

BENEVOLENT INTENT, RELATIONSHIPS AND THE FALLACY OF THE TWO

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When exploring the issue of establishing harmonious relationships it often occurs to one that this is established on the basis of brokering equitable balance in the interests of the two parties concerned. On the face of it this appears sensible, because, after all, a relationship requires at least two parties who are relating. The view of equitable brokerage therefore requires two who agree.

Successful relationship does not require two. In fact, it requires no more than one: a benevolent self. If you want something from someone else, that person's ability to withhold what you want gives that person power over you. You become manipulable. When the self is open to the manipulation of the other, the other becomes dangerous to the self.

Not only that, but when the self is in the relationship to get something from the other the other experiences the self as dangerous. You experience someone who is trying to get something from you as dangerous to you. Therefore: when the self wants something from the other, not only is the other dangerous to the self, but the self is dangerous to the other. When two people who are fundamentally dangerous to each other face each other the only possible outcome is hostility.

The degree to which any relationship is populated by individuals who are fundamentally there pursuing their self interest, is the degree to which that relationship necessarily becomes fractious and conflicted and will fail over time. In this sense brokered relationship is not relationship at all, it is anti-relationship. Surely the word relationship implies connected. No self can remain connected to the other when their intent fundamentally sets up hostility with the other.

However, assume you shift your attention in a relationship with someone from what you want from the other to what you should be contributing to the other. As soon as this happens then other can no longer withhold what the self wants, which means the self slips out from underneath the other's ability to control the self. The self is therefore free and safe from the other. By the same token, precisely because the self no longer wants something from the other, but is attempting to be helpful to the other, the other becomes safe from the self. The self is therefore safe from the other and the other is fundamentally safe from the self. When you have two parties who are fundamentally safe with regard to each other facing each other you necessarily have harmony.

When you deal with the other on the basis of what is in the best interest of the other you necessarily become related to and connected with that person. This is irrespective of how they deal with you. It does not require two for a relationship. It only requires one, the self.

However, this does not imply that the self always has to roll over and play dead. Merely acquiescing is very rarely in the interest of the other. It does not help the violent molester to allow the molestation to continue. In fact, what is most helpful to the molester is that the full accountability for what they have perpetrated is visited on them. However, the self can still do this without rancour, without ill feeling, without being in conflict with the molester. I am very intimately and deeply related to my son. I am quite capable of clouting him in his interest without feeling hatred toward him.