

connection

The Journal of
Seventh-day Adventist
Kinship International, Inc.

October 2003 • Vol.27 No.6



Why We Care About Marriage...

Discussion, news, interviews, and more.

KINSHIP BOARD

President: Bob Bouchard
Vice President: Taylor Ruhl
Secretary: Bruce Harlow
Treasurer: Karen Lee
Connection Editor: Catherine Taylor
Marketing & PR/Webmaster: Robb Crouch/Dave Gilsdorf
Church Liaison: Leif Lind
Womyn's Coordinator: Yolanda Elliott
Kampmeeting 2004 Coordinator: Fred Casey

BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE

IMRU: Eric Gilleo
KinNet Coordinator: Floyd Poenitz
Office Manager/Member Services: Fred Casey
Fund-raising: Mark Driskill
Finance: Karen Wetherell
International Coordinator: Obed Vazquez

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Bob Bouchard, Taylor Ruhl, Bruce Harlow, Catherine Taylor, Sheri Babcock, Samuel Pang

CONNECTION STAFF

Circulation: Fred Casey
European editor: Ruud Kieboom
Photography: Bruce Harlow, Wendy Rickwalt, Denise Proulz

REGIONAL COORDINATORS - USA

Region 1 (PA, NY, CT, RI, MA, VT, NH, ME) Eric Gilleo 617-524-8210
ericg21@hotmail.com
Region 2 (WV, VA, NC, DE, MD, DC) Yolanda Elliot 410-531-5382
yselliott@aol.com
Region 3 (TN, AL, MS, GA, SC, FL) Fred Casey 866-732-5677
office@sdakinship.org
Region 4 (MN, IA, MO, IL, MI, IN, KY, OH) Fred Casey 866-732-5677
office@sdakinship.org
Region 5 (TX, OK, KS, AR, LA) Floyd Poenitz 972-416-1358
floyd@attbi.com
Region 6 (ND, SD, CO, NE, WY, UT, NM) Robb Crouch 402-466-9476
rcdg@foundation.nebraska.edu
Region 7 (AK, WA, OR ID, MT) Fred Casey 866-732-5677
office@sdakinship.org
Region 8 (No. CA, NV HI) Harry Wilmoth 510-523-3461
hwilmoth@earthlink.net
Region 9 (So. CA, AZ) Bruce Boyd 818-708-7448 cinobruce@aol.com

AFFILIATED INTERNATIONAL REGION CONTACTS

Australia Noel Thorpe
nthorpe@vtown.com.au
Brazil Itamar Matos de Souza
matos.souza@pmdf.df.gov.br
Canada Brent Lehmann
rblehmann@telus.net
Europe Ruud Kieboom
kinshipeurope@yahoo.com
Germany Roy Ratzer info@had-ev.de
Mexico & Spanish speaking
Alexander Gomez Pasco
alexpasco@yahoo.com
Philippines Jonathan Co
cancer108@hotmail.com



Who we are...

Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc. (Kinship) is a nonprofit support organization which ministers to the spiritual, emotional, social, intersex and physical well-being of Seventh-day Adventist lesbian, gay men, bisexual, and transgendered individuals and their families and friends. Kinship facilitates and promotes the understanding and affirmation of LGBT Adventists among themselves and within the Seventh-day Adventist community through education, advocacy, and reconciliation. Kinship is an organization which supports the advance of human rights for all people.

Founded in 1976, the organization was incorporated in 1981 and is recognized as a 501a(3) non-profit organization in the US. Kinship has a board of up to 15 officers and 13 regional coordinators. The current list of members and friends includes several thousand people in 20 countries.

SDA Kinship believes the Bible does not condemn, or even mention, homosexuality as a sexual orientation. Ellen G. White does not parallel any of the Bible texts, which are often used to condemn homosexuals. Most of the anguish imposed upon God's children who grow up as LGBT has its roots in a misunderstanding of what the Bible says.

Support Kinship

Kinship operates solely on contributions from its members and friends. Help us reach out to more LGBT Adventists by making a tax-deductible donation to SDA Kinship International. Please send your check or money order to the address below.

SDA Kinship, P.O. Box 49357, Sarasota, FL 34230-6375 — 866-732-5677

Visit SDA Kinship's Web Site at: www.sdakinship.org

Production: Gerry Fox

INFORMATION

The Connection is published by Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc. Principal office: P.O. Box 49357, Sarasota, FL 34230-6375; 866-732-5677.

Submissions of letters, articles, pictures, art work, and graphics are welcome. Include your name as you want it published, address and telephone number. If an item is to be acknowledged or returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Some connection contributors have chosen to remain anonymous. Pseudonyms, if used, appear at the bottom of this page. The connection reserves the right to edit manuscripts for length, syntax, grammar, and clarity. Address all submissions to the Connection, P.O. Box 49357, Sarasota, FL 34230-6375. Inquiries and article submissions may also be e-mailed to office@sdakinship.org.

The mention or appearance of any names, organizations or photographs in this publication is not meant to imply a fact or statement about their sexual orientation or activity.

Subscription requests or address changes may be sent to: Subscriptions, P.O. Box 49357, Sarasota, FL 34230- 6375, or call 866-732-5677. The Kinship mailing list is confidential and used only by Kinship officers. The mailing list is not sold, rented, or exchanged for any purpose.

© 2003 Connection. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. OPINIONS EXPRESSED HEREIN ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF SDA KINSHIP.

Member of the Gay and Lesbian Press Association.
Printed in the U.S. using 100% recyclable paper.

On Marriage...

Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for your love is more delightful than wine. Pleasing is the fragrance of your perfumes. Your name is like perfume poured out.

Song of Songs 1: 1, 2.

I have come into my garden, my sister, my bride.

I have gathered my myrrh with my spice.

I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey.

I have drunk my wine and my milk.

Song of Songs 5:1

Where you go, I will go and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people. Your God will be my God. Where you die I will die and there I will be buried.

Ruth 1:16

Mowwage, mowwage is what bewings us togevah, today.

