

Negative Relating

(sarcasm, cruelty, pig-tail pulling, bitterness)

Wrong Attitudes

- I don't know how to handle negativity in my own life, so I transfer it to my tribe (roommate/wife/children).
- Because of my floating bitterness, I don't know how to respond to happy people.
- If I feel bad, everyone should pay.
- My outlook is always one of seeing the worst in every circumstance.

I expect you to instinctively know how I'm feeling ~~and~~ I'll withdraw or get angry because of your insensitivity.

Wrong Actions

- When things don't go well at work, rather than sharing that, I get negative toward my roommate/wife/children, and pick or pig-tail pull.
- Others' happiness is a threat to me, so I pig-tail pull to bring them down with me; then I can be happy.
- I'll control my environment with a great amount of emotional negativity, thereby bringing my roommate/wife/children down into my "black cloud".
- When people ask penetrating questions that I don't want to answer, I "stiff-arm" them (self-protection) -- build barriers.
- I never compliment but always find an area to criticize which will tear down the person I love.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't know how to handle negativity in my own life, so I transfer it to my tribe (roommate/wife/children). • Because of my floating bitterness, I don't know how to respond to happy people. • If I feel bad, everyone should pay. • My outlook is always one of seeing the worst in every circumstance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When things don't go well at work, rather than sharing that, I get negative toward my roommate/wife/children, and pick or pig-tail pull. • Others' happiness is a threat to me, so I pig-tail pull to bring them down with me; then I can be happy. • I'll control my environment with a great amount of emotional negativity, thereby bringing my roommate/wife/children down into my "black cloud". • When people ask penetrating questions that I don't want to answer, I "stiff-arm" them (self-protection) -- build barriers. • I never compliment but always find an area to criticize which will tear down the person I love.

Mature Response

1. I have to get to the root of the problem for why I am negative, and admit that it is a sin.
2. I need to apply God's Truth to the root cause of my...
 - a) negative self-image. [Position truths: Eph 1:1-13; Ps 139; Rom 8:1]
 - b) holding on to past hurts, failures, rejection, etc. [Phil 3:13,14; Eph 4:32]
 - c) bitterness. Need to root out bitterness and allow the discipline of the Lord to train me into the fruit of righteousness. [Heb 12:5-15]
3. I need to experience God's love which will free me from the clutches of negativity and the desire to denigrate others so I feel good. [I John 4:16; Rom 5:5]
4. I must express God's love in sacrificial giving...
 - a) with humility [Phil 2:1-5]
 - b) with honesty [I Tim 1:12-16]
 - c) with consistency [I Cor 13:8]

** Any negative attitude that blocks love is SIN!! **

Autonomous

Wrong Attitudes

- I don't need anyone else. I've got to be my own person.
- I've got to protect myself from being hurt or controlled.
- I've got to compartmentalize my life so I maintain control.
- I've got to have my own private space and time.

Wrong Actions

- My life is made up of many separate spheres: family, work, play, religion, and/or service clubs.
- My life is rigidly organized. I have to be in control in every area.
- I can't afford to have emotional ties which might hurt me and interfere with my smoothly functioning lifestyle.
- I'm a macho sports-stud which gives my life more meaning than a relationship ever could.

Mature Response

1. Examine the character of God (attributes); give Him His rightful role in my life. [Is 41; Is 6:1-5; Is 55:8; Ps 19; Ps 139]
2. See myself as David did in Psalm 8...
 - a) Who am I that God even notices me? []
 - b) My heart is wicked. I am 'dead'. [Jer 17:9, Eph 2:1]
3. Fulfill my role for which God created me.
 - a) and yet I will rule under God.
 - b) Therefore, as a submitted man, I am very significant and greatly used by God.
 - c) I'm God's adopted son and joint heir with Christ. [Rom 8:15,17]
 - d) I'm also God's ambassador. [II Cor 5:20]
4. Deep committed love relationships in the Body of Christ are mandatory. [Rom 12:5; Eph 4:1-4]

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• I will be very selective in choosing who I share parts of my life with... and I'll ~~make~~ any one person know too much of me.

• I resent anyone who tries to push themselves into my life.

Wrong Actions

- My life is made up of many separate spheres: family, work, play, religion, and/or service clubs.
- My life is rigidly organized. I have to be in control in every area.
- I can't afford to have emotional ties which might hurt me and interfere with my smoothly functioning lifestyle.
- I'm a macho sports-stud which gives my life more meaning than a relationship ever could.

• My schedule is my business

Functioning instead of Emotionally Relating

Wrong Attitudes

- Emotionally relating is for sissies, so I'll avoid it because I'm a man.
- I don't see any value in just relating; it's a waste of valuable time.
- My father and I worked together but never related, so I concluded that men don't need to relate.
- Relating is awkward, and like gossiping, it's superficial.

