

Acts of Love

From The Road Less Traveled by M. Scott Peck. This summary by Tim Isbell

Acts of love are always a form of **work** or **courage** directed toward nurturing our own or another person's spiritual growth.

Work is moving out against the inertia of laziness.

Relational work usually takes 3 forms:

Attention. When we give another our attention, we attend to their growth.

Listening. This requires tremendous effort and total concentration. We cannot truly listen and do anything else at the same time. It means that we give our friend/lover the kind of attention we would give to a great lecturer. Learn to [MIRROR!](#)

Prayer. This is a crucial part of the work in a close relationship. Inviting the Spirit of Jesus to help me relate to another person in a way that honors the other person and honors God is a very good thing.

Courage is moving out against the inertia of fear.

Relational courage is not the absence of fear; it is taking action despite fear.

Sometimes this means entering a Tunnel of Chaos. It's natural for people to choose peacekeeping over truth-telling. But if this condition persists, it leads to only a pseudo-relationship. Real relationships inherently involve truthfulness, occasionally involving going through some chaos. Christians entering the Tunnel are never in there alone; the Spirit of Jesus goes with them.

Courage often takes the form of speaking the truth in love.

(Ephesians 4:15 says that as we will speak the truth in love, we grow in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.)

(For related material on romantic relationship resources, see [Premarriage Counseling](#) and [Advice for Couples](#).)