

**Legendary Love. Module 4. Lesson 26.
Nurture Your Relationship As You Grow and Change.**

Nurture Your Relationship as You Grow and Change.

After the lessons on children, money, friendships, and personal space, you may wonder what more about needs can you learn about. Every lesson has been about needs and the importance of talking about them with your partner.

This lesson isn't about the most obvious needs. It's about the needs you discover as you enjoy your relationship and personal growth and development.

Life Involves Growth

People have the mistaken idea that developmental growth ends in the 20s. It doesn't. Your brain continues growing and developing, resulting in changes in the way you view the world.

Relationships are a major source of growth. As the two of you navigate the joys as well as challenges of life, you learn about yourself personally and about your partner. Going back to the Johari Window, the box about what you know about yourself and what others know grows.

A Happy Relationship Supports You

When you relate to each other with honesty and respect, you grow closer. You are also happier with yourself. Your partner's support gives you the opportunity to be comfortable with yourself. Your support of your partner does the same for your beloved.

Look at these wonderful areas in which you'll grow:

1. **You learn to trust yourself and be comfortable with who you are.**
When the one you love is continually supporting you, self-doubt diminishes.
 - Self-doubt can overwhelm you unless you have someone you trust supporting you. **Your partner will tell you when your self-doubt is not based upon reality.**

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- With love and support, you trust yourself more and more.
2. **You challenge each other to be a better person.** Your good habits will call each other to be your best self.
 - Habits are ingrained in your brain. You “do” those habits without thinking. **Because of your love for one another, your good habits challenge each other to be the best you.**
 3. **You learn to be dependable.** Because you each depend upon each other, you strengthen your ability to be dependable.
 - Because of your love for each other, you want to please your beloved. You learn what it’s like to be depended upon and the positive feeling of being dependable.
 4. **You learn more about yourself.** You discover talents you didn’t know you had.
 - Your partner supports you in your discovery. With their support, you’ll have the strength and courage to explore new areas.

You Each Are Changing

Healthy people grow and change. Their understanding of themselves, the world, and their relationships change as they themselves gain a deeper understanding and knowledge of themselves. This means you are both growing.

It’s possible for you and your partner to grow in different directions. This isn’t a reason for concern as long as your relationship is based upon trust, honesty, and consistent and respectful communication.

Your growth can be emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. These changes affect the core of who you are and your perception of how you want to live in the world, including in your relationship.

Internal growth can be confusing for you and your partner. You’ll want to explore with each other what is happening.

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Consider these ideas:

- 1. Be clear about how you're feeling and what these internal changes mean.**
 - Changes can range from a desire to change jobs, professions, or receive more education to exploring new spiritual interests.
 - The first step is for you to be clear within yourself about what's happening. Journaling is an excellent resource to sort through your ideas and feelings.
 - Part of having an intimate and powerful relationship is sharing with your partner the wonderful and sometimes confusing internal changes you're experiencing. Be clear about your thoughts and feelings.

- 2. Know the difference between what you want versus what you need.**
 - If you have a strong desire to help children who have cancer, do you need to be a doctor, or will volunteering at a cancer hospital satisfy the desire?
 - If your desire is to explore spirituality, do you need to join or change religions or will taking various workshops be sufficient?

- 3. Taking into account your family's needs and responsibilities and satisfying your own requires flexibility of all parties.**
 - Everyone involved has their own wants and needs. To accommodate everyone's needs requires the ability to be flexible mentally and emotionally as well as in concrete situations such as schedules.
 - Communication is crucial.

- 4. Know when to say "yes" and when to say "no."** There are times when the answer is a clear "yes" or "no."

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- Be clear in expressing your “yes” or “no.” Clarity involves your feelings as well as the “why” of your response.
- Many times, the answer is, “Let’s investigate further and see what we can do.” Leave yourself open to possibilities. When you give a definite “no,” minds close to exploring options.

Change can be both exciting and scary. As long as you’re alive, internal growth keeps life exciting and fun. Your mutual growth will keep your relationship exciting. Sharing with each other your feelings as you grow produces an intimacy you never knew was possible when you first came together.

Summary

No matter how old you are, as you live your life you gain experiences and open yourself to change. This change can range from a deepening of awareness of yourself and your partner to the inner drive to change jobs, locations, even professions.

Being clear with yourself and your partner deepens your relationship.

In the next lesson, you’ll explore how to know what’s important to you, your partner, and the two of you as a couple.

Before you move on, please take a few minutes to reflect upon what you’ve learned in this lesson.

Reflection

1. Have you considered the possibility that you or your partner can change in significant ways, such as interests, spiritual desires, professions, wanting to move, and more? What feelings or questions come up in your mind when you consider this?

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2. How well do you handle change? What would you need if your partner said they wanted to significantly change something in their life which would also affect you and the family?
3. Write a few sentences about how you've changed from the time you were in high school to now. From what you've written, imagine areas in which you might continue to change and grow.