

Flattery vs. Validation

When they are authentic, compliments are beautiful things. However, if the words have no worth attached, they are much like water running off a duck's back. I am honored when people tell me I've done a good job, when they celebrate my accomplishments or when they show a desire to involve me in their endeavors. All these things are special. However, without also knowing that someone values me for who I am and not solely what I do, I can receive their words as kind, but I still guard my heart until I know that their thoughts, intentions and motives are for our mutual good and not only their own.

You see, we are innately wired to be loved, valued and celebrated. When those core needs are met, we experience emotional health, hope, courage and a greater ability to take risks. When our cup is full, i.e., our needs are met, we become better contributors to our world. However, when there is a deficit of love, validation or authentic celebration, we may struggle to believe in ourselves or to see our worth. Because the entire goal becomes meeting our unmet needs, we often become self-focused, ego-centric and may even try to manipulate relationships in our desperate efforts to satiate what we lack.

Flattery can appear sweet but is really quite bitter in its candy-coated devaluation. Someone who flatters you exalts his or her need above your value. Words are powerful, and flattery is an abuse of that power. Exaggeration of our attributes and inflated words might feel good for the moment, but it sets a trap for us. Whether they realize it or not, people who flatter are disingenuous and self-motivated. They promise big and deliver little as they focus solely on what they want. Flattery is manipulation by its very nature. People say what they think you want to hear to get what they want to get – be it your time, attention, skills, abilities, platform, position

or even finances.

On the contrary, validation sees and initiates worth to the core identity of another person. It is generated from the purity of the person's heart to your heart! It is the overflow of a soul who knows its own worth. You are a treasure – period. All that you do is celebrated and honored, but never above who you are! Validation is selfless, unconditional and mature. It is unguarded, authentic and untainted by personal agendas. It lays a healthy foundation that allows the innocent exchange of life. It is from this place of value that strong relationships and partnerships can be forged.

True validation moves beyond words to actions that generate healthy ways of thinking, believing and responding. Value-centric relationships embolden one another to grow, advance and become the best versions of themselves.

Let it begin in me! When I can see my innate value without all the external trappings, I will be able to see others through that same lens of truth and treasure.{eoa}

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