

ATTITUDES

Personal Reflections

Attitudes are contagious—are mine worth catching?

I can think my way into making my life a daily hell or heaven.

Attitudes are emotional responses to situations, people, and ideas. We were not born with these feelings; we *learned* them from the outcome of relationships with our parents, our friends, and other past experiences. We continue to learn as we grow older but we are not always aware that we have become *conditioned* to feel, to think, to act in certain ways. Our behavior has already been decided ahead of time.

If our early years, our problems, have clouded our thinking with resentment, fear, and self-pity, then we need to *change our attitudes*. We must be willing to *learn new ways* of feeling comfortable with ourselves and others. We can begin to do this by learning about our own dispositions.

Ask:

Can I treat the past as the past and start on a new road to constructive action?

If I have tried and failed, can I use what I have learned?

Am I realistic about my abilities and limitations?

Am I willing to admit that there is room for improvement in my relationships with my family and friends?

Can I accept the fact that I can't control any other adult person?

Do I avoid judging motives and behavior?

Can I accept people whose social background is different from mine?

Do I make an effort to increase my knowledge of important social issues?

Can I take a stand and express my opinions diplomatically?

Have I learned that no matter what circumstances

Do I respect my loved-one as an individual, viewing our differences as complementary parts of our relationship?

Am I wise enough not to expect a partner to fill all my emotional needs?

Am I pleasant to my loved-one's friends?

Have I honestly assessed my feelings about sex and my sexual relationship?

Am I open to the idea that children have their own problems and that they need to be guided not dominated?

Do I appreciate children as individuals, avoiding comparisons?

Do I remember that they *are* children and that *their* immature behavior is reasonable in light of their age?

Have I been realistic in my assessment of how children have been affected by alcoholism?

Do I allow adult children to make their own decisions?

Have I forgiven my parents for any mistakes they have made in my upbringing?

Am I emotionally detached, seeking a healthy form of independence from my parents?

Can I be honest and open with them?

Have I forgiven old friends, organizations, doctors, or institutions who didn't do all that I expected should have been done to help our situation?

Am I trying to build healthy friendships in which I can be the real me?

Am I striving to find purpose and meaning in my work?

Am I interested in my community?

Ask yourself about your maturity:

Do I realize that life is not black and white or good and bad, but rather somewhere in between?

Have I let go of the people and situations I cannot change?

Can I look honestly at myself?

Do I let other people know the real me?

Have I developed a tolerant, easy-going attitude toward myself?

Am I tolerant of others?

Do I treat others with respect?

Do I avoid using others to get what I want?

Do I expect others to make special allowances for my behavior?

Do I listen carefully to the opinions of others?

Am I careful not to take myself too seriously?

Do I have a sense of humor?

Do I have reasonable expectations of myself?

Can I make mistakes without getting angry at myself, realizing that I am human?

MATURITY

Maturity is the art of living in peace with that which we cannot change.

Maturity is simply being grown up. It is the quality in people which helps them to balance their intellects and their emotions so that their behavior is appropriate. The ability to do the right thing at the right time requires a clear-eyed view of situations and people and an understanding of human limitations.

Mature people resist extremes, have realistic self-images and reasonable goals, and have learned to accept responsibility for their own actions. The only expectations they have are for themselves. The only inventories they take are their own.

Am I able to say "no"?

Do I take life's disappointments in stride?

Do I bounce back from upsetting situations?

Do I try to understand why other people act as they do?

Can I derive satisfaction out of doing my best?

Do I avoid finding fault with all my accomplishments?

Can I rejoice in the good fortune of others?

Do I try to avoid doubt, once having made a decision?

Do I accept responsibility for my behavior and actions?

Can I express my feelings in constructive and healthy ways?

Do I have a sense of discretion, reacting appropriately to different situations?

Can I accept disagreement and criticism good-naturedly, with an open mind, recognizing in it a potential for growth?

Am I patient and flexible enough to accept reasonable delay or change in plan, adjusting myself at times to the convenience of others?

Can I allow others to have their way without always being dominated by them?

Am I relaxed and calm in my social interactions with others?

Do I try to avoid constantly being the center of attention?

Am I somewhat independent, not always looking for approval and direction from someone else?

Am I willing to admit I don't have all the answers?

Do I recognize the role I have played in the unpleasant things that have happened to me?

Can I accept help and compliments from others without trying to discover a hidden motive and without feeling I have to "even the score"?

Am I willing to investigate the concept of a Higher Power, One greater than my intellect, who can help me to discover a deeper sense of maturity in my life?

It has been said that gratitude is the hallmark of the mature person. Sometimes we must start by being grateful for the awareness that we have a need to change. This will open the door to willingness to grow from our present state of immaturity toward a deeper, more mature appreciation of ourselves.

Do I accept responsibility to do something about my problems as they arise?

Do I set my goals realistically?

Do I consider my welfare when making decisions?

Am I true to my ideas, refusing to compromise myself *just to keep peace*?

Can I relax when I am by myself?

Have I kept an open mind, willing to learn . . .

Can I be counted on by others?

Can I discuss with my loved-one pertinent issues such as sex and finances, frankly and maturely?

Can I accept love from my spouse as well as giving it?

Am I able to risk rejection by continuing to increase and deepen our communication?

Am I considerate of my children's welfare in making and carrying out decisions?

Am I able to talk openly to my children about my reasons, values, and feelings?

Do I help my children to build a sense of responsibility by giving them appropriate tasks around the home?

Can I apologize when I am wrong?

Do I respect children's rights to privacy?

Do I allow children the freedom to make their own relationships?

Do I avoid using children to support me in my criticisms?

Am I a good example for children?

Do I keep in touch with my parents at reasonable intervals?

Do I treat my co-workers with dignity and consideration?

Do I avoid the tendency to use activities just to escape the problem at home?

Do I spend time each day trying to build a more conscious relationship with my Higher Power through prayer, meditation and reading?

Am I grateful for my blessings?

As we begin to clarify our responsibilities to ourselves and others, we will develop a willingness to take them more seriously. That willingness is the first step toward being able to respond with meaning to our needs and those of the people around us.

RESPONSIBILITY

Ask:

LOVE

Do I realize that a healthy form of self-love is needed in my relationships with others?

Have I freed my loved-ones to live their own lives?

Have I learned that whenever I say, "I could love you if . . ." I am not expressing love?

Do I know that I must love with an open hand and that anything or anyone I lose by releasing my grasp was never mine to start with?

Do I show my family members that I love them?

Am I consistent in my loving attitude toward my family?

Is sex a natural expression of the love between my loved-one and myself?

Have I faced the truth about my sexual relationship with my loved-one?

Am I open and honest in my relationships?

Do I have the courage to seek professional help about sexual problems I can't handle?

Can I detach from other people's problems and idiosyncrasies and still love them as people?

Do I know the difference between detachment and indifference?

Can I give love without seeking its return?

Do I have genuine concern for my fellow man?

Do I make an effort to remember and take an interest in special days, events and things in the lives of those who are important to me?

How often do I tell others that I love them?

Am I natural in my relationships with others, avoiding the tendency to be on guard to say and do just the right thing?

Can I share those whom I love, avoiding competition for another's affection?

Do I let my Higher Power work in my relationships?

Do I see gratitude as an expression of love?