The Princess Bride

From texts that have, for centuries, taken away the breath of their readers, to movie quotes that bring giggles, marriage and the hope of marriage has been one of the themes of human thought throughout the last several millennia. We've run toward it and escaped from it. We've longed for permanence and feared it. We've made disastrous mistakes in the name of love. And some of us have found great and lasting treasure in the arms of someone who touches our heart, our libido, and our hopefulness. How very poignant, arrogant and often infuriating it has been that some of our modern cultures have denied this tenant of humanity to people because of their orientation, their race, their class, their cognitive functioning. Most everyone reading this has spent some of the last months and years listening to and reading reports of the struggle for GLBTI people to

Continued Overleaf

Why We Care About Marriage

By Gary Chartier

From:

"Natural Law, Same Sex Marriage, and the Politics of Virtue"

UCLA Law Review

Volume 48 Number 6

August 2001

We afford legal recognition for various sorts of marriages - civil, ecclesial, common law-for a variety of reasons. We want to provide orderly means of disposing of property in case of divorce. We want to encourage the stability of families in order to foster the healthy development of children. We want to regularize the intergenerational transmission of property. Marriage serves important civic functions.

Marriage also serves to signify the community's endorsement of a particular kind of relationship: in contemporary American heterosexual and dyadic. It does so directly as a symbol, but also through the conferral of various legal privileges. Proponents and opponents of same-sex marriage rightly see the unavailability of marriage to same-sex couples as a sign that their relationships are communally disfavored. Proponents argue for same-sex marriage as a sign of inclusion in the cultural mainstream for same-sex couples. Opponents argue against it to preserve the moral integrity of the community, to discourage those who might be inclined to enter same-sex relationships from doing so, and to avoid encouraging those already involved in such relationships to persist in them.

If the social functions of marriage were only utilitarian and symbolic, those unconvinced by my moral arguments might be warranted in continuing to oppose legal recognition for same-sex marriage. There is however a third publicly

important function of marriage: the cultivation of virtue. It is precisely because of their concern that the state promote public virtue that many people oppose same-sex marriage. However to say that marriage is a school for virtue means that marriage offers the partners distinctive opportunities to develop morally, to foster in each other moral growth and to learn and practice a responsibility that extends beyond their relationship and into the wider public world. Taking seriously the capacity of marriage to further the development of virtue thus means making marriage available to same-sex couples.

While marriage may embody as clearly as any social institution the transition from status to contract as the basis for social interactions, it nonetheless remains a status relationship. We are not at liberty to define the terms of the marriage contract however we wish. To marry is to accept - and putatively to endorse - a range of pre-existing societal expectations. Those expectations include permanence and exclusivity.

Permanence and exclusivity both serve the ends of love. But that doesn't make them consistently easy. Societal expectations help us to take them seriously. Permanence and exclusivity offer great gifts to marriage partners: security, self confidence, freedom from alienating isolation. Active societal encouragement of marriage thus means active encouragement of the provisions of these gifts. A society that cares about its members will wish them to enjoy the liberating and empowering experience of marital love. It will also recognize that persons thus liberated and

Continued Overleaf

On Marriage...

marry whom they will, where they live. We've been to weddings of friends and people we care for. We've anguished over whether or not we want to or can marry. We've suffered through a divorce or three. Because the topic of marriage and our right to its privileges and responsibilities has been in the headlines this year, we decided to dedicate this Marriage edition of the Connection to the thoughts and stories of Kinship members and our friends. Gary Chartier, who wrote the lead article on the ethics of marriage for the UCLA law review is a supporter of and occasional speaker for Kinship. Janis and Michele are friends of ours who consult to the Connection around issues of gender. I asked about 15 Kinship couples if they would like to or had time to be interviewed about their relationship or their ceremonies and put a general request out on the boards. The interviews here are the people with whom I was able to speak by our print deadline. There are more of you who have offered your stories. As you have time I would love to talk with you and gradually include your voices throughout this year's editions. If some of you reading now would like your stories included I would love to share them with our readers. As you read, you'll notice the stories all have a different focus. The one similarity is that, in a culture where we are defined by the person with whom we have sex, there was almost no conversation about libidinal pursuits. I talked with one of the contributors about this. He thinks it's because sex may usually be an integral part of marriage but certainly not the only definition of ourselves as couples. We'd like to hear your thoughts about that. In general, we would love to hear and print any of your responses to the articles here, complaints about how the editor runs the Connection or anything else you might want to say. Please feel free to call or e-mail Catherine.

Why We Care...

empowered will be more fulfilled, more capable, and so better equipped to contribute in a variety of ways to the lives of others outside their families.

Taken seriously, habits of constancy, trust, honesty, fairness, and compassion will be evident outside the doors of people's homes. A relationship that affects a person as profoundly as marriage is likely to have ramifications that extend well beyond the domestic, not only because those who know themselves loved may be better

**Loving another
person means
attending to that
person as truly
other than oneself**

neighbors and citizens, but because those who learn to love faithfully in marriage will find it more difficult to be untrustworthy and undependable persons in general.

Loving another person means attending to that person as truly other than oneself, acknowledging the independent reality and worth of her or his perspectives and needs. Fidelity to another means being prepared at least sometimes to disregard one's own advantage. Commitment and love require learning that one is not at the center of the universe. To learn this contraction of the self in faithful and marital love is to acquire a habit one can and likely will carry into the wider world. A moral relationship with a partner fosters moral relationships with other members of one's community.

Marriage provides each partner a sense of dignity and value. Empowered and inspired by the

awareness of her or his own worth, a person can contribute more effectively to public life. And the unconditional care and love of another can be, as J. Philip Wogaman puts it, "deeply humanizing". It can thus offer a kind of grace that can equip a person to play a meaningful role in the life of her or his community. The intimate community of a couple is a good in its own right. Fostering mutual giving of marriage partners to each other not only empowers them for public service but also furthers their own well being.

Marriage also contributes to the maintenance of civil society. Stable couples contribute to the stable social networks. They are more likely to set down roots in local communities and to invest time and energy in making those communities thrive. Similarly, they are more likely to help anchor small communities of friends, which can serve as especially important alternatives to more traditional communities in an era when previously common patterns of authority and connections have lost considerable appeal... Their own shared life can exert a ripple effect on the varied communities they touch. Civil society depends on an array of intertwined communities. Marriage is among the most important of these communities. Strong marital relationships contribute to the growth and flourishing of healthy communities. And this is true whether the marriages unite same-sex or opposite sex couples.

