ForeWord Reviews

LGBT

Break Up or Break Through
Dina Bachelor Evan
Alyson Books
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(June 2001)

This is such a warm-hearted book, it seems almost unnecessary to mention that it is also wise and useful. According to the author, a psychotherapist with sixteen years of couples counseling, the way to maintain a successful relationship (for gays, lesbians, or heterosexuals) can be summarized in three simple concepts: “Stay Present,” “Be Honest,” and “Act Out of Love, Not Fear.” Underlying all this are two additional notions that provide the real cohesion in forming a successful relationship: true love of one’s self prior to and during the relationship with another, and a sense that the relationship is a sacred bond.

The concept of “staying present” has as much to do with realizing the presence of Spirit as it does in being physically present in a relationship. Evan states: “This sacred principle teaches us that the more we embrace the love and Spirit in each of us, the more love and Spirit we have in our lives,” and presumably in our relationships.

The concept of “being honest” begins with taking an inventory of one’s own fears, self-criticisms, and intentions and moving outward from there into a relationship. This part of Break Up or Break Through presents a series of exercises designed to discover an honest appraisal of the individual. “Being safe is knowing that fear is an illusion borne from doubt about who you are,” according to Evan, and so being honest with oneself is a major step in forming a successful relationship.

Finally, bringing the first two concepts in line in a relationship will make “acting out of love and not fear” achievable. Acting out of love, according to Evan, is trusting oneself and one’s partner to be committed to the relationship.

Relationship counselors should find this book enormously helpful in setting up meaningful activities for those whom they counsel, and individuals will find it equally beneficial.

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