



ACTION GUIDE - DANCE OF CONNECTION

One of the biggest differences between the RBC and other book clubs is this action guide. So often, we don't make time to read. And even if we do, we don't take the time to really absorb what we've learned – and put it to action in our life. The purpose of this guide is to help you document your Aha! moments and points you want to remember in one handy place, and give you a simple guide to refer to to refresh your memory and keep you on track in the future.

The point is not to recap the ENTIRE book, but instead to pull out the 20 percent that is going to make the biggest difference in your life. And, of course, my 20 percent might be very different from yours! :)

This book is a must-read for anyone trying to create something in their world – different relationships, a business, a work of art, a work of words. If you are risking on a regular basis, that means you are doing something outside the norm. And that means you're going to deal with resistance and fear. And this book deals with both.

Here are the elements that hit me the most:

1. **ALL FAMILIES HAVE CHALLENGES.** Our families impact us in all sorts of ways. If our families of origin had patterns and difficulties, those could very well impact us now.

"If you can learn to speak clearly and to respond in a new way with your difficult mother or sister, then other relationships will be a piece of cake."

2. **WE CAN LET OUR HIGHEST SELF MAKE THE DECISIONS.** Even when our emotions tell us otherwise, we can make decisions from our "best" self, which may give us a better chance of showing up as we want to. Some people call this "faking it until you make it." Whatever you call it, it's CHOOSING how we want to RESPOND.

"...If our old ways of speaking or staying silent are bringing us pain, it won't help to do more of the same."

3. **SETTING A BOTTOM LINE IS LOVING YOURSELF – AND OTHERS.** One of my biggest "ahas" was realizing that if I let someone step over my boundaries, I'm not just hurting myself; I'm hurting them AND hurting our relationship. Knowing our bottom line and communicating that clearly is essential to authentic relationships.

“Intimacy and honor are sacrificed in a close relationship when we withhold our genuine response.”

4. **WE MUST SPEAK TO BE HEARD.** It doesn't matter how “right” we are if we can't communicate in a way the other person can hear us. That means taking down the intensity, looking for the good in others, and “warming up” conflicted relationships.

“There is no virtue in speaking to others in a way that makes it impossible for them to hear what you have to say or to appreciate the truth of your position.”

5. **APOLOGIES ARE TRICKY.** It's almost more important to know why you NEED an apology than it is to GET an apology. Also, loved the piece about how people cannot be more honest with us than they are with themselves.

“Having an authentic voice requires us to operate from core values, rather than in reaction to the other person's immaturity.”

From the past homework sheets, what were your big AHA moments?

WEEK 1: _____

WEEK 2: _____

WEEK 3: _____

WEEK 4: _____

WEEK 5: _____

Some tips to remember:

- **Remind yourself that you can always choose your response.** Even choosing to react (as a victim) rather than respond is a choice.
- **Families create patterns.** We might not even know what patterns we are repeating until we take a look objectively.
- **Someone has to be the first to move.** Just as in a dance, if neither partner ever takes the first step, no one moves! Moving first doesn't mean you're admitting you're wrong. It means you want things to improve enough to be willing to take the first step.
- **Understanding yourself gives you power.** Understanding your family of origin, your patterns, your unwritten rules, your “hot button” issues gives you more power to choose to respond from your best self, rather than unconsciously.

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