



*"Marriage is a COURSE of shared adventures,
Sustained by the constant RHYTHM of two hearts,
Seeking BALANCE in an ever-changing world,
Enboldened by a true and loving RELATIONSHIP,
Nourishing the body, mind, and spirit of the SELF."*

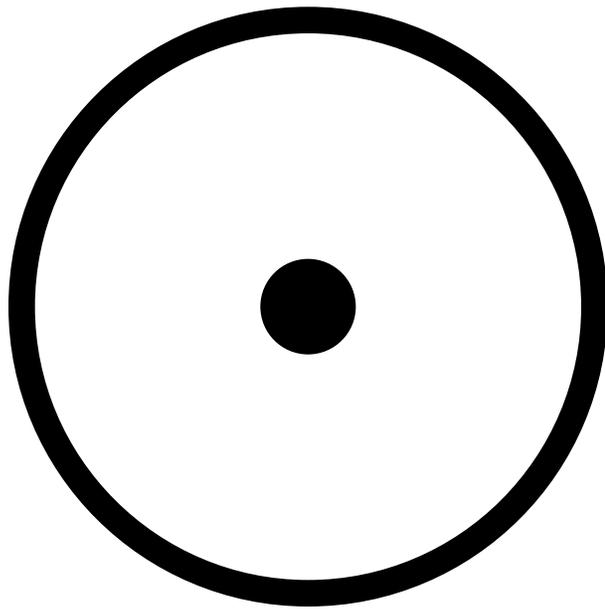
Five Spheres of Marriage
Keys to a Happy, and Healthy, Partnership
by Rick Tan

The Five Spheres of Marriage is a conceptual foundation of human experience, framed in the light of partnership. Regard it as a meditation, a journey of reflection, to open dialogue between couples who are engaged or married.

the circumpunct

SELF

vitality | development



The SELF is the individual: you or another person. The SELF is everything from which all experiences begin and end. Our experiences encompass thinking, feeling, and doing. In being fully engaged with the world around us, the SELF builds a vitality of being.

Inwardly, vitality of being means having a sense of self-worth, personal spirituality, and faith. Outwardly, it is having a sense of purpose, where the thinking, feeling, and doing are directed outside of the SELF. It is directed in service of others.

Giving is a major virtue of the SELF, and you can only give when your personal health and wellness are nourished and operating at optimum. Regarding the SELF is the practice of keeping one's SELF healthy and happy through proper nourishment, activity, and involvement.

How do you maintain your vitality of being, your SELF?

How do you nourish yourself?

What happens when you neglect to take care of yourself?

What is at your core?

What role does your faith play in your vitality of being?

How do you see your SELF?

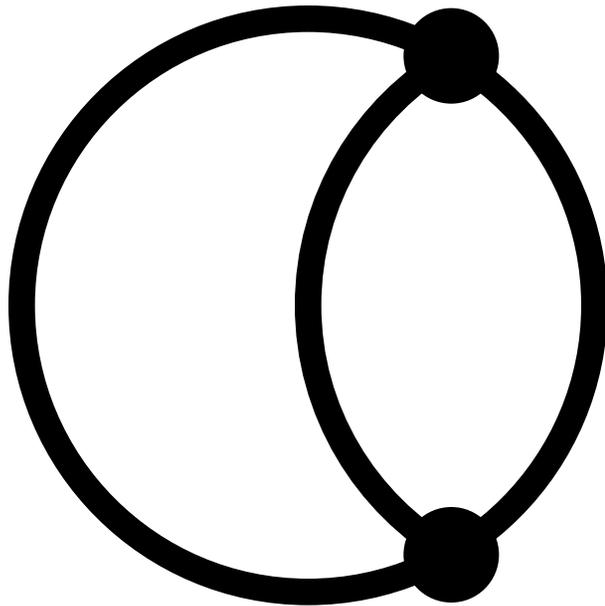
The promises of this world are, for the most part, vain phantoms;
and to confide in one's self, and become something
of worth and value is the best and safest course.

Michelangelo

the almond eye

RELATIONSHIPS

synergy | entrustment



RELATIONSHIPS refer to the exchange of thinking, feeling, and doing between SELF and another SELF, or simply, the interaction between people. There are so many ways we connect with each other, defined perhaps by who we are and what we bring to the table.

