



44 Relational Nutrients that Build *Core Character Traits*

The following relational nutrients are a combination of Dr. Townsend's [22 Relational Nutrients in Four Quadrants](#) (from Dr. John Townsend's book, *People fuel*) and 22 additional relational nutrients found in the file – [22 Additional Relational Nutrients](#) (they are underlined). These relational nutrients, when experienced in a safe relationship (called "Attachment/Need-Based Relationships"), build intrapsychic structure in one or more of the [Core Character Traits](#) (CCTs). The 44 relational nutrients below are organized around the particular CCT they build into a person's intrapsychic structure. Of course, there are some relational nutrients that can build several types of CCTs, but only one is listed.

ATTACHMENT

- **Attunement:** They let me know they feel what I am feeling.
- **Understanding:** They let me know they comprehend my situation.
- **Validation:** They let me know my feelings are significant and not to be dismissed or minimized.
- **Identification:** They share their own similar experience to help me see that I'm not the only one who has struggled in this particular area (but keep it to less than 60 seconds).
- **Belonging:** I am an important part of this person's life, their friends, family, cause, etc.

SEPARATION

Differentiation (Boundaries):

- **Clarification:** They let me talk about how I feel or think to connect the dots more which will help me understand myself at a deeper level. Sometimes they ask me questions to help me get to the real issue and solutions.
- **Passion:** They help me discover what "jazzes" me.
- **Diversity:** They are okay with me being different than them and other people. They help me discover my spiritual gifts and areas of expertise.
- **Encouragement:** They believe in me to continue the growth path and other things I want to do.
- **Self-Care:** They take time to do nurturing activities for themselves, exercise, eat properly and other self-care activities.
- **Respecting My "No" Muscle:** They respect my "no" and I don't have to make you happy or get them to like me.
- **OK with Anger:** They provide a safe place to be angry and aren't overwhelmed nor judgmental.

Initiative (Individuation, Agency):

- **Taking Risks:** They help me to start taking risks or trying new things.
- **Challenge:** They move me beyond my comfort zone to higher levels of growth.
- **Perspective:** They help me connect the dots at a deeper level.
- **Champion My Independence:** They let me do things for myself instead of doing them for me or telling me how to do it.
- **Action Oriented:** They are always taking action and they hold me accountable to be proactive in doing something about a situation instead of being reactive, passive or taking a victim stance.

INTEGRATION

- **Containment:** They let me express intense feelings and/or negative realities and don't try to fix me. They accept me and stay with me until they resolve.
- **Comfort:** They are present with me when I need to grieve a loss.
- **Acceptance:** They connect with the real me, with no judgment, as I have failed or struggled and am judging myself internally.
- **Forgiveness:** They let me know my debt is cancelled and help me cancel debts owed to me.
- **Weakness:** They let me be weak and are comfortable with asking others for help.
- **Respect:** They value me not based on performance but who I am, defects and all.



AUTHORITY

3 Styles:

1-Down.

- **Responsibility and Increased Decision Making:** They help me to take on more responsibility and make more decisions on my own.
- **Mutual Authority:** They don't let me feel one down, one up or rebel against authority. They relate to me mutually; I have equal power as him/her.
- **Empowerment:** They believe I have strength and can handle life's most difficult challenges. They love it when I express my voice, especially when there is opposition.

1-Up.

- **Submission:** They help me to submit appropriately to authority.
- **Feedback:** They tell me how they experience me, so that I can be aware of how I come across.

Rebellious.

- **Non-Controlling:** They don't convince or force me to do certain things and are don't get anxious if I don't see something I should do or make a mistake
- **Confrontation:** They point out something I'm doing that is self-destructive, so I can stop it.
- **Structure:** They help me establish self-control.

Competence:

- **Affirmation:** They note something good that requires effort.
- **Celebration:** They acknowledge a success in my life with me.
- **Wisdom:** They give me information from experience or the Bible that can help.
- **Advice:** They recommend some constructive action to help me change and grow
- **Development:** They love to find ways to grow and improve their skills or better organize their life

Intimacy:

- **Intimacy:** They aren't overwhelmed by my need for closeness and connection and desire it also.

Sexuality:

- **Opposite Sex Friendships:** They have opposite sex friendships and feel comfortable being close without being seductive.
- **Sexual Inadequacies:** They are not embarrassed to discuss sexual feelings and inadequacies.

Transcendence/Spirituality:

- **Service:** They help me serve and give back to others what I have received.
- **Hope:** They provide reality-based confidence in the future.
- **Bible Study and Prayer:** They pray or study the Bible with me so I can experience more of God's grace and truth.
- **Finding Existential Meaning:** They like to look at the deepest aspect of an issue or life as a whole. They continually question the meaning of different activities or aspects of life (e.g., money and possessions). They love deep philosophical discussions.
- **Purpose:** They help me discover my passion for bringing God's love and truth to this world and become part of something bigger.