

Relational Wellbeing

Introduction.

This session is all about relational wellbeing. We were designed for relationship. The poet John Donne gave expression to this truth when he wrote 'No man is an island'. Today we are going to explore the importance of relationships to our wellbeing.

Our guests in this session are Rachel Jordan-Wolf, executive director of HOPE Together; Paul McGee, a conference speaker, seminar presenter and best-selling author - many of his readers know him as the Sumo Guy; and Kate Wharton, Vicar of St Bartholomew's Church in Roby, Liverpool, Assistant National Leader of New Wine, and a member of the Church of England's General Synod. She is the author of 'Single Minded: Being single and whole and living life to the full'.

? Starter Questions - Think about these at home.

- Are you someone who prefers a few close friends or a wide social network?
- When you are under pressure, what is your natural tendency – to be left alone or to crave company?



WATCH THE VIDEO AT HOME

<https://vimeo.com/500784475> (Video Password is Isaiah9.6-7)

? Discussion Questions.

1. When you're in trouble, who are you going to call?
2. Who do you love being with? Who energises you? Discuss what kind of relationships replenish you?
3. Paul McGee quips: 'The grass is always greener when it's watered.' How can we invest in our relationships?
4. Looking at the seven categories Dr John Townsend lists in 'People Fuel', what types of relationships do you have?
5. Rachel Jordan-Wolf describes the Church as a family. How does belonging to a Church contribute to relational wellbeing?
6. How can forgiveness and reconciliation have an impact on our wellbeing?

? ACTIVITIES/TOOLS - GOING DEEPER.

1. Not all our relationships are or should be on the same level. Cultural anthropologist Edward Hall suggests that we have four levels of relationships: an intimate space reserved for close friends and family; a personal space used for conversations with friends, associates, and group discussions; a social space reserved for strangers, newly formed groups, and acquaintance; a public space used for speeches, lectures, and theatre. Divide a piece of paper into four sections. Then, thinking of your family, friends, colleagues, and acquaintances, add their names to the most appropriate area: intimate, personal, social, public.
2. Do you have people in every area? Reflect how much time you spend with the different groups? Which relationships do you need to invest in?
3. What changes might you need to make in terms of the time you invest in relationships, your willingness to be vulnerable and the boundaries you set?
4. Paul McGee and Kate Wharton talk about the importance of forgiveness. Is there a person or people you need to forgive?
5. What steps will you take in the next week to invest in your relationships, or seek forgiveness and reconciliation?

FINAL THOUGHT.

Pause and look at the names of the people you have written down. If you are happy to do so, pray for them, thanking God that they are in your life.

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