Wrong Actions

- I earn the money to buy the house, to educate the kids, etc. I am a good provider.
- I'm busy fixing things. I don't have time to relate.
- Talking while I am working at something is okay, because I am accomplishing something.
- Vacations are to be productive..."We'll all paint the house together as a family!"

Mature Response

1. Realize that my self-worth is not based on my ability to function but on how God views me.

[Prov 3:5-6; Phil 4:6]

2. God's priorities are:

- a) loving Him with all my heart, soul, strength, and mind.

- b) loving my neighbor (others) as myself

[Luke 10:27]

Therefore, relating lovingly is of primary importance.

3. Change my inner-motivation from self-protection through functioning to love. Realize that functioning without relating is totally incompatible with agape love because loving is relating.

[Rom 12:9ff; Rom 13:8; I Pet 1:22]

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• I'll solve the problem but then leave you to work it out on your own.

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Arrogant but Irresponsible

Wrong Attitudes

- I know I'm always able to pull it off at the last minute...better than the other guy can.
- It's not really that important if I complete it, it's the inspiration I have that counts.
- My enthusiasm and charisma will carry me through.
- When I over-book and get in over my head, I expect someone to bail me out.
- You need to make me feel good first. You can't just expect me to function without emotional input.

Wrong Actions

- I'll get around to it. I've got so much to do and no time to do it.
- You just don't understand because you don't have half of the responsibility that I have.
- I'm sure I paid that bill. They must have made a mistake.
- It's on my desk! If you hadn't moved my piles around I could find it!
- Oh! Was that a definite dinner date? I know we talked about it, but I didn't put it on my calendar.
- I'll lash out at you because you don't care.

Mature Response

1. Develop a sense of responsibility as God's servant.
 - a) As God's servant, it's His time I'm wasting.
 - b) Consistency in building deep relationships is the evidence of mature love.
 - c) I am to live as God's workman responsibly discharging His work.
 - d) The quality of my ministry must not be allowed to deteriorate when I...
 - feel bad or angry
 - get busy and fragmented
 - am bored and tired.
2. Realize that all of my gifts and abilities are on 'loan' from God, and He will demand an accounting of them.
 - a) I must live so I can say with Paul, "I have fought the good fight..."

[I Cor 13]

[II Tim 2:15; Eph 2:10; I Cor 3:10]

[Mt 25:14-29]

[II Tim 3:4-7]

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- My enthusiasm and charisma will carry me through.
- When I over-book and get in over my head, I expect someone to bail me out.
- You need to make me feel good first. You can't just expect me to function without emotional input.

• I expect you to overlook my inconsistencies because I'm such a great guy overall.

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- I'm sure I paid that bill. They must have made a mistake.
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- Oh! Was that a definite dinner date? I know we talked about it, but I didn't put it on my calendar.
- I'll lash out at you because you don't care. . .
- If you love me, you'll help me out of my mess.

Control (tribal/expectations)

Wrong Attitudes

- I'll arrange my life so that the control is effective.
- Everyone has to play by my rules or I don't play.
- I'm strong and proud of it, so I should be in control.
- If people don't change the way I expect, I'll cast them aside...(make them suffer).

Wrong Actions

- We'll have a joint checking account and I'll write all the checks.
- I expect you to move if I get a promotion.
- I work, you look after the house and kids; and if I let you work, that's okay, too. We'll put the money you make in a savings account for the kid's education.
- I always pick out the new car. I know more about it than you do.
- I'll plan the vacations because I do so much better at it than you do.
- I'll yell at my kid when he's playing ball until he cries. I'm going to make him do it my way--the right way!
- If people don't do what I expect, I'll play on their emotions until they feel guilty.

Mature Response

1. Transfer my rights to God. [1 Pet 2:21-23]
 - a) Use them to advance God's work and serve others (not control them). [Mt 25:14-29]
 - b) Understand that God will work for my good. [Rom 8:28]
 - c) Thank God in advance -- whatever the outcome. [1 Thess 5:18]
 - d) Expect God to test His rights...
...don't negotiate with God. Abraham gave up Isaac. [Jms 1]
[Gen 22]
2. Focus on the spiritual qualities that God is seeking to develop in me. Trust Him for...
 - a) material security [Mt 6]
 - b) a godly wife [Prov]
 - c) a positive, mature character [II Pet 1:5-9]
 - d) significant ministry [John 15]

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- If people don't change the way I expect, I'll cast them aside...(make them suffer).

• I will dolc out affirmation and love in carefully controlled amounts to teach my (wife, roommates friends) what I expect from them.

Wrong Actions

- We'll have a joint checking account and I'll write all the checks.
- I expect you to move if I get a promotion.
- I work, you look after the house and kids; and if I let you work, that's okay, too. We'll put the money you make in a savings account for the kid's education.
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