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MOTIVATED

THE MAGAZINE THAT MOVES YOU!

Walk a Mile in His Shoes

Honing Your Soft Skills

Together We Can Do It

Building relationships with people
from different cultures



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It is a simple fact that we cannot get by on our own. Take eating breakfast for example. Half asleep, or in a rush to get to work on time, it is easy to forget the people behind the scenes who make that breakfast possible.

Whether it is the farmer who grew the grain for our bread, the engineer who made sure we have clean water for our tea, or the truck driver who delivered supplies to the shop: our connections with others are endless. If we think about it long enough, we will find that we are linked to just about every human being on the planet.

The happiest people are those who acknowledge this interdependence, and who nurture warm and appreciative relationships with the people around them. Someone who is a genuine source of support and encouragement for the people around them is never short of friends and acquaintances.

People who are not appreciated often feel ignored or disliked, and the sour taste of neglect or even disapproval can linger for days or even years.

At the root of the strongest and most lasting relationships is a sincere wish for the well-being of the other person. Cultivating this thought sets in motion a chain of events in which we naturally learn to act with more warmth and kindness, and others, in turn, are more likely to respond positively towards us.

I hope this issue of *Motivated* will be a helpful guide towards building positive relationships, which is one of the most direct and effective routes to a happy life.

Christina Lane
For *Motivated*

Walk a Mile in His Shoes



By Curtis Peter Van Gorder

“Never judge a man until you’ve walked a mile in his shoes.”

If there was anyone who knew all about that, it was Mother Teresa. After having lived among the poorest of the poor for nearly 30 years (and she would do the same for nearly 20 more), she was awarded the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize. She began her acceptance speech with the words, “Life is life.” She went on to explain that all human beings are special and of great worth, no matter who they are, and that only when we have learned to respect that fact can we begin to help them improve their lives.

Most people would be happy to walk a mile in a pair of plush designer shoes or top-of-the-line athletic shoes, but how many would want to step into a poor laborer’s shoes?

When I was living in Uganda, East Africa, I found a discarded pair of shoes that became to me a symbol of Africa and its sweet-spirited but struggling people. It was apparent from the cement splatters that their last owner had been a construction worker—a human cement mixer. Like many others I observed there, he no doubt worked long days in sweltering heat with no protection against the sun, and had only a couple

of sticks of raw sugar cane for lunch. He had worn those shoes until the holes in the soles had gotten so big that the shoes no longer served their purpose. When there was no point in wearing them one more day, he left them for me to find.

It wasn’t his intention, of course, but those shoes put my own petty problems into perspective. No, I didn’t actually walk a mile in them or even try them on. Just looking at them was enough to make me appreciate my many blessings, including the casual, comfortable shoes I usually wear.

There wasn’t any question in my mind when, sometime later, a young man knocked at my door and asked for help. He had won a scholarship to a boarding school, but there was one requirement he couldn’t fulfill—he didn’t have any shoes. He asked if I had an extra pair I could give him. The ones I was wearing at the time fit him quite nicely, and that was that.

No, one simple act of kindness didn’t make me a saint on the level of Mother Teresa, but I do believe that in that moment I experienced from the inside out a touch of what caused and kept her doing what she did all those years. ♦

How to **Relate** Better to **People**

By Dr. Clyde M. Narramore, adapted excerpts



One of the most rewarding things in all the world is to relate well to other people. You can build great bridges, create a masterpiece in oils, compose an oratorio, write a bestseller, go to the moon, invent ingenious machinery; or do many other things—but nothing you accomplish is of much value unless it has relevance to other people.

It's amazing how much we can do these days beyond the sphere of Planet Earth—far out in space—yet how little we are doing right here on our own hometown planet, especially when it concerns relating well to people. We're really not doing too well.

Is it a hopeless situation? No!
Although there are millions of people

who don't understand others and can't get along, there are millions who can and do. Their lives are happy and radiant. They have learned how to relate to people. And because they do, their lives are richer. Not only do they make others happy; they make themselves happy too.

Of course, most of us do not automatically understand other people. As in every other area of life, we need to grow in our understanding. There are certain helpful insights to be learned. A person does not suddenly become a violinist, for instance, or a physician. So it is if we are going to become specialists in getting along with people. There are some insights and principles to understand and practice—and there's no better place to start than with yourself.