The public recognition of a marriage through legal acknowledgement and celebratory ritual; serves to strengthen a couple's ties with each other. Publicly married couples are clearly identified in the minds of friends, family members and the general public as couples. Who they are is different because they are married. At the same time, it also reminds them that their love for each other appropriately issues in a public vocation, a responsibility to

Partnership proposals called "apartheid"

Gay.com UK
Tuesday 30 September, 2003

The Government's [UK] Civil Partnership proposals are a "form of apartheid", according to gay rights group OutRage!.

In a statement released on the day that the consultation period ends for the proposals, the group has publicly rejected the partnership register, saying the suggestions "leave the door open for discrimination".

"It entrenches inequality and unnecessarily perpetuates discrimination," spokesman Brett Lock said today.

"In effect, it creates a sort of sexual Apartheid, where separate development paths are installed to define and manage the legal rights of same- and opposite-sex partners," he added.

Lock says that flaws in the proposals could leave future governments to update the legislation, allowing non-married

heterosexual couples more additional rights than their gay counterparts.

"If the motivation is equality, then equality it should be, not this Apartheid-style separate development which legally entrenches the second-class status of lesbian and gay citizens," he added.

OutRage! is suggesting alternative legislation that is dependant on a person nominating any significant person in their life as a next of kin. This would be regardless of gender or sexual orientation, and could include elderly spinsters who share a home, or a single person and a close friend, it claims.

"There is, nowadays, a huge variety of relationships and lifestyles. There are people who live together, and those who live apart," OutRage's Peter Tatchell says.

"The one-size-fits-all model of relationship recognition - epitomised by marriage - is no longer appropriate."

California enacts historic gay couples law

Tom Musbach,
PlanetOut.com Network
Saturday, September 20, 2003

In a San Francisco auditorium crowded with hundreds of GLBT supporters, California Gov. Gray Davis signed a landmark law on Friday night that gives same-sex domestic partners nearly all of the rights and responsibilities granted to married couples in the state. The new law makes California the second state in the United States, behind Vermont, to grant such legal recognition to same-sex couples.

Some of the new rights and responsibilities to be granted domestic partners in California include child custody and child and spousal support obligations, the right to make funeral arrangements, community property and spousal support, access to family court, parenthood presumptions, state court testimonial privileges, access to married student housing and mutual responsibility for debts.

Gov. Davis signed the sweeping bill, known as AB 205, while sharing the stage with several gay and lesbian politicians, including the bill's author, Assemblywoman Jackie Goldberg (D-Los Angeles). Several GLBT groups hailed the new law's impact, which extends beyond the more than 20,000 registered domestic partnerships in California.

Why We Care...

contribute to the polis out of the largesse that love confers on them.

By contrast, as long as lesbians and gays are marginalized, their unions will suffer from pressures to which the marriages and dating relationships of straight couples are never subjected. Being legally and publicly married will increase the opportunity for lesbians and gays to give to their various communities. By fostering the stability of lesbian and gay couples and integrating them more fully into the public world, same sex marriage will make our communities stronger. Marriages foster virtue in partners and enable them to grow morally, to contribute to each other's humanization, to foster the development of their society. Marriage is not morally neutral; it is

morally crucial.

Gary Chartier is Assistant Professor of Business Ethics and Law at La Sierra University. He holds a PhD in Christian theology from the University of Cambridge and a JD from the University of California at Los Angeles. His byline has appeared in journals including *Ratio Juris*, the *Jahrbuch für Recht und Ethik*, the *UCLA Law Review*, the *Anglican Theological Review*, the *Washburn Law Journal*, *Spectrum*, the *UCLA Asian-Pacific American Law Journal*, and the *Brigham Young University Education Law Journal*. Georgetown University Press is currently reviewing the manuscript of his book *Revisioning Divorce: Women's Experience and the End of 'Marriage' in Christian Ethics*.

Corinthians 13:4-8

Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

An Interview with Andrew and Samuel

Why did you want to get married?

We wanted to get married because we didn't want our children to be illegitimate! Well, that's just one of the reasons but not the only one. We are both very traditional people. Samuel didn't want to be cheated out of a wedding just because we are gay.

Why did you have your wedding at South Congregational Church in Springfield, MA?

Samuel had played the piano for many church weddings and he had always dreamed of having a church wedding. Andrew is from a family where ritual and ceremony are not priorities but it was important to him that we exchanged rings and made a commitment to each other. So if we were going to have a church wedding, Andrew wanted it to be held in a place with personal meaning and connections. So, we chose the church in which five generations of his family have been actively involved since 1894. It had voted in 2000 to become an Open and Affirming congregation.

How did you two meet and when did you start dating?

We had met at a garden party of a mutual friend in May 1999, at which time we had a long and interesting conversation. At that time, Andrew asked Samuel for his business card because he was interested in becoming a biological father once he found a husband, and Samuel is a reproductive endocrinologist who has been helping male couples have biological children. Samuel thought Andrew was interested in dating but Andrew didn't call, at least not initially. So Samuel went on with his life. Almost three years later, Andrew realized that he was about to turn forty and decided that he wanted to have biological

children, with or without a husband. He would have preferred to have children with a husband, but he didn't want to go through life without children and without a husband. So he called Samuel for his professional services. Samuel had never before helped a single man, gay or straight, have biological children, so he hesitated a bit. Altruistically, he believed it was too difficult to raise children as a single man and, at the same time, work to support the family, so he thought it was crazy for a single man to intentionally go through this process to have biological children. Samuel went out on a limb and confessed that when he gave Andrew his card, he had hoped Andrew would call for a date. So we started talking to each other, virtually every day, on the phone and also communicated by e-mail, for the next three weeks. We talked about values and dreams and relational issues. We grilled each other on long lists of topics. We got the "deal-breakers" out of the way during those first three weeks, even before our first date. If either one of us was going to have concerns, we wanted it out of the way before we became too involved. Each of us had previously experienced failed relationships from which we learned what we were looking for in a relationship. Each of us knew what characteristics in a mate were important to us. Andrew's touchstone was, "is this someone with whom I want to raise my children?"

How long did it take for you to decide to get married?

We exchanged rings (i.e. became "engaged to be married," if you will) three months after our first date with each other. Over the next several months, we met each other's family. It turned out to be an old-fashioned courtship.

How did your family react to your new relationship?

