



*The James E. Hughes, Jr.*  
FOUNDATION

*Reflection: Relationships*

I recently read a wonderful book on relationships that broke down their complexity into what I see as two continuing thoughts that we should all keep top of mind.

First, as John Locke suggested in his great treatise on governance, which of course is simply two or more people making joint decisions, the core of any relationship's success lies in knowing that to have the love I want. I must give up my freedom to help the other—with nothing held back. It means realizing that while I can make this rarest of promises to another, to help them forever and unconditionally, I cannot know if the other will help me. I can only hope he or she will. I know as I make such a promise to help another that my existence depends on my doing so while knowing I could be very wrong. This is a leap into the unknown with my existence depending on it. To fail to jump in these rarest of circumstances will be to fail to become who I am meant to be.

Second, in our universe, three forms of physics govern our experience and particularly in relationships— fission, inertia, and fusion. I suggest that looking at one's relationships through the lenses of these forces can be helpful. What do I mean in the case of relationships? In a highly simplified way, fission is like Goldilocks's porridge being too hot and eventually blowing us up in a blaze of heat. Inertia is like Goldilocks's porridge being too cold and eventually the relationship dies from profound cold. Only in fusion, when the porridge's temperature is "just right," does the relationship flower, sustain, and become anti-fragile! In fusion  $1+1=3$ . The miracle of our sun is that it enables life. In my view, this same force leads to life in relationships.

Namaste,  
Jay

\* This reflection is adapted from the foreword written by Mr. Hughes for the book entitled, *United in Flow*, by Feisal Alibhai, 2023