A happy, well-adjusted person can get along with people much more easily than if he feels badly about himself. If you are going to click well with people, start by taking inventory of your own personality traits and inquire about your own attitudes.

Let's start with your self—image—your self-esteem. Why? Because the feelings you have down deep about yourself influence how you feel about others. The glasses you use to look at others are the same ones you use to look at yourself. The way you view yourself affects the relationships that you build with others.

How do you rate yourself? Here is a checklist that might give you some clues:

- Can you usually take life's disappointments in stride?
- Do you have a tolerant, accepting attitude toward yourself as well as others?
- Can you laugh at yourself?
- Do you neither underestimate nor overestimate your abilities?
- Can you accept your own shortcomings?
- Do you have a good measure of self-respect?
- Are you able to deal with most situations that come your way?
- Is your personality marked with fear, anger, jealousy, worry, insecurity, domination, withdrawal, or manipulation?
- Do you get satisfaction from simple, everyday pleasures, or do you have to be entertained?
- Do people like to be around you? Are you fun to be with?

Answering these questions thoughtfully will give you some insight about your own adjustment. If you have to answer several of them in a negative manner, you can talk about it with a listening friend or a counselor to explore your own behavior and take steps towards improving in these areas.

Understanding how you developed negative attitudes toward yourself can change how you relate to others immeasurably. ◆

For great tips on how to improve your self-esteem, visit

<http://psychcentral.com/blog/archives/2011/10/30/6-tips-to-improve-your-self-esteem/>

<http://psychcentral.com/lib/blueprints-for-building-self-esteem/000293>

Honing Your Soft Skills



Tips for career development

By Dawn Dugan, adapted

Skills: Hard vs. Soft

Most people, as their career progresses, make an effort to ensure that their “hard” skills—tangible, teachable skills, and abilities that allow them to perform their job—are up to snuff. But in our effort to hone our hard skills, we should not ignore our “soft” skills.

Soft skills, sometimes called “people skills” or “emotional intelligence,” are less tangible qualities that determine how you manage your own behavior, as well as interact with and get along with others. While soft skills are more difficult to measure than hard skills, they are just as important when it comes to job prospects, advancement, and satisfaction.

If we spend years mastering our hard skills, we should spend a comparable amount of time proactively improving our soft skills.

Following are seven ways a lack of soft skills can hinder your career.

1. Emotion Overload: Are you quick to anger, or easily frustrated? If you can’t control your emotions and keep a cool head when the going gets tough, you’ll be perceived as a hothead who can’t think clearly. Emotional outbursts are threatening to co-workers and colleagues, and can result in low productivity. Learn how to cool it, or expect to cool your heels on the bottom rungs of the ladder.

2. Lack of Self-Confidence: It’s normal to feel challenged as you make the larger transitions throughout your career. It’s one thing to feel nervous, but quite another to let them see you sweat. If you don’t believe in yourself, you can be sure that no one else will. Figure out what’s causing your lack

of confidence—lack of training or experience, for example—and address it head on. Start by pretending you believe in yourself. Eventually, you'll convince yourself you do.—And once that happens, others will be convinced as well.

3. Poor Communication Skills:

Are you a good listener? Can you articulate your own thoughts and ideas in a way that others understand and appreciate? Good communication skills—and that means on both the giving and the receiving side—are necessary to develop the strong interpersonal skills that are so integral to any organization's success.

4. You're a Quitter: If your energy flags during challenging times or during difficult projects, or if you have a habit of being impatient and giving up, the proof will be in the pudding: goals simply won't be met. When promoting employees, organizations look for individuals who have persevered during tough times, encouraged others to be their best, and have helped to motivate and drive co-workers and colleagues. If you have a habit of giving up when the going gets tough, you can't expect to go too far.

5. Can't Deal with Office Politics/Politicians:

Don't think you can escape them. There's a Sabotaging Sam, Complaining Cathy, and Passive-Aggressive Pete in just about every workplace. Whether you get sucked into their drama or remain above the fray is up to you. An ability to both get along with and get the most out of difficult

personalities, as well as a gift for avoiding inevitable office politics, will stand you in good stead.