Samuel's family liked Andrew & welcomed him warmly into the family. Andrew had heard of Seventh-day Adventists but knew nothing about them before we began to date, so Samuel's father attempted to share with Andrew some of the tenants of the faith with which he was going to have at least some contact. Samuel's mother revealed to us after the wedding that when she visited Samuel three years ago, she was struck by the fact that Samuel was living alone. That realization saddened her, so from that day forward, she prayed daily that God would find a mate for him. When Andrew was introduced to the family, she considered that her prayers had been answered.

Tell me about some of the preparation and planning for your wedding?

With this level of family support for our relationship, we began the process of planning our wedding and we chose the date after consultation with family on both sides, to ensure that everyone could be there. We wanted a traditional church wedding and we found it easy to include traditional elements with only slight modifications for a same-gender couple. For example, our attendants processed in pairs of two women, mixed gender, and two men. Then, we each walked toward each other from opposite corners at the back of the sanctuary to meet at the foot of the aisle and walk up it together, hand-in-hand. The classic Book of Common Prayer vows fit our style perfectly. We chose traditional colors from both our cultures: gray morning coats for the men and the traditional red of Chinese weddings for the women attendants. We worked to create the right balance, making the day formal but not rigid, dignified but

not uptight. We used forks to feed each other the first bite of cake, and when it was time for our first dance, we simply signaled the band and walked out onto the dance floor, with no announcement. We wanted all our guests to feel comfortable and joyful, welcomed and cared for throughout the entire event. We were both pleasantly surprised & extremely pleased at how perfectly everything turned out. Our wedding was more perfect than we could have ever imagined. It was the most special day of our life.

How did you decide who to invite to your wedding?

Samuel's guests represented the many aspects of his life: his family, his childhood friends, his colleagues from the office, his swim team buddies, his Kinship friends, and his friends in PFLAG and The Boston Gay Men's Chorus. Only one quarter of the guests were Andrew's. He has a smaller family with fewer siblings than Samuel, and he was more selective, inviting only family and close friends. We felt very honored by the presence of our family and friends who were there to support us.

How has your relationship changed since the wedding?

The best ways we can find to describe how our relationship has changed since the wedding are: pencil becoming ink, soft clay becoming ceramic. Even though our relationship has been comfortable all along, it now seems even more solid, more reliable, and more safe. The exchange of rings brought this about for Andrew. For him it was liberation to say there is no turning back. Now our energies can be focused on building our family and our life, as opposed to searching for a husband. Andrew's father had been in the military and their family moved many times after having lived in the same New England city for 12 generations, so Andrew desires a sense of

permanence, emotional and relational, as well as in an abode.

In what ways do you see your wedding as a political statement?

I think we were successful in demonstrating that two men can have as traditional a church wedding as any heterosexual couple. Many of our guests commented to us that our wedding was the best wedding they have ever attended, some even admitting that it was better than their own wedding! A week after our wedding, a story about it was published on the front page of the Sunday edition of the Springfield Republican. A reporter from the paper had called the church in response to a news release by South

We had a church wedding for our own satisfaction and for our families.

Congregational Church, and had asked if he could interview the newlywed couple. After some deliberation, we agreed to a telephone interview, but chose to reveal only our first names. We tried to emphasize that while we recognize that "the personal is political," our wedding had not been intended to be a political statement. We had a church wedding for our own satisfaction and for our families. It was important to Samuel and meaningful to his family that we have a traditional church wedding. Although we weren't trying to make a political statement, we do believe that everyone should be allowed to marry the person of his/her choice, regardless of gender. One way we do act with political intent is in the choice of words. We insist on using the word "wedding" instead

of "commitment ceremony;" "husband" instead of "partner" or "lover;" and "same-gender marriage" instead of "same-sex marriage." This is the language that is used to convey heterosexual marriage, and to accept the use of different terms to describe our marriage is to acknowledge that it is different from heterosexual marriage. We didn't expect it, but we had been hopeful that the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court would rule before the date of our wedding so that our marriage would be legal. We even got the state-required premarital blood tests done the week before our wedding, just in case.

How did you decide to use Samuel's last name as your family name?

Andrew felt very strongly that every member of our family should use the same last name, to convey its unity. We talked about this and decided that we should have one family name as opposed to a hyphenated family name. Andrew volunteered to take Samuel's family name and we have each taken Andrew's family name as our middle name.

What advice would you share with those who are still looking for a life partner?

People often look for mates who are mirror images of themselves. We believe that our differences allow us to complement each other. We don't believe that differences are detrimental to a relationship. We believe that the key to a successful relationship is constant, open communication. Find the differences through talking, so they don't take you by surprise and feel threatening, and then find the common path you share. We believe that having common values and life aspirations are far more important for the success of a marriage relationship than having common interests or recreational tastes.

From Bev and Pauline...

On first thought, we got married because we were in Vermont and we could do it. We had talked about it for years. First one of us wasn't interested and then it didn't seem relevant. I didn't just want to round up any old Unitarian minister. Up in Vermont it was more accepted. We were going to go to a justice of the peace. We actually hadn't even thought about having a ceremony at Kampmeeting itself but our plans kept mushrooming. Someone made the suggestion. It sounded good to us. We talked to the justice of the peace and he agreed to come to the Green Mountain College for a very few minutes. We went away to Montreal for a mid week visit and came back to a room full of people waiting for us, a service already organized, food and a Ben and Jerry's Vermont Wedding Cake. We got to play our Helen Reddy music and dance at our reception. It turned out to be quite exciting. We got the original idea from an edition of last year's "Connection". Steve had it outlined in a way that made it look so simple. We just had our ten year anniversary combined with Bev's sixtieth birthday celebration. We told our friends that we were going north to do this and we got lots of support. We had difficulty figuring out who to invite and if they would want to come. It's a little like we eloped and then found out that a whole van load of our friends would have come up to be with us.

I don't think our marriage has changed our relationship much. Well, on second thought we're wearing our claudagh rings every day. I actually told someone at work who noticed the ring that I had decided to get married. I probably would not have mentioned it if not for the ring. We never had a real anniversary before. We couldn't figure out a day to celebrate. What was it we would celebrate?? The day we decided to live together? The day we did move in together?

