The Secret to a Happy and Meaningful Relationship

*By Dr. Roger Landry*

What’s the secret to a happy and meaningful relationship? If I had to choose one nugget of wisdom to share, it would be that a meaningful relationship is born out of being “other-centered.” It’s not about what the other person can do for you; but the way in which you value and treat the other person. Being other-centered is the key to a long-lasting relationship, whether it be a friendship or a romantic partnership. This week, here are a few suggestions for ways to put others first.

Five Ways to Practice Being Other-Centered:

1. **Listen completely.** Stop whatever it is you are doing, look the other person in the eyes and truly focus on what they are saying.
2. **Be Patient.** It’s easier to slow down when you’re not concerned about what you need to get accomplished. You are there for the other person. Consider this the next time you are in line at the grocery store and the person in front of you seems to be taking too long finding the correct change, or when you’re waiting for someone at the crosswalk at an intersection on your drive home from work.
3. **Reserve Judgment.** You may not always agree; but be open to hearing what the other person has to say, and be respectful of their opinion.
4. **Smile Often.** It’s the simplest gift you can give others that will immediately brighten their day.
5. **Speak Kindly.** Be generous with authentic compliments and curb negativity. This will also help you focus on the other person’s positive qualities – the very things that you love about them.

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