

## **Article 90: What is Your Hell?**

Listening closely and awarefully in your relationships will help you and the relationship live happier and longer, for careful and caring listening reinforces intimacy and helps bring you and your partner closer together ...to grow as intimate and reliable friends. Attentive listening shows respect and genuine concern ...and leads to intimately fulfilling relationships and communication in which both individuals are truly interested in what the other is thinking and feeling, ...not merely about daily events and affairs ...or about goals and concerns ...but also about each other's inspiring desires and dreams, ...and, at times, about fears and doubts and anxieties.

*Let go of the need to judge.*

True friendship and intimacy is revealed and best expressed in small matters which are constantly repeated and sustained, while destructive relationships are nourished by an environment of criticism and blame, of direct and indirect judgments, of defensiveness, and of disconcert from one another. Of course, such disastrous relationships are easy to identify when these actions are active and overt, but they are usually subdued or carefully hidden ...and frequently denied, ...but the destruction occurs just as surely, ...little by little, one accusative word after another. Learning to communicate openly, honestly, and intimately will not only help you live more contentedly and happily in your "intimate" relationship, but with all others, events, and conditions in your life. And you will be surprised at the awareness and wellbeing you will awaken and enliven ...and the enriching fulfillment that will be yours.

*Do not be afraid to initiate.*

Do you tend to be helter-skelter or doubtful in dealing with your relationships? Why? What do you gain from that? Are you avoiding someone or something? Could it be that you are avoiding open, honest, intimate communication with your present or intended partner? Are you fearful of knowing and expressing your trueself? ...your greatest and finest self? ...and that of your partner? This prevents your gaining any real insight into yourself, your relationship, or your partner, ...all of which makes everyday life more difficult ...and denies you the self and life and relationship of your dreams.

*Resign from the judgment-game.*

In night dreams, the element of judgment is missing, thus you are never judged, ...and since you create your dreams, it is obvious that you can create and live without judging, but you only seem to do that in your dreams, ...therefore, it would be wise to recognize the awareful self and life and relationships of your dreams and live them. Judgments in your personal relationship, whether direct or indirect, expressed or held within, do nothing for you but make your partner "wrong" in your mind and eyes, ...do you really believe that will create an open, honest, intimate relationship? ...especially considering that, to your partner, you are

“wrong”. Are you reacting out of hurt and fear? If you do not or will not communicate openly, honestly, and intimately with yourself or others, especially with friends or an intimate partner, how can you expect to live your true desires? Stop wasting precious time and vitality in judgments and arguments.

*Relax your rigid perceptions.*

Is your selfimage, and are your judgments, too “fixed” to live a flexible, ever-changing open, honest, intimate relationship easily ...and with confidence? Have you enclosed your self and your relationship within a wall of judgments? ...any judgments? Are your beliefs, thoughts, and ways of living too rigid? Considering your precious relationships, do you really believe you can create and live a loving relationship of happiness by continuing your old beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors? Are your beliefs about relationships and communication filled with illusions, self-deceptions, pretenses, judgments, and denials? Does it seem that most everything you have tried or thought of has never really worked in your relationships ...or satisfied you, ...at least not for any length of time? Could it be that you set yourself up to seldom, if ever, be satisfied ...or content? Active contentment in your relationship is not compliancy or indifference, it is complete involvement without judging, accusing, or blaming, ...it is enriching fulfillment.

*Has blaming and accusing become  
the way of your relationships?*

No matter how open, honest, and intimate you are in your relationships, it is impossible to see, experience, and understand others and things as they really are, for you are, at all times, ...looking and sensing through the veil of your own beliefs and feelings ...and will, thus, only see and experience others and things as you believe them to be. In all situations and relationships, you are seeing and experiencing more of yourself than of others and matters around you, ...which offers you awareful control of your self and life ...but no control over others. Are you open, honest, and intimate with others? ...with yourself?

*Are you comfortable with yourself?*

In reply to a Japanese samurai warrior’s challenge to reveal the difference between heaven and hell, a priest asked, “Sir, do you truly enjoy every aspect of living as a samurai?”

“Of course I do!” the samurai replied instantly.

“Then that,” the priest replied pleasantly, “is your heaven, ...but I have no desire to use my precious time fruitlessly trying to teach anything to an idiot who is so foolish as to become a samurai, ...so stand aside!” And with that, the priest brushed past the samurai and headed for the door.

Article 90 - 3

The warrior, startled by the priest's reaction, quickly drew his sword and yelled, "Old man! ...no one challenges a samurai like that. Turn around so I can properly cut off your head!"

And as the warrior raised his sword to strike, he heard the priest say quietly, "...and that, sir, is your hell!"

*Are you certain you know what you are doing?*