

My Relationships

Questions

1. How does anxiety show itself in the way you relate to others?
2. Where, how and with whom do you find yourself being reactive, anxious, apt to lose the plot internally?
3. When you are in conversation with spouse, children, siblings or friends, how often do you 'move' the conversation to more personal issues, and how often do you let them know what you are *really like*, versus misrepresenting yourself to look either *better* or *worse* than you are?
4. Some families have 'thin ice topics' that are taboo (like Dad's drinking or passive aggression, Mum's nagging or temper, how money is handled, or family 'secrets'). Are you willing to raise these kinds of uncomfortable topics in your family? (Especially your own?)
5. People in churches often hide their true thoughts, feelings and beliefs from one another (or from leaders) out of fear of being condemned, judged or marginalised. Do you exercise your freedom to express what is *there* internally, as opposed to what is *supposed* to be there?
[Remember, intimate relationships wither if you won't share your own views and risk disagreements.]
6. In the light of the material we have considered, have a conversation with someone close to you about the degree of maturity your parents achieved, how they managed anxiety, how power balance was handled in your home. What effects has this had on you?
7. In what relationships and situations do you feel that your emotions run away with you, and you have a difficult time soothing and quietening yourself? What might a more mature and healthy stance look like for you in these situations/relationships?
8. Where do you most experience the pressure to conform or rebel? (These look different, but are often two sides of the one coin!) How do you handle this pressure? How would you *like* to handle it, operating from your strength rather than weakness?
9. Where and with whom do you tend to feel most threatened? How is your behaviour under threat selling out on your own true interests and on your integrity?
10. Identify relationally when you judge that *the best in you* is available and running the show, and likewise when you are operating out of *deficit, weakness and fear*? What are specific situations/relationships facing you at the moment where you can choose to operate more from your best?
11. If you were to die today, who in your world would have much idea about who you are, what matters to you, where your true passions lie, what some of your deepest thoughts, fears and joys are? Why have you given yourself freedom to be known by this person? Who else do you want to build this kind of intimacy with? (Sometimes grandchildren are really interested—children can assume they already know you.)
12. We sometimes feel defined or constricted by some others (who for you?). Remembering that the most difficult person to confront is *ourselves*, what do you need to face in *you* in order to experience greater freedom and love in these relationships?