6. Inability to Coach, Mentor and Guide:

Those who are willing to help others succeed are seen as people who ultimately affect an organization's bottom line. Spend some time recognizing the expertise and excellence in others, and help them hone and develop those skills as well as acquire new skills to increase competency. Helping others through constructive criticism, feedback, and guidance will not only help others further their careers, it will also help you further yours.

7. Lack of Networking and Self-Promotion Skills:

How do people know how great you are? Encourage people to be in your network by attending the right industry events, reaching out to the right individuals, and engaging them in interesting conversation that brands you as an expert. Learn how to subtly, yet effectively, promote your work results, knowledge, and skills by keeping in touch with people who have influence. When you begin to influence people who have influence, you have set yourself up to succeed.

Take a Long Look in the Mirror:

How do you stack up? Give yourself an honest assessment. If you are lacking in any of these areas, you may be hindering your career. Start paying more attention to the soft skills that are necessary for you to get ahead. As your emotional intelligence grows, so will your job prospects! ◆



Author Unknown

Charles and Carla Coonradt tell the story of an immense, 19,000-pound whale, Shama, that is taught in Sea World, Florida, to jump 22 feet out of the water and perform tricks. How do you suppose they teach the whale to do that?

A typical managerial approach would be to mount a rope at 22 feet high out of the water, and encourage the whale to sail over it. “Jump, whale!” Maybe get a bucket of fish up there, reward the whale when it does the right thing. Set goals! Aim high! And you and I know the whale would stay right where it was.

The Coonradts say, “So how do the trainers at Sea World do it? Their number-one priority is to reinforce the behavior that they want repeated—in this case, to get a whale or porpoise to go over the rope. They influence the environment every way they can so that it supports the principle of making sure that the whale can’t fail. They start with

the rope below the surface of the water, in a position where the whale can’t help but do what’s expected of it. Every time the whale goes over the rope, it gets positive reinforcement. It gets fed fish, patted, played with, and most important, it gets that reinforcement.

“But what happens when the whale goes under the rope? Nothing—no electric shock, no constructive criticism, no developmental feedback, and no warnings in the personnel file. Whales are taught that their negative behavior will not be acknowledged.

“Positive reinforcement is the cornerstone of that simple principle that produces such spectacular results. And as the whale begins to go over the rope more often than under, the trainers begin to raise the rope. It must be raised slowly enough so that the whale doesn’t starve, either physically or emotionally.

“The simple lesson to be learned from the whale trainers is to over-celebrate. Make a big deal out of the good and little stuff that we want consistently.

“Secondly, under-criticize. People know when they screw up. What they need is help. If we under-criticize, punish and discipline less than is expected, people will not forget the event and usually will not repeat it.”

We need to make it difficult for people to fail, so there can be less criticism and more celebrations. ◆

Be slow... be quick!

Slow to suspect—quick to trust,
Slow to condemn—quick to justify,
Slow to offend—quick to defend,
Slow to expose—quick to shield,

Slow to belittle—quick to appreciate,
Slow to demand—quick to give,
Slow to provoke—quick to help,
Slow to resent—quick to forgive.



Together We Can Do It

Building relationships with people from different cultures

By Marya Axner, adapted

Relationships are powerful. Our one-to-one connections with each other are the foundation for change. Building relationships with people from different cultures, often many different cultures, is key in building diverse communities that are powerful enough to achieve significant goals.

Whether you want to make sure your children get a good education, bring quality health care into your communities, or promote economic development, there is a good chance you will need to work with people from several different racial, language, ethnic, or economic groups. And in order to work with people from different cultural groups effectively, you will need to build sturdy and caring relationships based on trust, understanding, and shared goals.

Why? Because trusting relationships are the glue that hold people together as they work on a common problem. As people work on challenging problems, they will have to hang in there together when things get hard. They will have to

support each other to stay with a project, even when it feels discouraging or the going is rough. People will resist the efforts of those who use divide-and-conquer techniques.

Each one of us is like a hub of a wheel. Each one of us can build relationships and friendships around ourselves that provide us with the necessary strength to achieve community goals. If each person builds a network of diverse and strong relationships, we can come together and solve problems that we have in common.

Friendship is powerful. As individuals, and in groups, we can change our communities. We can set up neighborhoods and institutions in which people commit to forming strong relationships and alliances with people of diverse cultures and backgrounds. We can establish networks and coalitions in which people are knowledgeable about each other's struggles, and are willing to lend a hand.

