This booklet is a tool which is to be used to teach how to come out of alienation into friendships. Look for specifics in relationships and make practical applications. Teach how to produce positive love output in their lives. Remember that "love" today as typically taught would be on a "casual" level.

How to Use Booklet:

1. Use Biblical verses to prove importance of building relationships.

2. Teach spiritual application

3. Explain theory (#1 with #1-A)

4. Go through the chart

5. Draw a relationship chart for each person.

6. Make up a list of all their friends. (See example)

7. Point out areas of weaknesses and barriers.

8. Start with one person to build Intimate Relationship. List likely prospects. If no one, find somebody who needs this kind of a relationship.

9. Draw a description of current involvement

10. Take them with you sometimes, let them see you function.

Progressive

LEVELS OF RELATIONSHIPS

	A - Casual	B Close	C Intimate
1. Common Experience	Sporadic contact - tends to be short term and somewhat superficial	Regular planned time spent. Feel the need to keep up time spent. Quality time included. Shared goals and interests.	Extensive time commitment. Complete availability demonstrated. Shared worlds in goals, activities and people. Significant backlog of common experience.
2. Personal Inner Working	General searching into their interests, goals, likes and dislikes, background, spiritual experiences, priorities, creativity, problems and frustrations.	Freedom to ask pointed, personal questions, i.e. other relationships, feelings, etc. Deeper problems being understood. Potential seen and promoted.	Completely open communication. Commitment to the development of the other's characte Affirmation and confrontation occurs both ways. Accountability.
3. Emotions Communicated	Visible interest, warmth, enthusiasm	Loyality, affection, gratitude	Same as close - more effectively communicated.

1. Common Experience
2. Personal Inner Working 3. Emotional

1. Common Experience - This involves the time spent developing a good relationship with someone. Only by spending sufficient time together can you build commonality, which is the feeling of having been through enough experiences together that you trust one another. Any new relationship cannot be deep in agape love, even though there may be a strong personal or even romantic attraction.

2. Personal Inner Working - This refers to your accumulating knowledge of the other person's personality. It measures the amount of true communication occurring. It includes an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the other, and the knowledge of how to work with both. This understanding should go both ways in a good relationship.

3. Emotional - This area refers to the emotional communication that should occur. An unemotional relationship is not fully Biblical. In each level, the kind of emotion communicated must be actually perceived by the other person. In other words, you may think you have communicated affection, but if the other person has not sensed the affection, it has not been effectively communicated.

Detailed Explanation of Relationship Chart

Refer to the chart for the terms used. The chart reads from top to bottom.

The Casual Relationship

Common Experience (#1-A)

By "sporadic contact" we mean that contact is not deliberate. You may run into one another periodically, but there is no planned effort to get together regularly. You may see each other frequently for awhile, then not at all, and this remporary absence will not feel unusual. "Superficial" is not meant here negatively (not deliberately avoiding) but only means that deep personal matters are not usually discussed.

Personal Inner Working (#2-A)

"General searching into their interests..." is achieved by asking questions. Some people may be so used to merely responding that they don't know how to explore another person. This is the so-called "shy" person who is so insecure he cannot show interest in another. Such a person is really self-centered. The self-centeredness may be negative, based on feelings of inferiority, but it is still wrong. Such a person needs to learn to ignore himself long enough to investigate another. Equally self-centered is the boaster, and usually for the same reason. He has insecurities, and he handles them in a different way, but his conversation still revolves around himself. He hopes to convince others that he is worthy of their attention instead of giving them his attention. In either case such people need to learn to ask and listen carefully to the answers.

James 1:19 - "Let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak.." Careless listeners are often too preoccupied thinking of the next question, or how well the last one sounded. The result is usually a short answer and more uneasiness as you wonder what to say next.

Initial casual relationship

1. Ask name - introduce yourself
2. Who they came with - who do they know in the fellowship?
3. How do you know them?
4. How did you find out about this place?
5. What do you do?

