

## “Relationships 101” – Book Review

**Pillar:** Book Review

**Summary:** This is a summary of the book “Relationships 101” by John C. Maxwell. You will gain insights into the creation of solid relationships and how it applies to our community at the ranch.

**Keywords:** #John C Maxwell; #Relationships 101; #community; #responsibilities; #transformational journey

***Relationships 101* by John C. Maxwell, published 2003, reviewed October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2019, by Fenja, Germany.**

Leadership Trainer and Motivational Coach John Maxwell has written a bunch of inspirational books about leadership, relationships and personal development. His books caught my attention after I read “The 5 Levels of Leadership” at the ranch. The content of his book “Relationships 101” can be summarized with the quote *“winning in every area of life comes from winning with people”*. From his experience of training leaders for many years, he explains step by step how to establish solid relationships in your work and private life.

The book is divided in three parts: The first part helps you to understand the nature of relationships. In part two you'll learn which steps to take for building successful relationships. The last part explains how to grow your existing relationships stronger and why building good relationships is the foundation of being a good leader.

In Part one, Maxwell lists the characteristics for solid relationships. They are respect for each other, shared experiences, trust, giving and taking and mutual enjoyment. At the ranch, our foundation is to trust each other. We all work independently and take on ownership, but we can't be everywhere at the same time. Everyone knows their responsibilities and we know we can rely on each other. At the same time, we share intense experiences, challenges and successes with one another. We guide Pack Trips, cut wood with the chainsaw and manage the ranch activities – together. The unique environment we live in is empowering for the individual and grows our relationships with each other to a strong sense of community.

If you want to have an impact on the world, you have to get to know your partner and obtain the ability to understand other people. Maxwell states that *“people don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care”*. Most people tend to express themselves *before* they try to understand their opposite. In Stephen R. Covey's book *“The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People”*, which I read in my first year at the ranch, one habit to be successful is *“Seek first to understand, then to be understood”*. This is one of the most crucial points in a relationship, as most people really just want to be listened to, cared for, and to be understood. Everybody wants to be somebody, as Maxwell states. And everybody needs support from someone else to reach their full potential. In our ranch community, we practice listening and communicating with each other in our daily *“10 o'clock meeting”*, where we talk about our priorities, personal messages to ourselves and encouraging words to one another. In our weekly **Transformational Journey Review**, we share our first time experiences, challenges, successes and interests with the whole group, so that we understand each others' goals and can be supportive and encouraging. And if each of us can help just one person reach their goals, their success will have an impact on other people and so the total impact will grow larger than we imagined. In this way, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, we all contribute to the bigger picture.

Part Two is all about encouragement and connecting. The book underlines that when people are not being encouraged and others don't show their faith in them, they believe they will fail and have a hard time taking on responsibilities. From my experiences at the ranch, this approach doesn't seem familiar to me anymore. Here, we create an environment where making mistakes is rather encouraged, we think that nothing is impossible and our potential has no limits. In our **Community Belief System**, we summarize it with one quote from the “Remarkable!” book: “*We believe the best in each other, want the best for each other and expect the best from each other*”. We make each other feel important as equal community partners and appreciate our differences as assets to the group. Weekly, we remind each other in our **Transformational Journey Review** that making mistakes and struggling is part of success and challenges are the key to personal growth.

In the third part, Maxwell explains how to grow your relationships stronger. He emphasizes trust building by showing integrity as the foundation of a strong connection with others. Integrity is not flexible and universal for business and personal success – and it's an inside job. Only when you act with true integrity, will you have your priorities straight and gain people's trust. It's *your* conscious decision to live by your principles and follow through your responsibilities. To ensure the integrity in our community, we created our **Community Belief System** that we act upon and hold each other accountable for. We know we live by the same principles and values and therefore have a strong foundation of trust.

In summary, the secret to building good relationships is to create a supportive environment where people aim to add value to each others lives by showing their support, appreciation and contribution. This sentence describes our community at the ranch precisely. It reminded me of the words that Moira describes in our Transformational Journey. If you would like to be surrounded by people that care for you, share your values and support you in reaching your goals, you should check out her video: [link] and our community website: [link]

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