Each RELATIONSHIP creates something unique and powerful. It creates synergy between us. Each and the other are learners, where capacities and skills are built, honed, and enhanced.

When we value the RELATIONSHIP that we are in, we are better individuals. We are more empathetic, more understanding, more compassionate. We are more open and trusting. We nurture as we are nurtured. We love as we are loved.

What does your SELF contribute to your RELATIONSHIP?
How do you nourish and nurture the other?
Are there times you feel you are neglecting your partner?
What is at your core together as a couple?
What role does your faith play in your vitality of being?
How do you build synergy in your RELATIONSHIP?
How do you build and maintain trust?

Trust is to human relationships as what faith is to gospel living.

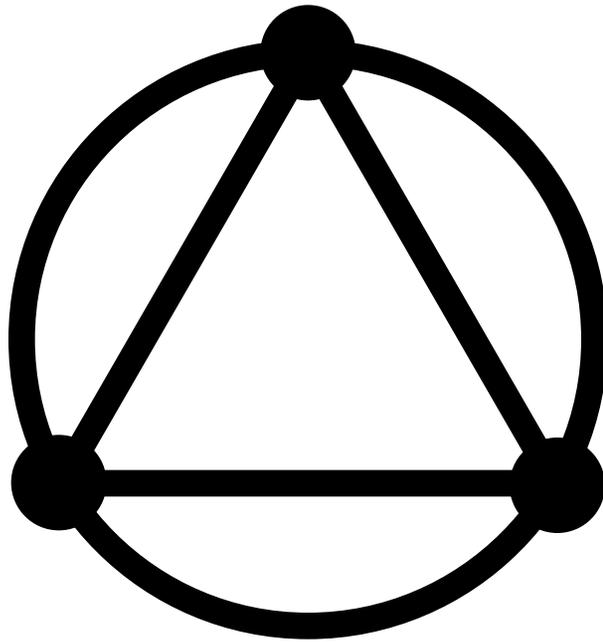
It is the beginning place, the foundation upon which more can be built. Where trust is, love can flourish.

Barbara Smith

the triangle

BALANCE

harmony | engagement



Happiness is when what you think,
what you say, and what you do
are in harmony.
Mahatma Gandhi

Dynamic equilibrium: maintaining BALANCE in the face of constantly changing conditions. Life is always changing and evolving. The SELF changes (growing older, maybe wiser!). RELATIONSHIPS evolve.

To maintain vitality and synergy, we must aim for harmony.

Here are some fundamental triads of human experience:

Thinking, Feeling, and Doing

Spirit, Mind, and Body

Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity

Faith, Love, and Trust

Create harmony by balancing the 12 senses: Communication (other's ego, hearing, speech, gesture), Comfort (sight, smell, taste, warmth), and Coordination (touch, balance, movement, homeostasis).

BALANCE in married life means listening, adjusting, synchronizing the beats of hearts, engaging all the senses.

What does BALANCE mean to you?

Why is it important to maintain BALANCE?

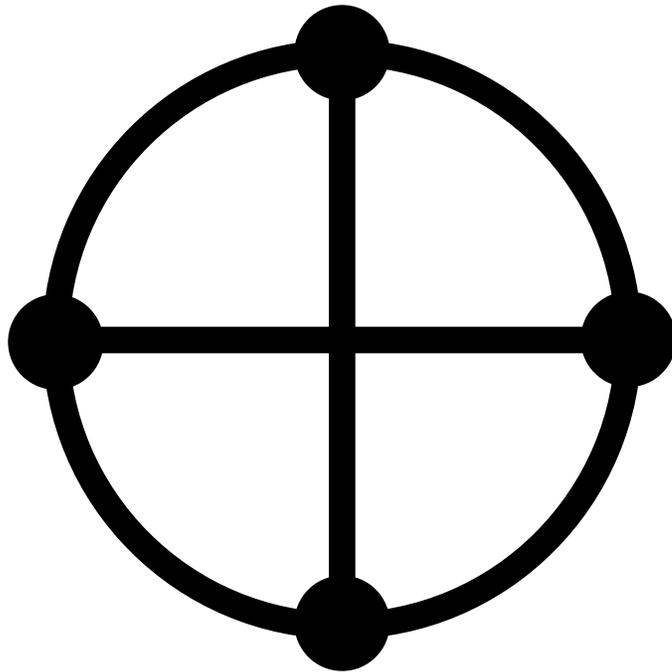
How do you harmonize the SELF and your RELATIONSHIP?