As a careful listener, you will see that the answer to your question (see list of 10 question areas) naturally raised several other questions. Very quickly the other person will realize that you are a good listener, and he will become willing to talk much more freely. Remember, you should be looking into the other person's interests, not waiting to tell him about your own. He will ask about you soon enough.

Emotional (#3-A)

When talking to someone about himself, nothing helps him open up like an enthusiastic display of interest. So often, our questions are rhetorical - we don't really care what the answer is. But when we ask questions, digest the answers, and then ask more questions, we will find that people greatly enjoy talking about themselves. This is how casual relationships are started. Warmth and enthusiasm are important. You have probably met someone who is quite warm and felt the immediate attraction such a person has. By practicing this kind of emotional communication, you will find scores of open doors for rewarding, casual friendships. In turn, these are the relationships that can easily develop into deeper friendships.

The Close Relationship

Common Experience (#1-B)

"Regular planned time spent.." means at least once or twice a week. "Feel the need to maintain time spent," means that if contact has not occurred for awhile, you feel the absence, and want to re-establish contact immediately. "Quality time included" does not mean that all time is spent in serious discussion.

In fact, this is not desirable, but it does mean that quality time is deliberately initiated. "Shared interests" means not only discovering and understanding, but also making an effort to join in his/her interests. This does not necessarily mean your interests, but according to the idea of selfless agape, it is you who are willing to give.

The same principle applies to time. Time is one of our most precious commodities. Often we are willing to give other things, but with time, we expect others to drop their schedule and spend time at our place doing our things. This amounts to a conditional relationship - spending time together only if it is convenient and doing something that interests you. It is not necessary to participate in all of the other's interests. Furthermore, it may become necessary to try to change some of the other person's time commitments. However, this should be done, not for your convenience, but for his good.

Personal Inner Working (#2-B)

The closer your relationship grows, the greater the freedom to explore the other person's personal inner working. By doing this, you should begin to form an overall impression of the strengths and weaknesses in the other person's life. With this personal knowledge comes the responsibility to encourage the potential good and, at times, to point out the areas of weakness. It is important to understand the relationships, such as dating, family and friends, that make up the other person's life. Also, at this level, his spiritual life should be explored. Always try to be honest about your own life, especially since the best way to bring about openness in another is to open yourself.

Emotional (#3-B)

Never underestimate the role of emotions in relationships. At the close level, new emotions must be communicated effectively. "Loyalty" means that you show that you are

willing to stand by the other person. In other words, you don't always have other things to do and other people to see. Since you hold the other person as a priority in your life, you don't find time for him, you make time for him.

For some of us, affection is even more difficult to communicate effectively. If this is true for you, you may have to actually plan out statements and repeat them verbatum when you are with the person. You may feel this is wrong because it is not spontaneous. However, if you are not a naturally emotional or affectionate person, you will never "spontaneously" communicate emotional affection. It is no more unspiritual to plan out emotional affection than it is to plan out the time you will spend. Paul suggests this in Ephesians 4:29, "Let no rotten word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification...that it may give grace to those who hear." As you practice this kind of communication, it will slowly become more natural.

Gratitude is also mentioned because it is typical of the kind of emotion which should be expressed. You should not be grateful simply for immediate favors that the other has done for you (Thanks for the dinner), but you should also express thankfulness for the relationship as a whole. ("I've really enjoyed the time I've spent with you lately.") These are the kinds of moments that bind people together in Christian love. Vulnerable emotional statements constitute a very real type of giving, often meeting the most basic needs in the other person. As such, they are indispensible to agape love.

