

## Exploring 'In Between'

There are a number of physical directions: north, south, east, west, above, below. There is also the direction 'within' when working with our own inner world and the journey of getting to know ourselves more fully. A direction that is often overlooked is 'between' when exploring and getting to know the relationship between us and someone else. Every relationship has a different landscape for 'between', and it is worth getting consciously aware of what that space is, what you do know, what you assume, and what you are blind to with each relationship.

The first important piece of information is the degree and quality of attraction/repulsion in the 'between'. Within seconds of encountering someone we have a feeling for or against them. That instantaneous sense of the relationship is a powerful factor in our deciding what form and nature that relationship may have. A strong repulsion is likely to encourage distrust, distance,

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### Abstract

*Explores important factors that fill the 'between' when in relationship with someone else, and the importance of working with those factors to be open to them.*

### Keywords

Authenticate, emotional intelligence, relationship, social skill

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*The 'In Between'*

protectionism, and caution. A strong attraction will promote openness, vulnerability, trust and confidence. So what is it that contributes to this initial sense of the 'between' when meeting someone? Can it be trusted?

Some of the factors that contribute to this sense we hold on meeting someone include past experience, our patterned responses and general attitudes towards openness and protectionism, and our availability and readiness to meet and engage with others. There may be qualities that this person presents, whether physical, behavioural, attitudinal etc that remind us of someone from our past that encourages us to be more open or closed. We may hold prejudices, judgements and universal beliefs that exclude or include the person (e.g. ethnicity, gender, educational background etc.).

To see someone and truly meet them we have to overcome all of our baggage, peel away those initial

judgements that occur so fast that we usually don't realise they are in place, and allow ourselves to see them as they are, insofar as they actually present themselves in their authenticity. Oh no, another factor. Not only do we have all our stuff, but they have theirs as well, getting in the way of a genuine meeting. Exploring the "in between" requires courage and commitment by both parties, and a willingness to be authentic during the process. Anything less and the process is slowed, protracted, and may never be fully realised. It takes tremendous trust in self and willingness to risk to fully engage with someone else authentically, and require authenticity of them, and it is a skill that can be developed.

Exploring the "In between" is even more fraught when we already have history with them, and there are issues and conflicts in place that cloud our ability to engage with each other.

***For more information related to themes in this article, refer to chapter 9 (Developing Personal Power) of: Harrison, S. G. (2012). [Appreciate the Fog: Embrace Change with Power and Purpose](#). Auckland, New Zealand: Xlibris Corporation.***

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