



# Transformation through **INTIMACY**

**REVISED EDITION**

The Journey toward  
Awakened Monogamy

*Relational intimacy as a sanctuary and crucible  
for a deeper, more authentic life*

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# Some Guidelines for Deepening Relational Intimacy

- Make your connection the priority.
- Cultivate intimacy with all that you are.
- Allow everything to serve your healing, awakening, and relational deepening.
- Do not allow your conditioning to make your choices.
- Don't confuse accepting your partner with accepting what he or she does.
- Don't let what is working in your relationship obscure what isn't.
- Share what is most difficult to communicate.
- Do not call the whole relationship into question when you are fighting or upset with your partner.
- Remember that there is no such thing as a negative emotion.
- Trust your partner with your mistrust.
- Do not confuse fusion with intimacy.
- Do whatever it takes to de-numb.
- Choose to see from where in yourself a particular choice is emerging.
- Gaze at your partner with fresh eyes.

- Don't tolerate disrespect.
- When your mind is overactive, shift your attention from thinking to feeling.
- Give generously but don't over-give.
- Treat your relationship as a sacred adventure.
- Don't confuse your inner critic with your conscience.
- Relate to your reactivity rather than from it.
- Neither force nor avoid commitment.
- Remember that anger and love can coexist.
- Be vulnerable, finding a source of strength in your vulnerability.
- Don't delay saying you're sorry.
- Remember that healthy challenge is not an attack, even when it is fiery.
- Deepen your emotional literacy.
- Don't let your strengths camouflage your weaknesses.
- Take conflict as an opportunity to grow, including when you don't want to.
- Remember that emotion and rationality work best when they work together.
- Meditate.
- Remember that the more intimate we are with our pain, the less we suffer.
- Do not take your partner for granted.
- Breathe integrity into all that you do.
- Don't let your desire for harmony obstruct the stands you need to take.
- Embrace and protect the child in you without identifying with him or her.



- Doubt your doubt.
- Remember that without attachment, there would be no compassion.
- Instead of collapsing your boundaries to include your partner, expand them to include her or him.
- Cease identifying with your inner critic.
- If you're on eggshells with your partner, get off them.
- Practice with the little blows, so that when the big blows come, they don't blow you away.
- Don't keep your shadow in the dark.
- Remember that in a truly intimate relationship, there is no Plan B, no bypassing of feeling, no indulgence in disconnection.
- Allow love and awareness to function as one.
- Communicate with your partner with respect, even when you are angry at him or her.
- Soften without losing your spine or dignity.
- Listen until there is no self-conscious center of hearing, but only listening.
- Don't let your shame mutate into aggression (whether aimed at your partner or at yourself).
- Turn toward your pain and difficulty, step by conscious step.
- Instead of using sex to generate connection, let sex be an expression of already-present, already-established connection.
- Do not get negative about your negativity.
- When you fight, do so cleanly and with heart, until you are fighting for the relationship.
- Remember that compassion that obstructs our capacity to confront is not really compassion, but only neurotic tolerance.

- Do not shame your partner.
- Stop eroticizing your wounds and distress.
- Remember that our past remains present until we bring our awakened presence and compassion into it.
- Keep working on yourself.
- Allow your relationship with your partner to deepen your relationship with all that is.
- Do not allow your anger to turn into aggression.
- Look with compassion upon whatever is unhealed in you and your partner.
- Take charge of your charge.
- Do not allow your spirituality to distance you from your humanity.
- When you lose touch with your partner, reestablish it as soon as possible.
- Do not allow resentment and guilt to take root.
- Give yourself without giving yourself away.
- Remember that the deeper you dive, the less you will mind upsetting waves.
- Release sex—and everything else—from the obligation to make you feel better.
- Let your mortality be a reminder to truly cherish your partner, remembering that avoiding death deadens us.
- Practice being grateful when you least feel like doing so.
- Open even when it hurts to open.
- Keep making your connection the priority.
- Put no limit on how deep your relationship can go.