Now we have an official anniversary. Psychologically, taking the pledge, saying those vows makes our relationship feel more solemn and more committed. Even the town clerk gave us an official stamp. And he wrote us a note wishing us well. This has been the highlight of our year. Down here the atmosphere is oppressive. It was good to have a place where we could be accepted. For Bev it was so important to be married in her own church environs. Here Bev has to lie to hold church office. To be so supported in a Seventh Day Adventist context was so very different. I had not thought it was even possible.

Bev: I had thought I wouldn't go to heaven if I married Pauline. But

I began to have some hope that maybe their journey could have some truth for my life.

then I saw pictures of these two women getting married. They were both dressed in beautiful formal dresses. And they were in a church. I began to have some hope that maybe their journey could have some truth for my life. For Pauline there never has been any conflict but for me the issues with the church have been heart rending. We began our relationship with so much negativity. Members of my family showed up for lunch one day while Pauline was at mass. They told me they would get a U-haul and get me out of here. Can you just imagine? One Sabbath someone invited me over for lunch after church and I go, just to find

out that she has invited me to dinner so she could ask me about my sex life. Where do people think they get the right to ask me about my personal life? I would come home from church weeping. I left Pauline because I thought I just cannot live in this way. One of the most important things that turned my heart around was going to the Kampmeeting at John Hopkins. That was the first time I had ever heard one of the General Conference brethren affirm my love. It's amazing to look back over those years. Our life is so heavenly now.

Pauline: Why did I stick around? Well, I had a friend that helped me set boundaries. Bev had talked to a SDA couple who had decided to be celibate but that was clearly not for me. I wasn't going to have qualities in my relationship that would make me crazy. I wouldn't have reached out to Bev in the first place; it wasn't really my style to go after anybody. We had been friends before we were involved with each other and I knew how special Bev is. We had already respected and trusted each other. I had made a list of what I wanted in a relationship and Bev thought "Well, I'm all of those". She kept dropping hints till finally I got them and picked up on them. Then when our relationship became so stressful I decided that for once in my life I would fight for what I wanted. I read in a devotional an encouragement to take risks. I fought in my own way for this relationship. This wasn't a good way for me to meet Seventh Day Adventists. I had a difficult time believing people could go so clearly out of their way to undermine a good relationship. Later I've met wonderful Seventh Day Adventists but the beginning was awful. We worked very hard early. Now I can't believe life can be this easy. I thought relationships were always supposed to be hard work. This is different.

Interview with Leslie and Jan

What are the reasons you decided to become married?

We don't call it being "married." We called our "ceremony" a commitment or holy union. We do have a signed affidavit that says we are "domestic partners" in order for Leslie's health insurance to cover Jan as well. But we don't call each other "my wife." We are each other's partner, best friend and soulmate, but *not* wife.

Why did you pick the ceremony you chose? Would you describe it?

At first we thought we wanted a more public ceremony at Kampmeeting, but we decided that a more personal and private ceremony was important to both of us. We picked a special day to have it. We hiked out to a remote cliff overlooking the ocean. There we found a cute little hidden "chapel" under the trees, took pictures, exchanged rings, and said our vows and promises to each other. We asked God to bless our union that day and always. Then we hiked along a trail and found a great place to watch the sun set over the ocean. For us, it was a *most* special

occasion.

What are the ways being married has changed your relationship?

Going through the ceremony, remembering the promises we made to each other, the prayer we said together seemed to really impress a

We felt really bonded to each other that day and now feel united because of the ceremony.

feeling of oneness upon our hearts and minds. We felt really bonded to each other that day and now feel united because of the ceremony. We are connected.

If you could be married in a legal ceremony, would you choose to do it? For what reasons?

Bev and Pauline...

If we were going to make recommendations for other couples we would tell them to be really sure marriage is what you want to do. Know the person's family if possible. You won't always have their support but it would be nice. You need to take into account who you should invite. You need to consider how you will deal with various levels of acceptance. Use your Kinship community. I can tell you clearly that if it had not been for Kinship this marriage would not have happened. I am so grateful for the support. I think it's important to

take a stand and get married if it will not be harmful to you. I think it's important to break ground. At times I feel cowardly because I haven't told everyone. Having a compartmentalized life can drive me nuts. I long for the time when I can share my life with everyone.

I'm grateful that we could be in Vermont to marry. I'm glad that Vermont felt strongly enough about people's civil rights to make this easy for us to be open. This is so rare for us. It was a wonderful, rare gift for us to be in a place that was so accepting.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

We have thought about it and aren't sure we would choose that. Maybe a "legal union" but *not* a "marriage." Jan has been married (to a man) before, and we feel that this relationship is different than a marriage.

Do you think we Kinship members have an "obligation" to get married to make a political statement? Why?

Leslie: HELL, NO! I don't feel there should be *any* "obligation" to do anything political. I don't believe something as important as a union should be done "to make a political statement." As you can tell, I am not an activist! To me, politicians and politics are BS.

Jan: Our relationship is a very personal thing, and we shouldn't have to feel "obligated" to make a political statement with it. I don't discourage others from making political statements and trying to change the laws, if that feels right to them. But Kinship members should NOT feel obligated to do so, in my opinion--especially with something as personal as this.

What advice do you have for people who would like to become married?

Our advice would be for them to do whatever they feel comfortable and right doing, as far as "marriage" or a commitment ceremony is concerned.





A Gift From the Sea

by Anne Morrow Lindbergh

One recognizes the truth of Saint Exupery's line: Love does not consist in gazing at each other. but in looking outward together in the same direction.Here one makes oneself part of human society. Here the bonds of marriage are formed. For marriage, which is always spoken of as a bond, becomes actually, in this stage, many bonds, many strands, of different texture and strength, making up a web that is taut and firm. The web is fashioned of love. Yes, but many kinds of love: romantic love first, then a slow-growing devotion and, playing through these, a constantly rippling companionship. It is made of loyalties, and interdependencies, and shared experiences. It is woven of memories of meetings and conflicts; of triumphs and disappointments. It is a web of communication, a common language, and the acceptance of lack of language too, a knowledge of likes and dislikes, of habits and reactions, both physical and mental. It is a web of instincts and intuitions, and known and unknown exchanges. The web of marriage is made by propinquity, in the day to day living side by side, looking outward and working outward in the same direction. It is woven in space and in time of the substance of life itself.

