

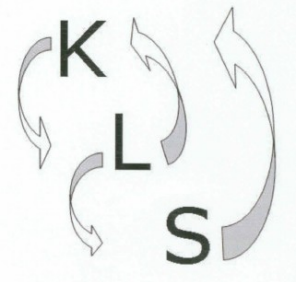
Interpersonal Relationship

BASED ON THE QUESTION: "WHY WERE YOU BORN?"

TO **KNOW** IS TO **LIKE** IS TO **LOVE** IS TO **SERVE**

by Donald E Koehler

Knowing begins with an attraction: physical, spiritual, accouterments, etc. This attraction urges (causes) us to learn (study) the person of interest to us. This study will either cause us to reject (walk away) or find a way to meet this person again, sooner rather than later. The initial study usually consists of gathering opinions from those who know or have known the person. First hand observation while possible is not always practical at this stage.



After a few get-togethers (could possibly be only one) you choose (discern) to either discontinue a possible relationship or push forward. "Pushing forward" sends you back to the know/study phase for deeper observations, deeper questions, and praying (asking God for guidance).

At some point comes *liking* the person with a *kernel of trust* — can we say you enjoy being with each other? You bet!

Over time a "philos" (brotherly love) relationship begins to grow which insists (forces?) you to know/study the person more, be with the person more, and enjoying the warm fuzzes. This relationship can cause us to "do nice things" for your friend. Did I say friend? Yes. Thus, you are on your way.

To this point we could be talking weeks/months of development; or, just a few days; or, instantly. However, a solid relationship is going to take a bit of time regardless of the persons involved. I am going to use the same word Yeshua used: *Agape*. To make sure we are all on the same page, here's the definition:

Agape is a decision to unconditionally proactively seek someone's well-being, asking nothing in return, expecting nothing; a commitment which chooses the risk of possibly being deeply hurt by that someone.

Before charging on, read the definition again — even a third and possibly a fourth time.

When and if you get here you are in great company as this is the level Yeshua is with His companions. Unfortunately, His companions were not on the same level as Yeshua during His life time. That changed in a flash with the advent of the Holy Spirit.

Did you notice anything unique about *agape*? It is singular — not plural — not a couple. Definitely one sided. The 'decision to unconditionally proactively seek . . .' does not rely on another's feelings or opinions. And you shall struggle making this commitment — in the end you will beg (yup! Beg. Not ask.) the Holy Spirit for guidance. Once you make this commitment it is made for a life time. This is when Service to the other begins. Using today's words, 'Service growing from Love.'

Note, it is not necessary to develop an *agape* relationship to have a successful relationship. It is far easier for a couple (not married) to possess a *philos* relationship one, using today's English, that is very warm and loving.