a great partner, then you have to become that great partner. It is a two-way street.

### Try this:

Make a list of everything you want in a partner. Take your time and be thorough; what are all the attributes that would contribute to this being a successful and long-lasting relationship?

Once you have enthusiastically compiled your list, ask yourself, 'Am I those things? Am I willing to become those things so I can be a 100% partner?'

It is through our true, unconditional giving that we learn the next great lesson of life: the art of receiving – because what we give always comes back to us. Learning how to give and receive in equal amounts is the greatest lesson of relationships and partnerships. It sets up a flow in our lives, it moves us forward and creates abundance. The highs become higher and the lows are never quite as low again.

## Purpose #4: Happiness and Success

Happiness and success in life is a common purpose for all of us. If we are not happy, there is a second common purpose: to heal ourselves until we reach happiness again.

Our happiness comes from learning to have great relationships, with our partner, our friends, our children and, of course, the trickiest place of all, within our birth family. The most obvious place to start however, is with your significant other, because everything that is broken in our minds will come up within a committed relationship. We then have a choice; either blame the other person, demand that they change, get rid of them, or... Or we take responsibility for our feelings, communicate honestly about them, resolve the issue and move on – for within every problem there is a gift, a lesson, an insight, if you look at it from the right perspective. There is always something to learn about ourselves.

This process is how relationships evolve – and it is how you evolve too. You get to move past your psychology, your skewed ego structure, past your old limiting subconscious beliefs to a more successful and abundant life. Working through your patterns together (or alone – it only takes one), means you get to have more honeymoons as you spiral back into a new level of harmony, communication and understanding with each other. Issues, it seems, often come round in spirals; we go through them layer after layer. Time and again, our clients tell us that once they have worked through a layer of issues with their partner, their lives open up, things start to flow and there is more success and happiness in their lives. They reach partnership and true intimacy.

**If you want to explore your situation in more depth then book a coaching session with Sue or Jeff Allen or sign up for one of our events.**