



LESSONS FROM TV AND THE LITTLE PRINCE

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I was watching an early morning show on TV about two weeks ago. Two of the hosts were discussing the aspects of personality and character in the choice of a partner. One interesting fact that distinguished the two was this: personality is what is perceived by the senses, such as the ability to sing, mental intelligence or how a person looks, while character is one is not so easily perceived, such as emotional maturity and one's perspectives on life. The discussion became more interesting because it focused on how the two aspects have been mistakenly perceived as being one and the same, when in fact they aren't.

Many people find partners because of personality, which is inborn, but few couples really end up making beautiful music together because of incompatible character (acquired).

We see many cases of annulled marriages here in our country because of psychological incapacity that afflicts both halves of a partnership. Sometimes, one partner is too immature while the other is too intelligent to be bothered by the inanities of that one partner's immaturity. I can certainly put myself dead center on how such partnerships fail. After all, you can be young only once, but you can be immature forever. Living with a partner who never seems to grow out of an "unripe" brain can prove to be both punishing and depressing. Imagine if someone too advanced in thought-years is paired with such individuals.

Personality is sometimes described as scintillating, brilliant and captivating. It can attract and enchant. But the enchantment will somehow fade into oblivion once the paint comes off. It is what is inside that matters, or, as the fox had said in the most translated and most widely-read French literary work, "It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye."

(Antoine de Saint-Exupery,
http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/a/antoine_de_saintexupery.html#VucbWMu1EjJBuDX2.99)

The entire book itself is all about how the little prince learns about life and human nature at large. It makes for interesting reading for young people who are yet to discover their priorities in life. It explores the learning process that the prince and the Pilot (the Narrator) undergo in order to find peace in themselves. One can pick up numerous nuggets of wisdom from reading the whole book.

The Little Prince teaches us how personality can only be a teeny-tiny aspect of our entire self. It teaches us about friendship, perseverance, maturity, leadership, responsibility. These and many more make up both personality and character.

In our day-to-day existence, let us not forget the lessons that The Little Prince, as well as the TV program, teaches us. Let us live our lives fully, becoming fully mature individuals and great partners to those we care for the most.

QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What attracts you to a member of the opposite gender? What will make you want to maintain a lasting relationship with that person?
2. Is it easy to find all the qualities you want in one single person? Elaborate on your answer.
3. Why do personalities clash? Is there a solution to such a problem?
4. If you had to choose between someone with a wonderful personality but immature character and someone boring but definitely mature, which would you take and why?
5. Can a person develop a certain type of personality? What about character? Which of those two can be more difficult to eradicate?