

AND BE IN HEALTH - VI

"Relationships and Health"

I. WE ALL NEED PEOPLE WHO WILL LOVE AND SUPPORT US

A. Dr. Viktor Frankl wrote: *"A key to maintaining good health is being able to get emotional support from other people. You have to have good relations with your intimates. There are cases on record of people who were called hopeless, but they pulled through because of their belief not only in themselves, but in the people who were aiding them."*

B. Love can prevent or correct physical ailments

1. Cancer victims who have survived for long periods of time were consistently vigorous, assertive, optimistic, and had a history of constructive social relationships

2. Among pregnant women, complications are nearly three times less likely in a high support group than in a low support group

3. Support systems have been shown to reduce the amount of medication required and change the biochemistry of the immune system

4. Those who feel abandoned and rejected often have to fight for their lives

5. Divorced individuals have twelve times the chance of contracting an illness during the year following a divorce than normal

C. Agape love means to choose another person's highest good above your own

II. CAN HELP TO CONTROL OUR HEALTH BY INVOLVING OURSELVES WITH VITAL SUPPORT NETWORKS

A. Love network - a resource pool of people who provide friendship, security

1. Support systems begin through our willingness to come together and help make each other feel worthwhile

B. Both self-image and self-esteem influenced by kind of support systems you have at work, home, play, and worship

C. Self-image is how you see yourself

D. Self-esteem is how you feel about yourself

E. People you love should feel important around you

III. WHAT IS LOVE?

A. Love is something you give away

B. At the root of most of our problems is the inability to give or to receive love

C. *"For those who have not loved, old age is a wintertime of loneliness. The greatest human talent was buried in the ground so it would not be lost. And in the end everything was lost. No one else came or cared. There was only a loveless person and a lonely waiting for death. For those*

who have loved old age is a harvest time. The seeds of love planted so carefully and so long ago have matured with time. A loving person is surrounded in the twilight of life with the presence and the caring of others. The bread always comes back on the waters. What was given so freely and joyfully has been returned with interest."

D. Conditional love

1. I can love you if you love me
2. I can love you if you are lovable
3. I can love you as long as you serve my purpose; add to my happiness and contribute to my cause
 - a. Fair weather friends
 - b. A friend is one who knows all about you and still loves you (warts and all)

E. Unconditional love

1. Love each other for what they are; not for what they do, promise or give
2. I love you because you are you--no other condition is necessary
3. I want only what is best for you--I will not rip you off, take advantage of you, manipulate or exploit you
4. Consideration of others
5. Unconditional love is not revengeful
6. Unconditional love is forgiving

IV. THE FEAR OF INTIMACY

A. Fear of separation

1. *"I don't want to get too close to you, because afterward you might leave me. You might die, or divorce me. It is safer 'not to love than to lose'"*

B. Fear of infusion

1. *"If I share everything with you, what will be left for me? Will I still have my own turf, the place where I can be alone?"*

C. Fear of rejection

1. *"If you really get to know me, you won't like me. You will gradually lose interest once you find out all you want to know."*

D. Fear of responsibility

1. *"If I get too close to another, I will feel obligated to be there for that person in his or her moments of need."*

V. FRIENDS

A. Two are better than one

1. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow
2. And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him, and a threefold cord is not quickly broken

B. A friend corrects

1. Pr. 27:6 - *"Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the guises of an enemy are deceitful"*

2. Open rebuke is better than secret love
 3. Pr. 28:23 - *"He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favor than he that flattereth with the tongue"*
- C. A friend counsels
1. Pr. 27:9 - *"Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart; so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel."*
- D. A friend supports - v. 10
1. *"Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of calamity; for better is a neighbor that is near than a brother far off."*
- E. A friend sharpens - v. 17
1. *"Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend"*
- F. How to win friends
1. Show mercy
 2. Show love *"A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."*
 3. Be honest
 - a. Go directly to a person
 - b. Don't gossip about them
 - c. Be dependable
 - d. Be considerate