



## Three Universal Human Processes, by Angeles Arrien

There are three universal processes that every human being is involved in whether you're in Africa or China or among the island people of the world. They are, first, the work with self. That is the longest relationship that you are ever going to have. Who you eat with the most, sleep with the most, shower with the most is yourself. That's the relationship that you have to really begin to trust. Be a great friend unto yourself. The second universal process is one that we are all involved in as human beings: our relationship with each other; one-to-one work. Then the third process is a group work, collective work, community work, or teamwork.

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The work with self involves attending to character development. Human beings are here for two purposes: one, to learn about love and to express love, and the other is to create. What is it that I am creating? What is my life dream or contribution that I want to make to the world, and how can I express what's in my heart? The love of friendship, the love that's found between a mentor and a mentee, or a teacher and a student is where we impact each other, and there's a

lot that can be done in that one-to-one work. Many of the cultures of the world believe that there is much we can do by ourselves, and that we can do with our partner, or with our friend or colleague, but there are a thousand and one things that we can do in community together or in a team. Many of the old cultures of the world know that you can only survive in community. For example it has been discovered that if you truly want to survive you must be in communities of at least eleven or more people.

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Some of us like being by ourselves. We like solitude, enjoy self-containment, and that work with self. Others hate being alone and hate solitude. Some like the one-to-one work, the relationship work, and others love being in groups. Some people hate groups, and love the one-to-one work and being with themselves. Still others love being alone, love groups, but when they get together one-to-one at lunch they get all shy and awkward. The mark of a healthy person is someone who is comfortable with themselves, comfortable if they were to just hang out with one other person, and comfortable in a group or team.

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--Angeles Arrien, in an Interview at Mount Madonna School