Janis and Michele

Michele is a transsexual woman who transitioned from male to female in 1991. Although California, where she was born, allows transsexuals to change their birth certificates to reflect their new sex once they have had genital surgery, Michele chose not to do so. She felt that her birth certificate was a historical document that accurately showed her sex as male at the time she was born. I was born female. We got married in 1999 using the regressive laws in England that did not at that time (it's changing now) allow transsexuals to change their [legal] sex for the purpose of marriage. Therefore a male-to-female transsexual was considered to be a man and could only marry a woman. Our marriage is technically an opposite sex marriage, even though we are two women. Michele is considered legally female in California, where we resided after we were married.

We certainly wouldn't have thought about getting married if we weren't in love and quite certain we wanted to spend the rest of our lives together. That said, I'm not sure I would have jumped at the chance to get married if it hadn't been for other factors. I'm not a sentimental soul, nor do I care a whit for tradition, and I know from past experience I'm capable of having a wonderful relationship without getting married (and conversely, marriage doesn't necessarily make a relationship better). For me, the compelling factors were political and economic.

The political reason for getting married was to further the cause of same-sex marriage. We wanted to demonstrate that dividing lines between man and woman and between gay and straight are not as clear as many people assume; that two women can be married and the whole institution of marriage doesn't collapse. Those who want to preserve marriage for one man and one woman usually take the

position that a person cannot change his or her sex. We showed that their position can result in two people who are legally female and look like women being married, which we're sure is not what they want. I think that the more these



lines are blurred and the more complicated it becomes for lawmaker

s to exclude same-sex couples from marriage, the more likely it is that same-sex marriage will be legalized.

The economic reasons for getting married were both practical and a matter of principle. The practical part was that it would be very beneficial to us if I could be covered by Michele's health insurance plans as a spouse and be eligible to receive a portion of her pension in the event of her death (as spouses can). The tax benefits of being married were also a consideration: as domestic partners we would be taxed on any health benefits I received, [whereas] as a married couple we are not. Filing jointly saves us money over filing separately. And down the road, there will be inheritance taxes we can avoid by being married. The principle part is that it's not just about saving money. It's about fairness. Any heterosexual married couple would automatically get those savings (and a lot more). Why should we be penalized for being two women? We objected to our relationship being devalued.

There are different kinds of marriages involving transsexuals. A transsexual may be married to a person of the same sex, like Michele and me. A second type of marriage would be between a transsexual and a person of the other sex. Then there are marriages where two transsexuals are involved, either both of them transitioning in the

same direction or one going each way. All of these marriages could legally be considered to be heterosexual marriages, although the resulting couples may appear to be two women, two men, or a man and a woman. Now that same-sex marriage is possible, transsexuals could also have same-sex marriages performed. Michele and I, for example, could go to Canada and get married as a same-sex couple if Canada recognizes her post-transition sex.

Legally, a lot depends on whether a marriage is contracted as a heterosexual or a same-sex marriage. Because many states (38 I think) have enacted state versions of DOMA, they probably won't recognize a same-sex marriage performed elsewhere. But they probably will recognize a marriage between persons considered to be of opposite sexes. This is how Michele and I were able to get me on her benefits plans. California enacted its DOMA shortly after we were married, so the attorneys we were dealing with didn't want to consider our marriage valid. Only after we convinced them that it was [legally] an opposite-sex marriage did they relent.

I think there are other differences between lesbian/gay marriages and trans marriages. Lesbians and gay men who marry will have a lot of support from their communities (despite some detractors who are just anti-marriage in any form). Trans people may get much less support. Couples consisting of a man and a woman, where one is trans, can't expect to have wide acceptance in straight society. Trans women are not necessarily welcome in lesbian communities [either], and lesbian couples, where one is trans, may not find much enthusiasm for their marriage. We were even criticized by a member of the trans community who thought that Michele using her male birth certificate to get married was a betrayal of the whole community. Also, one or both partners in a trans marriage may be new to the community in which they appear to

fit.

Interpersonally, there are often differences because of the training trans men and women have had growing up as girls and boys. A transman and a non-trans woman may be quite similar in things like communication styles, types of skills they have learned, [and] strategies



for dealing with people. In that respect, they may be a lot like a non-trans lesbian couple. With me and Michele, she learned a lot of typical boy skills like how to build things, how to sound authoritative, [and] how to take risks, whereas I learned more girl skills like empathizing, building relationships, and cooking. There's more difference in our backgrounds than in many lesbian relationships and more foundation for our taking on different roles in the relationship.

We had three ceremonies. The London one was the legal marriage. It was very small (we hardly knew anyone in London) and simple -- just the basic civil ceremony. I had been living on the east coast until three years before our marriage and most of my friends and family were there, so we thought it would be nice to have a ceremony that those people could attend. Michele had been living on the west coast, and all her friends and family were there, so we decided to have a ceremony there too.

Michele belonged to a Buddhist temple in Los Angeles, and she had asked the minister there, even before she met me, whether he would perform a marriage ceremony for her and a theoretical female partner. He said he would -- easy to say when it's theoretical! When the time came to actually do it, he got cold feet,

but after checking with his superiors, who said there was no reason not to do it, he went ahead with it. The ceremony was a traditional Buddhist wedding ceremony with a few pronoun changes. It was the first same-sex ceremony performed in the Jodo Shinshu sect. It was attended by many temple members, mostly Japanese Americans, as well as some of Michele's coworkers on the LA Fire Department and many of our lesbian and transgendered friends. It was a fabulous mixture of all kinds of people, with a huge potluck afterwards.

Our Massachusetts ceremony was much more free-form. We decided to have it at my parents' annual party, which we were planning to attend anyway. We figured it would be easy because all the food would already be there, plus all the guests -- the party attracts over a hundred family, friends and neighbors during the afternoon and evening. We asked a friend who was a newly ordained transgendered Unitarian minister to officiate -- a striking woman with a beard -- and we created our own ceremony. We wanted a lot of audience participation and spontaneity, so the minister asked people to rise, not to voice any objections to our marriage as in traditional ceremonies, but to say why we should be together. I didn't feel comfortable promising to love Michele forever (agreeing to have certain feelings 10 or 20 years in the future strikes me as bizarre), so we took turns saying things we appreciated about our relationship. We told the stories of the rings we had gotten each other when we first got together. And the minister inserted a short political statement about transgendered issues. All this took place in front of about 70 people, some of whom were total strangers. Most of the guests had no idea they would be attending a wedding that day, and some would not have come if they had been

Continued Overleaf

Janis and Michele...

invited to a same-sex ceremony. It was a wonderful consciousness-raising event, which was in line with our desire to effect change. Besides that, it was filled with humor and love and was tremendous fun.

