

Introduction

The purpose of my first book, *Healing Wounded Emotions*, was to help correct any misunderstanding and to counter misinformation that exists about our humanness, especially our emotions. Erroneous thinking in this area affects many people, including religious people. The book was an attempt to change the negative attitudes we have about our feelings and to give us permission to feel whatever we may feel.

The other goal of *Healing Wounded Emotions* was to help readers integrate the emotional with the spiritual, or if you will, the psychological with the religious, and eliminate the seeming contradiction between the two. I pointed out that genuine spirituality is rooted in our ability to be fully human. The book was successful beyond my expectations, so that I was continually exhorted by people to write a sequel.

Healing Wounded Relationships is that sequel. It looks at the many aspects of our human relationships, especially our close and personal ones, and tries to provide the information and enlightenment they need if they are to survive and grow in today's world. It is only with such information that misunderstanding and misinformation can be avoided.

Daily in my role as a marriage counselor, I see the same misunderstandings about relationships being passed on from one generation to another. I watch couples going into married life with the same disastrous baggage that their parents carried into marriage. The unnecessary suffering that stems from all this does not have to be. To avoid it we need a massive education program about what makes good relationships, what makes them work, how to communicate within them, the necessity of conflict, and coming to know what intimacy is about. The information I'm talking about is abundantly available today, but it is not being disseminated in our schools, churches, and universities. It will only be through education in these matters that we will, for example, lessen the divorce rate, which is wreaking havoc in our society.

Jesus became a human person. He integrated the human and the spiritual. He taught us how to be human and how to relate. The gospels are all about relationships. He, as Paul says, became one like us so that we might become more like him. He told us to love God and our neighbor as ourselves. He showed us that, unless we love ourselves, we can't possibly genuinely love another, including God.

But do you know what? After 2000 years, we still don't get it when it comes to forging healthy relationships. I hope this book will help readers "get it" and to realize, among other things, that if we are not fully human, we cannot truly love or develop a genuine spirituality.