

3 Relationship Tiers That Enrich Your Internal Health and External Impact

There were times in my life's journey that independence was my mantra. The words from Simon and Garfunkel's "I Am a Rock" were an emotional reinforcement and justification for my self-contained philosophies. They penned phrases like, "I've built walls, a fortress deep and mighty," "I have no need of friendship; friendship causes pain," "I touch no one, and no one touches me. I am a rock. I am an island. And a rock feels no pain. And an island never cries." I embraced these words as my own. They felt so truth to my life's story.

However, I eventually learned that self-protective mindsets do not exempt us from hurt or protect us from disappointment or failure. On the contrary, they are harmful to our emotional health and the potential within us to be truly successful.

It is impossible to be a fulfilled and truly influential leader without other people. In particular, there are three levels of relationships that promote internal health and are essential to impact our world for good.

1. Mentors: We all need people in our lives who we receive and learn from—they are vital for our growth. There is never a time in our lives when we outgrow our need for coaches. Isaac Newton said, "If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulder of giants." My knowledge is limited; therefore, as I learn from those who know what I do not yet understand, it will allow me to gain the ability to see from different perspectives and discover strategies that position me for increase.

"Show me a successful individual and I'll show you someone who had real positive influences in his or her life. I don't care

what you do for a living—if you do it well I’m sure there was someone cheering you on or showing the way. A mentor,” Denzel Washington said.

2. Partners: Whether I am leading, following or working side-by-side, these relationships are the ones that fill in the gap for my weaknesses, and I, in turn, protect theirs. These partnerships are not based upon position but heart. It provides the synergy where we can work together aggressively to accomplish the tasks of today for the fulfillment of tomorrow’s vision. We trust them with our lives and refuse to compare or compete but celebrate and validate one another. These are the ones who sincerely dance a happy dance for every milestone we accomplish. We encourage each other when discouraged and challenge one another to be and do our best continually.

3. Those we invest into: Investing into others is as important as being mentored. We have skills and experiences that up-and-coming leaders are hungry for. In a world of mistrust, we can be another’s cheerleader and support system. What good are our gifts if we are not generous givers?

I am not a rock, and I am not an island! I not only need the resources of another, but I need to be a resource for others. I am not a stagnant pond but a river with a source and an outlet allowing fresh clean water to flow. I am not isolated from the world that I am commissioned to serve. My life is not defined by what I acquire or the position I’ve earned but who I become and the wholeness of my heart.

If I am blessed enough to have these three tiers of relationship in my life, I am truly successful.

This article is also available in video form here. In this short video, Dr. Melodye Hilton shares the three types of relationships that every person needs to be successful in life. We cannot only have those who are pouring into us and

likewise; we cannot only be investing into others. Learn the necessary balance of relationships to live your best life.
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Dr. Melodye Hilton is the co-host of the upcoming Life Exchange podcast on Charisma Podcast Network (coming late summer 2021). Melodye works with individuals and workgroups around the globe as a leadership consultant, behavioral analyst and executive coach. For over 38 years, she and her husband, Steven, have served as the founders and co-leaders of Giving Light, a local church and global resource center located in the heart of central Pennsylvania. In addition, she has founded the #StopDevaluation movement in an effort to see hearts and cultures healed through love and validation.

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