If you are considering marriage, know what you're getting into. I'm amazed at how little understanding many people have of what marriage means financially and legally. I think it's the only contract people sign without even being offered the fine print to read. And they may be literally signing away half their life. The specifics vary by state, so you have to do your own research, but generally your spouse may own half of everything you own and you are responsible for each other's debts. People entering same-sex marriages should understand they are not getting peace of mind or security or any guarantees. They are not simplifying their lives but wandering into a legal morass.

Regardless of the legality of their marriage in the place where it was performed, their state of residence usually determines its validity. Some states may have no precedent for doing that. States with DOMA-type laws will reject it. These laws are open to challenge and may be found unconstitutional, but do you want to be the test case? Even if your state recognizes your marriage, the federal government won't. This can lead to all kinds of uncertainties and contradictions. Even marriages like ours, which is a heterosexual marriage that appears to be a same-sex marriage, will be challenged. It took us an entire year and the help of an excellent lawyer to get me on Michele's benefits plans. Our experience is that each person we deal with feels they have the right to decide whether our marriage is valid. If they decide against us, we have a battle. Even the victories we've won could be reversed in the future.

Learn what the rules are about divorce. It's not a subject anyone wants to think about when they're

Canadian gay married couple denied entry to US

Thu Sep 18

MONTREAL (AFP) - The United States denied entry to Canada's first legally married gay couple because they had filled out a single customs form as a family, Canada's foreign ministry said. A US customs official at Toronto Pearson International Airport denied entry to Kevin Bourassa and Joe Varnell, CBC television said. They are the couple whose case led an Ontario court to recognize gay marriage in June.

The customs agent denied them entry as a family because the United States does not recognize same-sex marriage. The United States allows all members of a family to use the same form. The two men refused to fill out separate forms and canceled their trip to Braselton, Georgia, where they were due to participate

in a human rights conference.

Doug Elliott, a lawyer for the couple, told the CBC he was considering legal action against the Canadian and US governments. "A law in Canada does not have extra-territorial application. Each country is free to impose conditions of entry to its territory," foreign ministry spokesman Reynold Doiron said.

Varnell and Bourassa celebrated their union in January 2001 in Toronto, a few weeks after the Netherlands enacted a law allowing gay marriage. They won their legal battle to have their relationship legally recognized as marriage in the province of Ontario. A court in British Columbia followed soon afterward. Canada's federal government is considering legislation that would recognize same-sex marriage throughout the country.

*When two people are at one
in their inmost hearts,
they shatter even the strength of iron
or bronze.
And when two people understand
each other
in their inmost hearts,
their words are sweet and strong,
like the fragrance of orchids.
—I Ching*

Janis and Michele...

getting married, but some percentage of those who get married will want to get divorced. If you get married in another country or even another state, you may not be able to [get divorced]. Even though there may be no residency requirements for getting married in a particular state or country, there may be a residency requirement for divorce (as there is in Canada, for example). Could you pick up and move to another state for a year in order to get divorced? What about another country where you may not be allowed to work? (This is also true for civil unions.)

Then of course, there's all the relationship stuff to consider....

Love's Philosophy

by Percy Shelley

The fountains mingle with the river,
And the rivers with the ocean;

The winds of heaven mix forever,
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single;
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle:-
Why not I with thine?

See! the mountains kiss high
heaven,
And the waves clasp one another;
Now sister flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother;
And the sunlight clasps the earth,
And the moonbeams kiss the sea:-
What are all these kissing's worth,
If thou kiss not me?

Is your relationship “good enough”?

~By Shelby Smith Wylde
(With lots of input from Karen Lee Wylde)

“Marriage, a union for life, is a symbol of the union between Christ and His church.”

-- EG White, 7T 46

I once read in a couple's book that we should work for a relationship that is “good enough.” They advised “letting go of the concept of the perfect partner, the guaranteed future, the happily ever after.” If the good times outnumber the bad, well, you're in a “good enough” relationship. Wow...good enough. Is that what you always prayed for? Is that what God wants for us? If our marriages are to be a symbol of our relationship with God, shouldn't we work toward more than “good enough”?

Ellen G. White said the true friendship and love in marriage is a foretaste of heaven. Who wouldn't want a little bit of heaven on earth? We know God wants us to be happy, and He knows we'll be happiest if we do things His way. But how do we know what His way is? It seems some of us spend our lives searching for the elusive “God's Will.”

Call me crazy (I heard that!) but Mrs. White really had some good points. Ideally, our relationship with God should serve as a model for our relationship with our spouse. I sat down recently and made a list of some things we are supposed to do to have an intimate relationship with God. I wanted to see if I could find any parallels in my relationship with Karen. Here's what I came up with:

1. Renew your commitment every day.
2. Have a Sabbath apart where you can completely focus on God with no distractions.
3. Meditate daily on Him; praise Him and thank Him for all that He has done for you.
4. Never tire of learning more about Him.
5. Be in constant communication (Pray without ceasing).
6. Confess your weaknesses and sins.
7. Accept forgiveness and change your behavior.
8. Make all your decisions with His will in mind.

**Communicate,
take time to be
alone together,
forgive one
another, look for
the best in each
other, be curious
about each other,
praise each other.**

9. Accept that He always has your best interests at heart.
10. Love Him with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength.

I think many of us have read enough couples and self-help books to write a few ourselves and we can quote their advice with our eyes closed: Communicate, take time to

be alone together, forgive one another, look for the best in each other, be curious about each other, praise each other. All good advice, in fact it sounds vaguely familiar.

“The divine love emanating from Christ never destroys human love, but includes it. By it human love is refined and purified, elevated and ennobled. Human love can never bear its precious fruit until it is united with the Divine nature, and trained to grow heavenward.”

-EG White, AH 99

By rote we can explain the importance of the Sabbath, of recommitting our lives every day, of repentance, forgiveness, and a host of other things. Just like the list I made, we can rattle them off but most of the time they don't really apply to REAL life. I saw the spiritual application but I'd before never extended it to my marriage.

