

Part One ~

How Character and Environment Relates to Attracting Functional or Dysfunctional Relationships

As no one intentionally sets out to attract a dysfunctional relationship, nonetheless, it occurs time and time again adversely affecting so many people. The damaging dynamics of these relationships, besides being very stressful is that they are psychologically challenging, physiologically taxing and physically draining, not to mention costly in many ways. In as much as avoiding dysfunctional relationships would seem to be the obvious solution to the problem, avoidance does not solve the problem because it is not the solution to the problem. Anyone who has a history of attracting dysfunctional relationships knows all too well that this is not a onetime event but that it is a repetitious experience in spite of best intentions. This is because something other than what the problem really is appears to be the cause of the problem when in fact the problem is an effect of an unidentified cause, which accounts for the repeated occurrences. Thus, attempts to overcome attracting dysfunctional relationships by way of avoidance, while the real cause for the attraction remains unidentified and therefore unresolved is not only futile, not solving the problem guarantees that it will happen again and again until the real cause is finally identified and resolved. Unbeknownst to many people is that attracting dysfunctional relationships has a lot to do with character and environment. Thus, the purpose of this essay is to show how the influence of character and environment relates to attracting functional or dysfunctional relationships, that when put in proper perspective solves the problem of continually attracting dysfunctional relationships.

As character relates to attracting a functional relationship, so character relates to attracting a dysfunctional relationship. Thus, it is important to know what character is, where character comes from and how character is either strengthened or weakened. The word character comes from a Greek word meaning, "to stamp, engrave or inscribe." What is being stamped engraved or inscribed are the actual traits that make up character, composed of a number of inborn qualities and aptitudes such as talents, skills and abilities as well as innate inclinations and tendencies such as temperament and disposition that not only constitutes character but also distinguishes it from the character of others. Although character traits are inborn, they do undergo modifications as the result of environmental influences. However, just because character is inborn does not automatically imply hereditary. There are countless documented cases where one or more character traits are evident early in life that do not relate to heredity nor are they adversely affected by environmental influences. The fact that the qualities that make up character are inborn, thus are innate not necessarily by way of genetics validates that they are not acquired in this lifetime but are the sum total of all prior life experiences carried forward, thereby giving credence to reincarnation.

Even though character is composed of inborn traits, tendencies, inclinations and disposition does not mean that character is etched in stone. Character is affected by environmental influences as well as internal forces that either strengthens or weakens character. It is important to note that a

strong constitution does not necessarily imply strength of character per se. Habituated reactionary responses to past or present circumstances and even the anticipation of future adverse conditions may give the appearance of a strong constitution but is really a defense mechanism for the sake of self-preservation. As character affects the mind, likewise the mind affects character. Thus, it is important to understand how the interplay between mind and character affect personal reality, and hence affect relationship dynamics.

The dynamic interplay between character and mind also affects thoughts as well as how thoughts are processed and then acted on. Hence, problems arise when thoughts that have no real basis in objective reality play out on the movie screen of the mind that although they appear to be objectively realistic is really a subjective interpretation of reality, hence is not realistic. Subjectively interpreting reality becomes even more problematic when action of some kind is taken, typically provoked by strong feelings and emotions, characteristic of an undeveloped character. As the mind conjures up all sorts of distorted images of reality, it takes subjectivity a step further by actually identifying with those images as if they are real. Eventually these mental images become a manifested reality as thoughts really do become manifested things, resulting in undesirable consequences and needless suffering, all of which adversely affects the dynamics of a relationship, ultimately weakening character. As if that is not enough trouble to contend with, a weak character falls prey to being mastered by the mind and the emotions rather than mastering the mind and the emotions, which takes strength of character. When given free rein the mind acts on its own accord as if it had a will of its own, thus creating an unrealistic and often distorted subjective reality that eventually becomes a manifested reality.

Furthermore is that when the mind is left to its own devices, it tends to focus on external things, such as where the other person in the relationship went wrong. Given free rein, the mind will take to holding grudges, keep a list of grievances, find fault with others, make accusations and blame someone or something, even oneself all of which is counterproductive to strengthening character. Thus, character cannot be developed much less strengthened while attention is focused outward instead of inward. So begins the jumbled interplay of mind and emotions, blame and faultfinding, grudges and grievances, all attributed to a single cause, undeveloped character that in turn produces an avalanche of other causes as well as their very unpleasant and often destructive effects, all of which plays a big role in attracting dysfunctional relationships.