How do freedom and equality play into a healthy BALANCE?

the sun cross

RHYTHM

sustainability | contentment



My body doesn't have any rhythm, you know.
I've got quite good rhythm when I'm singing,
but my feet are very much two left feet.

Adele Adkins

The passage of the four seasons of spring, summer, fall, and winter has a reliably recurring RHYTHM. The flow of blood through the four chambers of the heart has a reliably steady RHYTHM. Whether it is the organism of earth or the human being, life is sustained in RHYTHM.

Homeostasis describes the internal harmony of the body's systems. We thrive on the RHYTHM of sleeping, eating, breathing, and moving. We can choose in our daily living to follow our bodies' needs for RHYTHM.

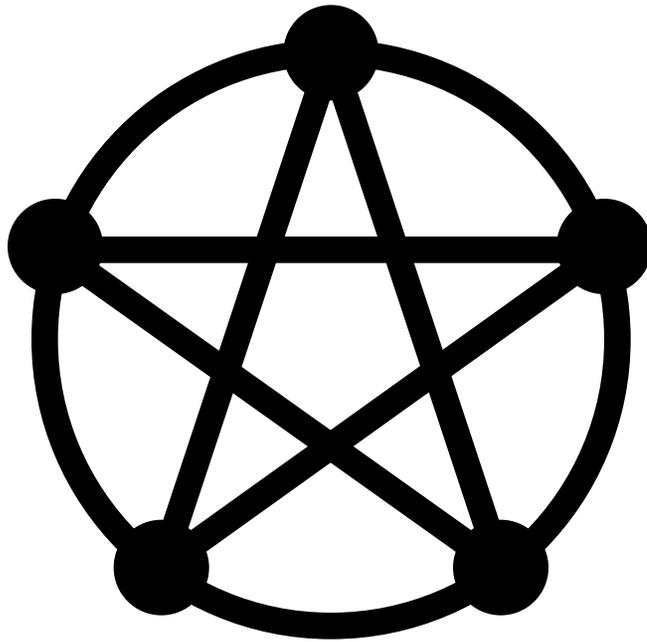
While it may be the brilliant spark of romance that gets things going, it is the steady fire that sustains a marriage. Follow the steady RHYTHM of nature, your body, to create a daily feeling of balanced contentment and adventure!

How does a steady RHYTHM contribute to a healthy lifestyle?
How does a steady RHYTHM sustain a marriage?
What activities in your daily living do you feel are sustainable?
What activities can burn you out?
What is the difference between RHYTHM and routine?
How can you optimize your daily living to be in RHYTHM with each other? With the world around you? With your SELF?

the star

COURSE

discovery | wonderment



A star is a source of luminous light, a focal point that draws our attention, awe, and wonder. The North Star guides wayward explorers. The Purple Star is awarded for courage and valor. A star tops a fairy's magic wand.

Da Vinci's Vitruvian Man is a star upon a square and circle. It is a schematic representation of a deeper reflection on the "cosmografia del minor mondo" (cosmography of the microcosmos). We are interwoven with the workings of the universe. We are stars!

With vitality, synergy, harmony, and sustainability, we go on a COURSE of discovery. The adventure of humankind calls us to explore and to seek. We search for excitement, adventure, meaning, and purpose.

And no matter how far we travel or what path we choose, we go on a voyage only to come back to the origin of our journey, the SELF.

What is the COURSE of your married life?

How will your RELATIONSHIP determine your COURSE?

What role will your SELF take in the path of discovery?

Is it OK to have a broader sense of where your path will take you?

Can a COURSE be a daily journey, and not a lifespan plot?

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—

I took the one less traveled by,

And that has made all the difference.

Robert Frost