

## **RELATIONSHIP OF THE SPIRITS**

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**Premise:** 1) If we are in a committed relationship, we long for a relationship of the spirits! 2) It is possible to have such a relationship.

**Definition:** Relationship of the spirits is when two partners are able to connect as two spirits, pure and simple spirits, with the secure feeling of one's own lovability, and with a safe connectedness.

**The Obstacle:** War of the EGOs!

**The Way Out:** Take away the obstacle by following the 4-fold path to the relationship of the spirits.

### **4-fold path:**

- Right Understanding
- Right Ego
- Right Expectation
- Right Surrender

**Sincere Advise:** In the initial phases of developing this 4-fold path, do it under a teacher's supervision. Although not impossible, it is hard to give up old habits on your own.

### **Description of the 4-fold path:**

1) Right Understanding: Right understanding means to have love and compassion as the basis for understanding our partner's intentions, for the way we interpret our partner's actions, weaknesses, disturbing qualities, and aggressive tendencies. Right understanding means being mindful of not hurting the partner, out of love, and forgiving the partner, out of compassion. The relationship of the spirits is built on the foundation of the right understanding because it changes the quality of interaction – including the fights and their aftermath.

2) Right Ego: It is very important to understand that stopping the war of the egos (removing the obstacle) does not require what is generally called giving up your ego – always compromising, always setting your “self” aside -- in fact, it is about keeping the right ego and attempting to remove the wrong ego.

Ego has two meanings. The first meaning is Ego is the sense of “I” which sets “me” apart from “others”. Ego is that part of our psyche which is most in touch with external reality and makes us maneuver for our survival – physical and emotional. We need ego to manage independently in today's competitive world and to take care of our own needs.

We need ego to survive break ups and to separate from our parents. Ego helps us to be cautious and also allows us to take risks when we see the rewards.

This second meaning of ego is pride, both healthy self esteem and a destructive inflated need to be right. Inflated pride (I pride!) is an obvious hindrance in creating safe connectedness in a relationship. Hurt I pride is a wild beast! It can devour any sensibility and sensitivity. It can eat your sense of peace alive and it can also create fits of rage against the person responsible for hurting the beast. It uses curse words to denounce actions, it spitefully takes the spouse to the court for child custody and alimony, it rejects any humility, and it often creates armor no one can penetrate.

For relationships of the spirits to work, I-pride is the wrong ego and the rest is the right ego. Right ego allows us to keep the balance between the “animalistic pleasure seeking desires” and “doing the right things”, so important in a long term relationship. Healthy self-esteem allows us to be secure in “I am lovable” and become less possessive. Good ego makes us try to “work” on the relationship and also allows us sometimes to “give up”, however selfishly! This is the right ego.

I pride – the wrong ego -- keeps us away from self-exploration, from admitting our mistakes, and from extending our love sphere to include our partner, this ego is the wrong ego. Work towards keeping the right ego and removing the wrong ego if you long for a relationship of the spirits.

3) Right Expectation: Right expectation is to expect duality in our relationship: the practical side in which the complex adjustments to each other’s schedules, preferences, flare-ups, weaknesses, and jealousies need to be managed, and the spirit side in which the blissful union between two pure and simple spirits, spirits that surrender their ego (right and wrong both!) is experienced. Right expectation is to expect, accept, and balance such duality.

Right expectation is the key to the relationship of the spirits because it allows the freedom to be “ourselves” and yet making the relationship a special one. Right expectation has the patience that developing the right understanding and the right ego is work in progress, which means that there will be moments in which the I pride will show up and the compassion will be tested, there will be moments in which the conflicting needs of two egos would seem like an impasse, and there will be moments in which the two partners may not be in sync in their ability to have a true union. Right expectation would mean to allow such moments to happen without falling apart from disappointment. Right expectation would understand that “this is work in progress” and allow the spirits to emerge again in their pure form.

4) Right Surrender: What sets apart the relationship of the spirits from an ordinary relationship is the existence of the moments of surrender, surrendering our ego – good and bad – to the union of the spirits (not to the I pride of the other person). It is a mutual feeling of pure, simple, blissful, and safe union of two spirits which goes beyond the question “what about me?” It is about naturally wanting to give joy and pleasure to our

“beloved”. However rare such pure moments are, the deep awareness of such moments makes the relationship of the spirits a special one. The right surrender is the understanding that unlike the surrender to the God or to the Guru, this surrender does not require a perpetual and absolute surrendering of our ego, and yet it requires allowing moments of surrendering of the “me and mine” to the “us”.

The Right Surrender to your beloved would be with the Right Expectation that there are two co-existing lives, a practical and of the spirits, and that it is alright for the practical life to allow the Right Ego to fight its battles because they would be resolved with the Right Understanding.

### **Big Question:**

Are you sure we all want a relationship of the spirits? Not everybody talks about longing for more connectedness.

If you pay attention to the whispers of your own hearts and to the people in committed relationships, you will hear such a longing. When asked in our vulnerable moment, most of us admit to a longing for a more complete connection with our beloved. Depending on our own place in our own life’s journey, we are either simply amused by such longing, discard it, or feel a persistent restlessness. Some of us may have a relatively peaceful and supportive relationship and some may have a perpetually troubled one. In either case, the longing for a very SAFE “connectedness”, manifested in different ways, sexual, psychological, and on a “soul” level, is there. Such a relationship of the Spirits, more often than not, is not well defined in our consciousness, let alone an active search for it. We learn to discard the vague notion of the relationship of the spirits as simply “idealistic” or “airy-fairy” when in fact once we allow ourselves to understand our needs, it essentially boils down to the longing for the relationship of the spirits.