The Spirit
Controls our
heart problem
+ discipline ess of the
flesh

The Intimate Relationship

Common Experience (#1-C)

"Time Commitment" means that your relationship has now reached a point at which it is natural to spend large amounts of time together. While merely spending a lot of time together does not necessarily mean that you are intimate friends, it is impossible to be intimate if you don't spend much time. "Significant backlog of common experience" means that you have been relating long enough so that you both have developed a basic trust and basis for communication. If you have only recently started spending time with someone, you have no realistic basis for intimacy. "Shared worlds.." means that you understand much of what goes on in the other person's life because many of the same things are a part of your life. You should make an effort to know the important people in the other person's life, even though it isn't necessary to know them as well as you know your friend. In this way, you can avoid any division of interests that will pull your relationship apart.

Personal Inner Working (#2-C)

At this level, there should be nothing unshared. Many people have problems that they never tell anyone but unless we have someone with whom we intimately communicate, we will always feel lonely. "Commitment" is an important term throughout the intimate column, and is not well understood in our culture today. In this case, you are committed to the character development of the other person. This commitment sometimes involves confrontation. For many people, this is the most difficult aspect of love to practice. In the non-believing world, there is no actual basis for always doing what is best for the other person.

Therefore, confrontation out of love does not occur. If confrontation does occur, it is usually done out of anger or personal hurt. This is selfishness, not love. The secular concept of love tends to be either domination or permissiveness. Agape love cannot be understood in this way. We must learn to confront for the good of the other person, not because his problems are bothering us.

For some, confrontation comes easier than affirmation. Have you learned the power of gracious compliments and encouragement? These are skills which come with practice.

One important point in this regard - the confrontation must go both ways. If the confrontation goes only one way (which very often happens), there is a hierarchy in the relationship. This is more like a ministry relationship than an intimate relationship based on equality. If the other person is too passive, and will not confront you, then you should confront him about this short-coming! Is it possible that he will not confront you because you are not receptive to criticism? Criticism is an act of love and you should express gratitude for it. The word we choose to sum up this kind of commitment is "accountability." One of the things which may cause us to avoid intimate relationships is our fear of being accountable. We will see later that this kind of autonomous attitude should be avoided.

Emotional (#3-C)

The same kinds of emotion expressed in the close relationship should be expressed at the intimate level. Here they are even more appropriate. Often there is a temptation to consider these emotional expressions as unnecessary. Since you have expressed these emotions before, you may take it for granted that they are understood. Expressing emotion never becomes unnecessary, no matter how many times you have expressed it before. The goal is to make the other person feel consistently loved.

Performing a Personal Love Inventory

Having read the foregoing description of the various levels of love relationships, we return to the question of your present ability to love in the agape way. Write down a list of your friends and compare the areas of sharing in each relationship with the description above. Here is an example:

John	Common Experience	Sporadic contact Sometimes meaningful (usually not)
	Personal Interworking	Some personal areas are communicated, but no real freedom to confront him on all areas. Unsure of what makes him tick.
	Emotional	Not much overt emotion is expressed.

This description when compared to the definition,

will indicate that your relationship with John is a casual one. In fact, you will find that most of your relationships tend to be casual. This is not wrong. On the other hand, if all of your relationships are casual, it indicates that you could be described as a "diffuse" person. This means that in marriage you will have difficulty building an intimate relationship with your spouse. It also indicates that the affection you feel for your dating partner may well be totally in the "eros" or romantic area. If this is true, you are headed for trouble in marriage unless you are able to correct this problem first.

Does a genuine, honest appraisal reveal that there are one or more intimate agape relationships in your life? As we stated before, this is the kind of relationship you are trying to establish in marriage. Yet, it is a very difficult thing to do. If you are unable to relate to someone intimately now, what makes you think that you will suddenly be able to do so in marriage? This area is so crucial that it simply cannot be overlooked. If you do not have any intimate agape relationships in your life now, are you willing to delay your marriage (and even serious dating) until you do? Only in this way can you know that there is a proven ability in your life to love others in the way you must when you are married.

	Current	Next Step
Common ship	see only at CT	add social activity get together etc. → regular time
Personal encouraging		pointed question →
Continual	3A →	