Here's how this line of thought came about...with 3 active children and all it entails, we don't have much free time. When the children were gone one weekend, we put away the projects, the housework and all the distractions and focused a whole day on being together. Not just physically in the same house but spending time focused on one another without distractions or obligations. At the end of our day together, we were amazed at how close we felt and how it improved our communication the rest of the week. We thought, “Wow! We just had a sabbath together!” and a little piece fell into place.

Suddenly we started looking for other parallels. We realized that when we took the time to look into

Continued Overleaf

Good enough?...

one another's eyes, we found ourselves mentally reaffirming our commitment. We decided that we would turn toward each other in little ways every day and in that way, nourish a love that would fill our whole hearts for the whole of

Every time they do something you don't like, take an imaginary chocolate out and tell them what it is you didn't like. (There's the constant communication!)

I lost quite a few chocolates at first; in fact I think I went into chocolate debt. I'd told Karen I wanted her honesty and boy did she

grow and better learn how to show her my love and respect. (I confessed my weaknesses, accepted forgiveness and changed my behavior.) Now my bowl is so full that I'm getting fat eating all those imaginary chocolates! (She gave me praise and thanks.)

We used to avoid talking about difficult issues but we learned that we stayed so much closer if we talked about things before resentment had a chance to take root. Now, we try to catch things when they are twinges. Confronting issues isn't scary anymore because it became an instrument to bring us closer together. Now we're so close to perfect, we never have fights anymore (Ok, you KNOW I'm kidding on that one!) But, now when I lose a chocolate, I start asking myself questions like:

1. Did I make an assumption or did I ask her?
2. Did I expect her to read my mind or did I tell her?
3. Was I being reasonable or irrational?
4. Was something in my history biasing my reaction to what's happening now?
5. Did I take over or let her say what she needed to?
6. Do I need to be right all the time or is it ok to be wrong sometimes?
7. Did I filter her comments or did I give her the attention she deserves?

When I look at Karen, I don't see "good enough." I see the perfect partner, the guaranteed future and the happily ever after. It's not that either of us is truly perfect, but we're basing our marriage in One who is. Every day, we work to keep our relationship moving heavenward and so have a piece of heaven here on earth.

*A ma vie de coer entire, my love.



our lives.*

I think I spent so much time looking for the big things like *trust*, *respect*, *communication*, and *love* that I forgot that it's the little things that keep us connected so that the big things can exist. Those little building blocks that we're already familiar with are what the big things are made out of.

I'll share with you a corny little game we found that made a huge difference in our communication. Imagine two empty bowls. Every time your partner does or says something you like, you put an imaginary chocolate in their bowl and tell them what it is you liked.

give it to me! At least it felt that way. My first reaction to my missteps was to pull away, shut down and pretend nothing was wrong. That didn't do anything to keep us close though, and quite honestly, I missed her.

So I took a deep breath, decided our relationship was more important than my pride and decided to turn toward her instead of away. I took a risk and realized that she wasn't out to criticize me or push me away; she was trying to tell me what she needed. (She always has my best interests at heart!) I stopped looking at losing chocolates as a failure but as an opportunity to

The grace of Christ, and this alone, can make this institution what God designed it should be—an agent for the blessing and uplifting of humanity. And thus the families of earth, in their unity and peace and love, may represent the family of heaven.
-EG White, AH 100.

Irish Blessing

May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rains fall soft upon your fields.
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of his hand.

May God be with you and bless you;
May you see your children's children.
May you be poor in misfortune,
Rich in blessings,
May you know nothing but happiness
From this day forward.

May the road rise to meet you
May the wind be always at your back
May the warm rays of sun fall upon your home
And may the hand of a friend always be near.

May green be the grass you walk on,
May blue be the skies above you,
May pure be the joys that surround you,
May true be the hearts that love you.

Kinship Office Updates

By Fred Casey
September 30, 2003

A message received at the Kinship office (This seminar must be in Southern California as that is where area code 714 is):

The GLTB community is not taking advantage of important human rights protections and are wrongfully being deported, tearing families apart. Will you help spread the word about these important legal rights?

Please note the following:

Free seminar: immigration protection for GLBTcommunity.
Gender Rights Asylum Project,
www.judithmarty.com
October 25, 2003, noon, RSVP
714-724-9986

Love has no other desire but to fulfill itself.
But if you love and must needs have desires, let these be your desires:
To melt and be like a running brook that sings its melody to the night.
To know the pain of too much tenderness.
To be wounded by your own understanding of love;
And to bleed willingly and joyfully.
To wake at dawn with a winged heart and give thanks for another day of loving;
To rest at the noon hour and meditate love's ecstasy;
To return home at eventide with gratitude;
And then to sleep with a prayer for the beloved in your heart and a song of praise on your lips.

—The Prophet by Kahil Gibran

Someone to Talk to:

Carrol and Bob Grady will meet with four other families for supper and conversation in Portland, Oregon on October 10.

"Listen and Love: How do you treat gay people?" is the title of an article by Carrol Grady in the August issue of Ministry: International Journal for Pastors. You can read it on her website, www.someone-to-talk-to.net, under "Articles and Information."

One isn't necessarily born with courage, but one is born with potential. Without courage, we cannot practice any other virtue with consistency. We can't be kind, true, merciful, generous, or honest.

—Maya Angelou

Business Items:

Membership Data

Fred Casey, who does the usual yeoman's work organizing the business office would like to remind us to keep our membership data, addresses, and important information updated with the office. The best way to get information to him is to write him at: office@sdakinship.org

The next edition of *Connection* will be on Kampmeeting Europe and the Autumn Board Meeting. We are also soliciting articles for our holiday edition. We'd like to know how you and your family celebrate the winter holidays, concerns you have, traditions you celebrate, recipes you cook and eat. Print deadline for the Kampmeeting and Board Meeting edition is October 26th. Deadline for the Holiday edition is November 26th. The editorial staff should probably warn you that these are real deadlines, not the "I'll tell you this so you can have a little flex time" deadlines. We do look forward to hearing from you!

Do It Anyway

People are often unreasonable, illogical and self
centered:
Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish,
ulterior motives:
Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some false friends
and some true enemies:
Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you:
Be honest anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, they may be
jealous:
Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, people will often forget
tomorrow:
Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never
be enough:
Give the world the best you've got anyway.

You see, in the final analysis it is between you and
God:
It has never been between you and them anyway.

—Mother Teresa