



## Roots and Wings in Relationships

This week was a quiet week for me. Everything was just routine with no major wins and no major challenges. I began to wonder what I would write about when some commentary on the radio really caught my attention.

The essentials of the story was that some seventeen year olds went from Ireland to Italy for a football match and not all of their parents knew they had travelled. What caught my attention however was a comment made by one of the listeners who asserted that all you really need to give your children are 'roots and wings'.

I see the roots as giving solid nurturing and grounding so that the children can feel loved, safe and secure. On the other hand children also need the confidence and optimism to take on the world and follow their own dreams, the wings.

However this idea of balancing roots and wings is relevant to all our relationships and not just children. Often when our adult relationships are on an even keel we don't take the time to stop and check are we still providing that right balance of nurturing and freedom, or indeed that we are receiving the right balance either.

Then out of the blue we realise that things have gone wrong. We may develop a sense that the nurturing is all one-sided (although generally only when we are the one doing the nurturing). Or we may feel trapped and unsupported in our attempts to move forward and try different things.

The bottom line is that we need to be clear in our own heads, about the levels of nurturing and freedom we need to thrive. Until we know that for ourselves it is very difficult to communicate our needs to those who are dearest to us.

And so my challenge to you this week is to consider two relationships that you have in your life. The first should be one that is working really well at the moment. The second should be one where things are ok but not as good as you would like them to be.

Consider each of the relationships in terms of their balance, the giving and the receiving, the nurturing and the freedom. What is it about the relationship that is working really well that make you feel good? Are some of these elements missing from the relationship that is not working so well? In doing this challenge I hope that you gain a little more insight into the conditions that help you to thrive. With this insight you will be better able to communicate your needs to all your relationships.

Warm Wishes

Mary