

## **Workshop IV**

## **HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS**

**(M. Allison Reeves, M.A., R.C.C. 818-0146)**

All relationships are helped by good boundaries. Good boundaries bring respect, trust, and straight-forward communication. Relationships can always get better. Given that, the best place to start is by improving the relationship you have with yourself. All other relationships (with your friends, lover, family, employer, colleague, acquaintance...) will benefit.

The signs of a healthy relationship are numerous. A few of the signs are: respect, trust, clear kind language, allowing people to have their own emotions, straight-forward communication, gentleness. By continuing to bring in any one of these, a relationship will improve; healing relationships is an on-going process and is a good idea for everyone.

Healthy relationships bring out the best in us and each other.

The signs of an unhealthy relationship are numerous also. A few signs are: blaming, accusing, hurting, avoiding, shaming, withdrawing, and lying. Relationships can be damaged very easily. Being in unhealthy relationships wounds us emotionally, mentally, spiritually, and physically.

To create better relationships, I strongly recommend you become your own best expert. Some information and suggestions:

1) Our minds are filled with all our thoughts and it is these thoughts which create our feelings (emotions). Every single emotion has a felt-body sense. For example, in our society, many people feel nervous in their stomachs or angry in their jaw. Becoming aware of where you feel your emotions can bring you oodles of information about how you are feeling in a relationship.

2) Most people have real troubles with their boundary health. A good question to ask yourself is: whose issue is this anyway? If it is not yours, allow the other person to work it out themselves or ask you for help before you dive in and take over.

(anti-whiner technique), agreeing and distracting, replacing the word "but" with the word "and".