



Relationships Make You Conscious, Not Happy, by Eckhart Tolle

With the acknowledgment and acceptance of the facts also comes a degree of freedom from them. For example, when you know there is disharmony and you hold that "knowing," through your knowing a new factor has come in, and the disharmony cannot remain unchanged. When you know you are not at peace, your knowing creates a still space that surrounds your nonpeace in a loving and tender embrace and then transmutes your nonpeace into peace. As far as inner transformation is concerned, there is nothing you can do about it. You cannot transform yourself, and you certainly cannot transform your partner or anybody else. All you can do is create a space for transformation to happen, for grace and love to enter.

So whenever your relationship is not working, whenever it brings out the "madness" in you and in your partner, be glad. What was unconscious is being brought up to the light. It is an opportunity for salvation. Every moment, hold the knowing of that moment, particularly of your inner state. If there is anger, know that there is anger. If there is jealousy, defensiveness, the urge to argue, the need to be right, an inner child demanding love and attention, or emotional pain of any kind -- whatever it is, know the reality of that moment and hold the knowing. The relationship then becomes your sadhana, your spiritual practice. If you observe unconscious behavior in your partner, hold it in the loving embrace of your knowing so that you won't react. Unconsciousness and knowing cannot coexist for long -- even if the knowing is only in the other person and not in the one who is acting out the unconsciousness. The energy form that lies behind hostility and attack finds the presence of love absolutely intolerable. If you react at all to your partner's unconsciousness, you become unconscious yourself. But if you then remember to know your reaction, nothing is lost.

Humanity is under great pressure to evolve because it is our only chance of survival as a race. This will affect every aspect of your life and close relationships in particular. Never before have relationships been as problematic and conflict ridden as they are now. As you may have noticed, they are not here to make you happy or fulfilled. If you continue to pursue the goal of salvation through a relationship, you will be disillusioned again and again. But if you accept that the relationship is here to make you conscious instead of happy, then the relationship will offer you salvation, and you will be aligning yourself with the higher consciousness that wants to be born into this world.