The Importance Of Solitude In A Relationship Essay, Research Paper

The Importance of Equal Amounts of Solitude in a Relationship

Solitude in a relationship in equal amounts is an important factor in making a good marriage. Any good relationship must have a certain degree of independence on both sides. If one person believes that the other person must be around for a decision to be made or if one person believes life could not go on without the other person, that person could begin to take the other person for granted. When people do this the relationship begins to be somewhat fake because the person is not living in reality believing that that person will be around forever.

A good marriage must have communication to work properly. Rainer Maria Rilke wrote “A good marriage is that in which each appoints the other the guardian of his solitude.” This means that for a good relationship to work both people must have good enough communication with another to show each other nicely that people must be independent to a certain point.

In a good relationship the time spent together must be regulated wisely. Like Rainer Rilke’s quotation says, each person basically says how much time alone the other person receives. This amount of time must be large enough to let the person be themselves. If people are not given that time to be themselves, they won’t be happy and the relationship will not work. That amount of time that they are given also must not become too large or the other person may begin to feel smothered.

Communication problems are often the cause of breakups and divorces. Countless problems can be blamed on communication problems. Like Deborah Tannen says in her essay, “…[Communication problems]…. require a new conceptual framework about the role of talk in human relationships.” (79) Communication is vital in all relationships, especially marriage. The couple must be confident enough in their relationship to talk about needing more solitude. Deborah Tannen adds “Once the problem is understood, the improvement comes naturally.” (79) If both sides can come to a compromise by using good communication skills an adequate level of solitude can be achieved, avoiding a breakup or divorce.

A good marriage is complicated because the couple must be close to each other but also maintain the solitude that keeps the relationship healthy. Also, the couple must be close enough to each other to tell the person that they do not feel like they have enough independence. Barbara Whitehead writes in her essay, “Americans have a ‘best friends’ ideal for marriage….” (101) This kind of relationship is good because it allows people to be close enough to share problems, like not having enough independence, and prevent a problem before it starts. After a problem starts, the couple may feel overwhelmed because the problem may have gone on for some amount of time and assume that it may not stop or be able to be fixed. However, if the couple has a good relationship that has that “best friends” feel, then the problem should be resolved with a small amount of effort.

People in relationships sometimes do not notice the importance of solitude. These people tend to not give their spouse the independence that they need as a human. In the Chinese folk tale “Women” Chang the Third was a jealous man that could not leave his wife alone so he would magically put her in a bottle when he left so he could keep an eye on her. Chang ends up having his worst nightmare happen when he bottles up his wife with another man. In the end Chang’s own insecurities brought on the thing he feared most. Some men are like Chang and they “bottle up” their wives, and vice versa. This bottling brings on problems for both people. If both spouses want to remain problem free these insecurities must not be brought into the relationship and they must realize the importance of giving the other person space.

People must be considerate of each other when it comes to solitude. When the amount of independence is adequate on both sides, a very solid and healthy relationship can develop. People can not truly love one another without being self-sufficient. If the solitude is lacking a resentful relationship may follow. Both people are supposed to communicate and let each other know what they need to themselves. If that equal amount of solitude is achieved a healthy, growing relationship will be the outcome and both people will feel comfortable with the other person and also themselves.