



Technique of the Dance, by Anne Morrow Lindbergh

Relationship is not strangled by claims. Intimacy is tempered by lightness of touch. We have moved through our day like dancers, not needing to touch more than lightly because we were instinctively moving to the same rhythm.

A good relationship has a pattern like a dance and is built on some of the same rules. The partners do not need to hold on tightly, because they move confidently in the same pattern, intricate but gay and swift and free, like a country dance of Mozart's. To touch heavily would be to arrest the pattern and freeze the movement, to check the endlessly changing beauty of its unfolding. There is no place here for the possessive clutch, the clinging arm, the heavy hand; only the barest touch in passing. Now arm in arm, now face to face, now back to back -- it does not matter which. Because they know they are partners moving to the same rhythm, creating a pattern together, and being invisibly nourished by it.

The joy of such a pattern is not only the joy of creation or the joy of participation, it is also the joy of living in the moment. Lightness of touch and living in the moment are intertwined.

But how does one learn this technique of the dance? Why is it so difficult? What makes us hesitate and stumble? It is fear, I think, that makes one cling nostalgically to the last moment or clutch greedily toward the next. But how to exorcise it? It can only be exorcised by its opposite, love. When the heart is flooded with love, there is no room in it for fear, for doubt, for hesitation. And it is this lack of fear that makes for the dance. When each partner loves completely then he has forgotten to ask himself whether or not he is loved in return; when he only knows that he loves and is moving to its music -- then, and then only, are two people able to dance perfectly in tune to the same rhythm.

--Anne Morrow Lindbergh