



**BECOME
GOOD SOIL**

Styles of Relating

Predominant Styles of Relating

FALSE SELF

TRUE SELF

MOVE AWAY

Withdrawing. Hiding. Disengaging. Checking out. Life is sought through self-preservation and creating emotional distance between themselves and others. There is a “magic circle” where they don’t let you “in.” You can “get along” but it’s actually their way of keeping you at a safe distance. Moves away from things they cannot manage in place of things they feel they can manage. Refuses to risk engagement because of the fear of exposure and not having what it takes.

Monastic heart. They have experienced the reality of “Be still and know that I am God.” Contemplative. Secret life is rooted deeply in God. At peace. Welcome stillness. Don’t need to be God for others or come through compulsively. There is no agreement with false urgency. Trusts God’s timing and God’s way rather than self-determination, or “make it happen.” Models self-care and invites others into that Kingdom reality. They have healthy boundaries. They can play, and have embraced “unforced rhythms of grace... yoke is easy and burden is light.”

MOVE TOWARD

Compliance. “I need you to like me. I need us to be okay for me to feel good.” Appeases and pleases to avoid rejection. Feels secure when connected with others, even if it is an unhealthy bond. Compulsive need to be liked. Compulsive need to serve others. Does not do handle criticism well. Avoids conflict. Self-protects by “not rocking the boat” and making others feel good in order to feel worthy of love and belonging.

Extraordinary capacity for empathy. They manifest the miracle of holy validation. When with another, they communicate the Kingdom reality that nobody or nothing is more important in the world to God than the heart of His beloved. A holy “move toward” reveals that the other is worthy of love and belonging just as they are. “Move toward” has a profound capacity to intercede, to come to the center of another’s reality with affection and compassion and share both in another’s pain and hope. Generously opens heart to others and cultivates holy intimacy and connection.

MOVE AGAINST

“Follow or get out of the way.” Aggression. Domination. Life is primarily battle. Feels best when in control and in charge. What can I gain from this? How can I succeed, achieve and win? Outcomes are extremely important. Fear is a fuel. Never at rest. Always focused on “the next thing.” Willing to sacrifice relationship for ambition and success. Doesn’t handle criticism well. The rules don’t apply to them. “It’s my way or the highway.”

Natural leaders. Lead with a servant’s heart, and serve with a royal heart as they know they are beloved sons and daughters. Men and women of action and engagement who walk in harnessed and yielded strength. They make room for others to thrive and will sacrifice finances and influence to help others thrive. They walk in authority and also submit to the authority of others. Deep confidence, yet humility to listen, to defer, to lean into counsel beyond themselves. They will spend themselves upon a worthy cause and risk love in a way that is not tied to outcomes. They thrive in war and in peace. They truly care about investing in, building and restoring God’s Kingdom more than building their own kingdom. They care more about your heart than your usefulness as a means to their ends. Willing to lovingly and courageously confront others for the sake of their growth and restoration.

Styles of Relating

MARRIAGE EXERCISE

Become Good Soil Podcast: Style of Relating - Episode One

- ❶ What is my predominant style of relating when in service of my false self? How do you experience relating to me when I operate in this style? How has it affected you?

- ❷ How have you experienced ways I am maturing in all three styles of relating, in the service of love from my true self?

“Jesus’ enduring relevance is based on his historically proven ability to speak, to heal and empower the individual human condition. He matters because of what He brought and what He still brings to ORDINARY human beings, living ordinary lives and coping in their daily surroundings. He promises wholeness for their lives. In sharing our weakness He gives us strength and imparts through His companionship a life that has the quality of eternity.”

– Dallas Willard, The Divine Conspiracy

