

## **Happiness Is a Question of One's Attitude**

A couple's inner attitude lays the foundation for every relationship. Whether the alliance will ultimately succeed or fail largely depends on to what degree one considers their partner's happiness more important than one's own. Sooner or later, being continuously self-centered and tight will strangle every kind of happiness, but if one manages to put the well-being and development of the partner before their own, then everyone wins. Even better, a couple can mutually grow by doing meaningful activities together. By deliberately maintaining one's shared motivation for growth and developing a deep, mutual trust, the shared, positive impressions increase, and with them, the ability to give to others. If one realizes how much one's partner longs for happiness and also suffers sometimes because of disturbing emotions and incorrect ideas, then one has a foundation of experience to work from and can learn to benefit many people in a skillful way.

The art of love lies in the ability to give one's partner space. True love, without sticky attachment, always has the taste of freedom. Generosity and trust feeds the feelings and actions that allow partners to mutually learn and grow, reflects the priority that one's partner develops, and that the surrounding environment thrives. Love succeeds when one isn't interested in controlling or limiting one's partner, but rather proudly enjoys the development of the couple's inherent qualities: the power, beauty, and capabilities that both can joyfully radiate into the world. A relationship should offer the possibility for self-chosen development. If a couple stays together while doing so, then the connection is mature, and if they break up, but with understanding, they will be good friends again in future lives. One should continuously check whether one thinks more of the other person or more of one's own wishes, and if one can reach beyond "I-You." This way, a happiness that requires nothing from anyone develops—a main goal of meditators.

The biggest danger for new, deep relationships is when couples isolate themselves and avoid contact with the outside world. If the nights are already dedicated to one another, then days should be used to keep involved in the world and gain richness through the exchange with others. If this

doesn't happen, a lack or severely limited supply of news will soon lead to insecurity with others and an intellectual kind of poverty will arise—which is known as “boredom.” Therefore, it is vital to stay current, both in one's relationship and elsewhere in life, and to be sure that one is not being superficial with others, but is, instead, sharing something meaningful with them.

It is particularly important to pay attention to essential subjects in which politicians turn a blind eye. For example, the birth rates of different population groups should be considered well into the future, as well as equal rights for women, and the preservation of human freedoms and the Western values of our countries. Those who look beyond what is currently comfortable will realize that events, actions, and values are not merely “good” or “bad,” they should be evaluated based on whether they will bring about happiness or suffering in the long run, regardless of what is considered “politically correct.” A historically-informed and alert view not only ensures a positive result from an action, it also allows one to avoid a dangerous loss of time and quickly evade confusion. In this way, the framework for the most perfect of all accomplishments, fully developed people who radiate their insight onto a confused world, can arise. If one is ever unsure which direction to pursue, one should simply ask: which will bring more happiness and freedom to more people in 50 years?

A couple experiences the highest level of meaning and establishes the basis for lasting joy when they decide to drink together from the only everlasting source: the richness and perfection of mind. Only mind experiences happiness, and the richest and securest relationships are nourished through the strong wish to recognize mind and benefit others through this knowledge. The bridge that appears from people opening up to their partners gradually leads to a “We” attitude towards all beings. This unlimited experience not only sounds good, it also feels exceedingly liberating and gives the assurance that overcomes all dilemmas: if one thinks of oneself, then one has problems; if one thinks of others, then one has interesting tasks to fulfill.