

Not Mistaking Potential for Capacity

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From the perspective of Oriental Psychology, which incorporates the spiritual practices of Taoism and Buddhism, successful relationships are based on not mistaking potential for capacity. Should either a man or woman fail to understand the difference, their relationship is destined to dissolve in a sea of negative emotional disturbances of one kind or another.

Sentiment and Nostalgia

After all, sentimentality and nostalgia are not reliable measuring sticks to gauge partner suitability. Indeed, to the extent that a couple are hoping for things to turn out well, they run the risk of clinging to unrealistic expectations that can never be met. Nor is hope ever a useful strategy!

Self Knowledge

The ability to accurately read another's capacity is not easy to learn. Some gifted people instinctively have it, but the majority of us gradually come upon some awareness of it only through trial and error. In order to develop the ability to read capacity accurately and precisely, one must cultivate self-knowledge of a kind that sheds light on personal motives, intentions, pursuits, desires, fears and cravings.

Spiritual Goals

A woman will be drawn to a man who not only knows his limitations, but who is aware of his spiritual goals and pursues them without compromise. She requires a demonstration from him that he has set his sights on something more than harvesting the fruits of materialism. In short, she wants to know that he has really grown up and is not just a little boy dressed in a suit. If she walks down the aisle without having established his capacity to lead from the front, she may be disappointed.

Endurance

Similarly, a man will be attracted to a woman who is as soft on the outside as she is tough on the inside. He wants to be assured that she won't fall apart at the seams when the chips are down. He wants her to accompany him on the journey and be prepared to endure the kinds of hardship and challenge that adventurers face when they raise the bar and expand their horizons. He wants to know that she has the capacity to go the distance.

Heaven and Earth

Fortunately, the Taoist sages developed a model through which, the nature of correct relationship might be explored with a heightened sensitivity and awareness. The sages were precise in extolling the virtues of the male and female principles and likened them to the energies of heaven and earth. In short, if heaven is a symbol of strength, a man must forestall the danger of aggression. Domination is not strength. If earth is a symbol of open receptivity, a woman must deflect the danger of falling prey to subservience. Obligation and love are two different things.

To see the potential in someone is to confirm that they might be interested in going on the journey. Their capacity however, is determined by the consistency they bring to the table and the extent to which their deeds match their words!

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