If all that is not a large enough arsenal containing weapons of personal destruction, producing no good outcomes whatsoever, the mind will also take to transference. Relationships disintegrate when the mind is allowed to bury the other person in the relationship beneath layers of transparencies like those in the old Britannica Encyclopedias, eventually losing sight of the person all together. As the transparencies pile up on one another the other person's identity is buried on the bottom and is no longer visible. The layers at the top represent someone connected to some past event, reacting as if that situation or circumstance is still occurring. When transference is taken to the extreme, such as when there is no separation of identities, the other person in the relationship doesn't just represent some other person's identity, the person in the

relationship is that identity which is not only dysfunctional, it is very damaging as it undermines the stability of the relationship.

To understand how strengthening character relates to attracting a functional or a dysfunctional relationship is to understand how the law of attraction really operates, which has nothing to do with prosperity as there are no quick fixes or overnight successes, financially or materially speaking. As the culprit in a dysfunctional relationship most always appears to be the fault of the other person, the fact of the matter is that no one is really at fault. The problem isn't about who said or did what, why and how, the problem is the result of the interplay between mind and emotions that ultimately determines whether character is strengthened or weakened. Character is not built on an unstable mind anymore than it is built on unstable emotions. Character is built on stability of mind and emotions and the ability to correctly identify and resolve personal issues, which requires more than just honest self-introspection, although that is certainly a good start. The ability to strengthen character rests on knowing the right things, which for most people is often a very difficult learning experience, a process of materializing many undesirable causes and effects before the lessons are learned. As mind and emotions has everything to do with attraction, specifically what is attracted and hence what is repelled, strengthening character is essential to attracting a functional relationship.

Contrary to what most people believe, attraction does not begin at the actual point of attraction. Attraction begins prior to the physical attraction because the causes that bring about the attraction in the first place as well as the effects of the causes are already in place on the mental plane of reality. Thus, attraction occurs on the mental plane long before it materializes on the physical plane. Correctly stated is that attraction, having already occurred on the mental plane, materializes as an objective experience manifested on the physical plane of reality.

Consequently, not only is an attraction of like kind predestined, the dynamics of the relationship not yet materialized is predetermined because like is already energetically attracting like. As like is in the process of attracting like, the person responding to the attraction is also going to bring similar causes and effects, aka "emotional baggage" into the relationship, adding to the mental/emotional interplay that cannot help but affect the dynamics of the relationship rather adversely sooner if not later. When all these adverse effects start taking a toll on the relationship the downhill slide leads to an unavoidable breakup. The problem grows even larger when blame and accusation enters into the picture, which does absolutely nothing to solve the problem but adds to the one cause that in turn produces many other causes with all its effects. That one cause is a weakened, hence undeveloped character lacking inner strength and self-discipline.

Having described the qualities of character, what remains is to describe how character can be strengthened in spite of internal and external influences that over time modifies character positively or negatively, thus strengthening or weakening character accordingly. Although there is no set ways or means of strengthening character, given that the paths of life are as unique as the individuals experiencing them, thus, the lessons learned are just as unique, nonetheless, character can be strengthened by acquiring a more heightened level of self-awareness, which is a

journey all unto itself. Thus, strengthening character is not a onetime event, as there are no magic wands nor are there any shortcuts or quick fixes. The building of character is a journey of trial and error, a continuous learning experience, an ongoing perfecting of weaknesses of character as they are identified, which does not happen overnight, but occurs over the course of time. As denial stands ready to throw the process of individuation off course, including the development of latent character traits, strengthening character takes some serious self-introspection and a great deal of honesty. The process of strengthening character is an ongoing journey of self-discovery during which time many new things are learned, hence many personal bridges are crossed. Thus, strengthening character is a mental and emotional effort, which takes time and patience, a journey few people are willing to embark on but the rewards are well worth the effort. A history of attracting dysfunctional relationships is good cause to begin the journey of self-discovery and start strengthening character.

As awareness is shifted inward instead of outward, reality begins to look and feel very different. Thus, the more attention is focused on strengthening character, the more the attracting energy changes direction. Likewise, as the vibrational frequency increases, the energy that had been attracting dysfunctional relationships is directed away, hence like is no longer attracting that same like kind because it no longer exists. To make certain the principle is understood, the law of attraction begins to attract a functional relationship because like has to attract like, which means the same law that attracted the dysfunctional relationships also has to repel attracting those dysfunctional relationships because that same attraction of like kind no longer exists. However, this reversal of attracting energy does not occur overnight, its success depends on the effort invested in strengthening character. As the proof is always in the pudding, the benefits of strengthening character is self-evident, likewise, the reward is always proportional to the degree of effort invested.

Last but not least is the matter of emotional sensitivity, which also relates to character and environment. Just like character, emotional sensitivity plays a very important interacting role that likewise also affects the interacting dynamics in some if not all relationships to some degree. However, because of the significant role emotional sensitivity plays as being both a cause and an effect of character and environment, it is addressed in part two, following this essay.