

Roles, Relationships & Responsibilities

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Key Objectives

- Discover your roles
- Identify your relationships
- Consider your responsibilities

Roles, relationships and responsibilities are inseparably connected. You can't have one without having the others. How much thought do you give these vital ingredients of life? Many people, without much conscious intention, fulfill many more roles in their lives than they realize. Behind those roles are relationships. Where there are roles and relationships, there are responsibilities.

Roles, relationships and responsibilities come about in different ways. You have some roles, relationships and responsibilities that were given to you. Others you have chosen. Perhaps some have been unintentionally assumed while others you have given much attention and effort to develop.

Since the greatest impacts in your life will come through your roles, relationships and responsibilities, wouldn't it seem wise to give some consideration to what your roles, relationships and responsibilities are?

Share a blank copy of "My Relationships, Roles, and Responsibilities."

Roles

Consider plants. Each part of a plant plays a role. Roots, trunk, branches, leaves and fruit, each unique, yet all in relationship with specific responsibilities. (John 15)

Some roles are given to you. Other roles are the result of your choices.

Remember the three key objectives in this session.

- Discover your roles
- Identify your relationships
- Consider your responsibilities

Help people identify their roles. A typical list should include ten or more roles. Some people will have many more. Roles can include:

- Son or daughter
- Father or mother
- Nephew or niece
- Husband or wife
- Coach or player
- Aunt or uncle
- Friend, neighbor, mentor
- Brother or sister

Relationships

Life is all about relationships. Look at the Ten Commandments. They all address some aspect of relationships. Study the entire Bible. It's all about relationships.

- Have you ever felt lonely? Why?
- Have you ever felt loved? How?
- Have you ever felt betrayed or let down when it didn't involve a relationship?
- The two greatest commandments in the Bible are both relational.

For instance, the greatest commandment is that you love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Identify the roles, relationships, and responsibilities in this verse.

The second greatest commandment is like the first in a way. It is that you love your neighbor as yourself. Again, identify the roles, relationships, and responsibilities.

It's all about relationships with God and with others.

Consider the role of son or daughter for instance. In the role of son or daughter, what is the relationship? The distinction is subtle but significant. For instance, in the role of son or daughter, the relationship is 'child'. The role of father or mother is 'parent'.

In some roles, such as neighbor, your relationship could be 'friend' or 'acquaintance'. 'Friend' can also be a role in addition to a relationship.

The point is, this exercise does not pose a rigid set of rules and right answers. Your objectives should be:

- Discover your roles
- Identify your relationships
- Consider your responsibilities

Responsibilities

All roles and relationships involve responsibilities. Sometimes responsibilities are well defined such as in the case of employee / employer relationships. Often however, responsibilities may be less than obvious, clear, or constant. The risk is misunderstanding. For example, friends may not have ever considered their responsibilities in their relationship until a conflict arises. Conflict is often the result of misunderstanding the responsibilities and expectations that are assumed in relationships. Productive conflict almost always includes some negotiation and agreement about responsibilities in relationships.

Next, on My Relationships, Roles, and Responsibilities worksheets, list top responsibilities for each of the stated roles and relationships.

After working of My Relationships, Roles, and Responsibilities worksheets, consider exploring the following questions:

- Were you surprised at the number of roles you play?
- Are there roles on your list that should not be there?
- Are there roles that are not on your list that should be there?
- Are there some roles you think you are fulfilling well? What are they?
- Are there roles you think you are not fulfilling very well? Why?
- Who sets the expectations in your most important roles? God, you, or others?
- Are there roles in your life that you are absent from? Why?
- Do you have roles and responsibilities you feel unable to fulfill?
- Are there roles you would like to add to your list someday? Name some of them.
- Are there any obstacles preventing you from fulfilling your roles and responsibilities?

Next

This exercise can and should be more than a one time only experience. Life changes. Your roles, relationships and responsibilities will change too. You can use this exercise throughout your life to clarify your roles, relationships and responsibilities.