

## Experiences of Intimacy – All Ages

Most often when we hear the word *intimacy we think love relationships*. It often involves a level of emotional openness in combination with physical closeness. Intimacy covers a broad range of connecting experiences between individuals. These include:

1. Emotional - The tender sharing of feeling, expressions of friendship, sharing of confidences or life's blissful moments!
2. Physical - Mutual massage, Tickling/holding, tending to one another's physical needs, the sharing of life space.
3. Aesthetic - Connection around the physical world of beauty, Arts and entertainment.
4. Conflictual (yes, conflictual) - Together working through life's troubles, communicating through conflict, challenging one another toward growth.
5. Crisis - The merging of hearts through unexpected life situations, the bonding around pain and crisis.
6. Intellectual - The sharing of information, learning together, discussions of mutual interest and skill, challenging each other to learn in new directions.
7. Spiritual - Connecting around your relationship with a Higher Power, belief system or profound spiritual experience. The merging and safety of two souls developing alongside one another.
8. Philosophical - Mutual pondering of life's systems and wonders, two great minds exploring the philosophy inherent in humanity!
9. Laughter and Play - Sharing time with that special person who brings you joy, cracks you up, warms your heart, brings out the giggles and the razz!!
10. Activity - Your playmate, sport mate on the trail, in the gym, buddy over a game board, sharing a hobby or just working together comfortably and cooperatively.

Most committed partnerships then include:

11. Sensual/Sexual- libidinal energy focused in the sharing of ones bodies through talking, touch, the merging of sexual organs and/or erogenous zones.

Take a few minutes to review the forms of intimate connections. Which ones are active in your relationships with family, friends, and/or significant others? Which ones are lacking? What might you be willing to do to improve or add to those that are absent or lacking? One can improve all relationships by adding to or deepening forms of intimacy.