

RELATIONSHIPS

The Quality of Your Relationships Determines the Quality of Your Life

“All things being equal, people will work with people they like. All things not being equal, they still will.”
– John C. Maxwell

LESSON ON VIDEO

Directions: The following fill-in-the-blank section corresponds with a short video from John Maxwell. Watch the video and follow along with the outline. Click [HERE](#) to watch the video for this lesson.

The Quality of Your Relationships Determines the Quality of Your Life.

Five People Practices to Develop Relationships:

1. Practice the _____ rule.

The Triple-A Treatment

2. Listen with your _____.

3. Remember a person's _____.

4. Create a _____ and visit it often.

5. Help people _____.

What action step did you commit to last week? What were the results?

INSIGHT

Directions: *Take turns reading the paragraphs below. As you read, underline the ideas that capture your attention.*

Most of life's great experiences—the ones that resonate in our hearts and minds—involve other people. Rarely do we experience them alone. And even when we do, our first inclination is to share them with others.

Think back to the most important experiences of your life, the highest highs, the greatest victories, the most daunting obstacles overcome. How many of them happened to you alone? Probably very few. When you understand that being connected to others is one of life's greatest joys, then you realize that life's best comes when you initiate and invest in solid relationships.

Few things in life are more important than people and our relationships with them. The quality of our relationships impacts every area of our lives. For that reason, we should do everything we can to create solid, positive relationships. Here are some things to keep in mind as you do:

Trust Is the Foundation of Every Relationship. Developing trust is like creating the foundation of a building. It takes time and effort. But if it's done right, the building that stands on it is solid. It can weather storms and earthquakes.

Every Person Either Lifts Others Up or Takes Them Down. People are the sources of both our greatest joys and our greatest challenges. That's why John C. Maxwell teaches the Elevator Principle, which says, "We can lift people up or take people down in our relationships." When we help and encourage others, we lift them up. We add to their lives. We make them better. When we are negative and selfish, we take people down. Every day, we get to choose which we will be.

Believing the Best in People Usually Brings Out the Best in People. Each of us has a choice in life. We can see the worst in people and base our treatment of them on low expectations, or we can choose to see the best in them and treat them accordingly.

BENEFITS

When you develop good relationships with people, you experience the following benefits:

1. You live at peace with others.
2. You develop a strong network of people who want the best for you.
3. You experience the satisfaction of meeting the needs of others.
4. You experience the harmony of being treated as well as you treat others.
5. You are more likely to receive support from others when you need it.

STEPS TO FOLLOW

1. **Put Others First.** John C. Maxwell reminds us that the entire population of the world—with one minor exception—is composed of other people. If we maintain this perspective, it helps us to remember to put other people first. This week, focus on serving others and putting their needs ahead of your own.
2. **Seek to Understand Others before Being Understood.** Another lesson taught by John is the Exchange Principle, which says, “Instead of putting others in their place, we must put ourselves in their place.” How do you do that? By listening and working harder at understanding the other person’s point of view instead of trying to get them to understand yours. This week, make it your goal to speak less, listen more, and understand others.
3. **Repair a Broken Relationship.** If you have a broken relationship, you need to do all that you can to repair it. This usually requires that you take the first step. Do something to reach out to someone that you might have wronged, even if the relationship breakdown is not all your fault. When you make good relationships a priority, you sometimes have to go first in rebuilding them. Apologize for your contribution to the problem, and be open and forgiving, even if the other person does not respond in kind.

REFLECT AND RESPOND

Choose something you underlined that is important to you. Take a moment to tell everyone what you chose and why it is important to you.

EVALUATION AND ACTION

Complete the self-evaluation section below.

Rate how well you demonstrate this quality in your life on a scale of 1-10.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Why did you give yourself this rating?

What benefits would you receive by improving your rating?

Who do you know that exemplifies this quality? What do you admire most about that person?

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating?

Take a minute to share your responses to the self-evaluation section, including the step you will take to improve in this area. Everyone is asked to participate.