

A Revolution in Relating

Taken from the introduction to *Heart of Relating* Communication Beyond Ego

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A revolution in relating is underway across the globe: a paradigm shift in how we relate with all that exists in this extraordinary world. The *Heart of Relating* teachings play their part in this movement towards relating from our essential Self – the identity that lies beyond our ego.

My definition of “paradigm” is:

A particular way of thinking and seeing, valuing and experiencing our reality.

Human beings enter life with about 100,000,000,000 brain cells, a small portion of which are wired to oversee our basic bodily functions, but the majority of cells are unwired, awaiting programming from both the societal ways of our time and our particular life circumstances, family beliefs and values.

It is as if we, as youngsters, automatically don the invisible glasses of our culture – which all have a similar lens prescription – and through these lenses we perceive and frame our world. In addition, the colour and depth of tint of our lenses adjusts according to our unfolding personal interactions and life experience. We will continue to wear these metaphoric glasses until the realisation dawns that we have been viewing and interacting with life in a prescribed way. When this is brought to consciousness, we can question whether there are changes we feel drawn to make.

Change will, to some degree, happen naturally once we gain insight about what has been clouding our clarity, however, we will need to be proactive if we want change to last and become embedded in our actions. New habits are born by repetition of action, which grounds our head knowledge – hence the practices in the *Heart of Relating* course.

Heart of Relating focuses specifically on the shift in relating, which includes our relationship with ourself, others and life, but there are paradigm shifts happening in education, medicine, science, technology and other fields. Quantum leaps in awareness occur when the number of people consistently behaving in new and similar ways reaches a critical mass. The next incoming generation will then accept these predominant ways of being as normal ... until the desire for expansion and change is stirred in them.

Coming up is a simple model that encapsulates what I see as the main components of the two overlapping paradigms of relating at this point in history: the pervading “outside-in” paradigm and the emerging “inside-out” paradigm. This course is designed to assist the migration from the former to the latter, recognising that we are usually in a state of flux and that wherever we are right now is absolutely fine. It supports the truth of Eckhart Tolle’s statement,

If you get the inside right, the outside will fall into place.

In a nutshell, the outside-in paradigm of relating is one in which we often feel at the mercy of that which we perceive as being external and separate from ourselves. We communicate mainly

from our ego-identity, and failure, fault, blame, right and wrong, good and bad are all a natural part of our vocabulary.

When we are functioning from the inside-out paradigm, keeping our integrity by staying true to our inner truth is paramount no matter what's happening externally or what anyone else thinks of us. We perceive and relate from our essential identity beyond our persona; from the aware Self that perceives ego antics. We aspire to “stand with” rather than “separate from” others and life.

Cutting edge research and wisdom teachings agree that the energy behind our words – our state of being – forms the quality and direction of our lives and relationships. When we are not “at home” with ourselves – not feeling safe – communication tends to go pear-shaped leaving a mismatch between how we feel inside and the words that leave our lips. *Heart of Relating* helps us recognise when we have drifted off-centre and shows us how to return to the comfort of our home base. It points to what is causing dysfunction and helps create heartfelt, authentic relationships that embrace challenges as catalysts of awakening. The teachings also help us clean up and match our language to our feelings, and from this aligned place, any practical skills for effective relating have a much higher chance of working.

A foundational shift that happens when embracing the new paradigm is the move from an underlying belief like this:

Things are not right – I haven't got there yet, but I will make it one day if I keep trying.

To this:

Life is about being present with and opening to what's here now; whatever is presenting itself.

The *Heart of Relating* teachings support the release of striving, seeking and anything that belittles or pushes away any part of ourselves or others. They advocate compassionate acceptance of what's here now and remind us that we will miss what we are looking for if we search for it outside ourselves.

A new language will develop, of that I am certain; a language that will clarify the difference between the “I” we speak from as ego and persona and the “I” that is a knowing awareness that doesn't exist as a personalised entity. For now, I can only express myself in the language of our time through my own particular lens.

I suggest that you use the following model of the two paradigms of relating to place where you stand and where you would like to be – practising self-acceptance if necessary.

**The OUTSIDE-IN Paradigm of Relating
I'm on a journey to somewhere else**

The world outside my body is separate from me. I conceptualise what I perceive and then relate from my interpretations and opinions about it.

How other people perceive me is important. I often morph my behaviour to what I think others want, in order to get approval/results of various kinds.

I engage mainly with the spoken word and what is presented externally, rarely sharing the truth of what I feel inside. There is a mismatch going on.

I relate mostly from and to the human identities (persona) of both others and myself, e.g., appearance, roles, conditioning, status, gender.

My circumstances, history, what others have told me and what I see as my limiting character traits prevent me from fulfilling my dreams.

My ego reacts and my emotional state swings in relation to others and my external world, which I believe is responsible for sending me off-balance.

I imagine I know a lot about others and often pigeonhole them, speak on their behalf, generalise, stereotype, gossip, blame and judge.

On balance, I mostly value: speed, setting goals and making things happen; fixing things and people; the intellect, logic and information.

I am entitled to get my needs met by the world. It's ok to tell white lies, coerce others, and compete to get what I want: there is scarcity out there.

This has gone wrong. Who failed? I deserve to be made to feel bad about this, and to expose and punish those guilty of mistakes or wrongdoings.

I resist, resent, and complain about things that feel uncomfortable and consequently sabotage my natural sense of well-being.

**The INSIDE-OUT Paradigm of Relating
Wherever I am, I'm home**

Everything's connected. I experience being of and with life and relate using my full body's senses – including feelings, intuition and reason.

Staying true to my own integrity and authenticity is paramount. I notice relationships blossom best when I relate from who I am... beyond ego.

I listen and attune to what is going on inside others and myself, behind the words and presenting behaviour. I aim to align my words and feelings.

I relate from an expansive identity that embraces the non-physical Self, i.e., awareness and intuition, and connect to this in others when I can.

I welcome the awareness of what is limiting me and trust that I can find surprising ways to break through. I expand and open to my limitless Self.

I aspire to be in the driving seat of my responses to life's circumstances and know that ultimately, I am responsible for my behaviour and state of being.

I speak for myself from what I feel to be true in the moment. I am curious and interested in our differences and keen to learn from them.

I value: silence; spaces to just be; feelings; not knowing; sitting with what's not ready to move... until it is; receptivity; insight; and intellect/logic etc.

I meet my own needs where possible and clearly and cleanly express them when necessary. I trust that my true needs will be/are being met somehow.

I compassionately accept "failure" and allow it to spur creative change. Every challenge I encounter offers insights about who I am.

I live closely with my inner smile and am grateful for life's rich diversity and the opportunity before me to wake up to greater awareness.

**All is in flux, both paradigms merge in
us in varying degrees.
Neither is wrong
Where do you stand now?**

Model by Carmella B'Hahn

Heart of Relating (the book) and *Heartful Relationships* (The Course) are available from: www.heartofrelating.com