Together, we can do it. ◆

Teaching Kids to Get Along With Each Other

By Barabara Abromitis, adapted web reprint



Children can be taught specific methods for getting along with each other, while at the same time learning skills they will need to cooperate and succeed as adults.

Whenever children play or work together, conflicts can occur. Merely telling kids to get along doesn't work—not because children want to fight, but because they often lack the skills necessary for cooperation, collaboration, or compromise. By incorporating the principles educators use to teach cooperation in the classroom, parents can also teach their children to cooperate with friends or siblings at home.

Positive Interdependence

One of the most important principles

for promoting cooperation is positive interdependence. When children are positively interdependent, they must work together, each in his or her own role, in order to successfully complete a task. At home, this may mean sharing supplies for a project, or each having responsibility for a portion of a chore, which is then not considered complete until all portions are finished.

Children can learn to compromise, too. For example, when given permission to watch a movie and several children are deciding which movie to watch, arguments or hurt feelings can

result. But even very young children can be taught strategies that allow them to successfully make group decisions. In this case, each takes a turn naming three movies they would agree to; they look for common ground, discuss the final alternatives and make a mutual decision.

Face-to-Face Interaction

Children can learn to get along well when they are involved with hands-on activities that foster communication and creativity. Parents can encourage face-to-face interaction by limiting screen time (TV, computer, and other electronics) and providing toys or play materials that require sharing, taking turns, listening, talking, and collaborating. For example, inventive role-playing games (such as playing house, restaurant, doctor's office, shop, or other "dress-up" play) require children to negotiate their roles and practice adult social skills while having fun.

Older children may also need some parental guidance to find constructive ways to interact with siblings or friends. They may enjoy completing crafts, playing noncompetitive sports or outdoor games, or volunteering together in the neighborhood or community; and during their involvement with these activities, they will also be learning to collaborate and cooperate with others.

Social Skills

While most children pick up appropriate social skills by taking cues from others during cooperative play, some skills may require extra practice. Parents and caregivers can structure activities to focus on particular social skills such

as taking turns, active listening, and encouraging others, and help children understand what those skills look and sound like by modeling them first and praising them when they occur.

One particularly important social skill that may need practice is agreeing to disagree, meaning that children can express and retain their own opinions on things without arguing, fighting, or otherwise becoming disagreeable. By offering alternatives to these frequent negative responses, parents actually provide a model for later emotional maturity.

Reflection

Helping children become more aware of the ways they've learned to cooperate, and which strategies work best for them, will also help them get along better. By asking questions such as "How did you both decide that?" or "What are some ways you can divide up this task?", parents encourage their children's active participation in the choices that lead to cooperation, collaboration, and compromise. By answering, children learn and remember strategies that may work for them in the next situational conflict.

Teaching children to get along with each other is not necessarily easy, but is well worth the effort if the result is a more harmonious home. By following the principles of positive interdependence, face-to-face interaction, social skills, and reflection, parents and caregivers can give children the tools they need to navigate any potential conflict successfully. ◆

Relating to Others

We must learn to live together as brothers, or perish together as fools.
–Martin Luther King, Jr.

Unless you can find some sort of loyalty, you cannot find unity and peace in your active living. –Josiah Royce

There is no love without forgiveness, and there is no forgiveness without love.
–Bryant H. McGill

You will know that forgiveness has begun when you recall those who hurt you and feel the power to wish them well.
–Lewis B. Smedes

Sometimes forgiving was easy for me; sometimes forgiving was a very bold choice. Whatever kind of choice it was, it always led me to a more peaceful heart. It always left me happier and free to move on to create healthier relationships with others and with myself.
–Robin Casarjia

To speak gratitude is courteous and pleasant, to enact gratitude is generous and noble, but to live gratitude is to touch Heaven. –Johannes Gaertner

To live the full life, one must have the courage to bear responsibility for the need of others. –Aung San Suu Kyi

Loyalty is the pledge of truth to oneself and others. –Ada Velez-Boardley

Leadership is a two-way street, loyalty up and loyalty down. Respect for one's superiors; care for one's crew.
–Grace Murray Hopper

Our loyalties must transcend our race, our tribe, our class, and our nation; and this means we must develop a world perspective. –Martin Luther King, Jr.

Respect is love in plain clothes.
–Frankie Byrne

