

# RELATIONAL WISDOM®

## PREPARING YOUR CHILDREN FOR HIGHLY RELATIONAL LIVES

*“Get wisdom. Prize her highly, and she will exalt you.”*  
Proverbs 4:7-8

1. In essence, relational wisdom (RW) is the ability to love God with all your heart and to love your neighbor as yourself ... better yet, as Jesus has loved you (Matt. 22:37-39; John 13:34-35).

**Living Out the Two Great Commandments**

2. Specifically, relational wisdom is your ability to discern emotions, interests and abilities in yourself and others, to interpret them in the light of God’s Word, and to use these insights to manage your responses and relationships constructively.

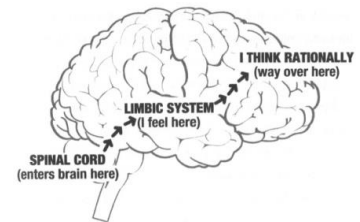
3. RW is a *“relational operating system”* (like Windows or Mac OS) that impacts every aspect of our lives, including worship, marital intimacy, church unity, and job performance and advancement.

- *Relationship trumps expertise* in most areas of life
- Soft skills (relational abilities) *magnify* or *diminish* the value of hard skills (technical expertise)



4. RW is crucial because life is all about relationship (Gen. 2:18; John 3:16, 4:1-42; 13:34-35, 17:20-23).

5. Relationships can be challenging, because they are often fueled by emotions, both positively and negatively (Matt. 14:14; Gen. 37:11, 28).



6. The Bible provides a powerfully effective way to deal with relationships and the emotions that fuel them. These truths may be organized into a discipleship paradigm called *“relational wisdom.”*

- **Relationships are three dimensional**
  - **God, Self, Others** (So do continual 360’s)
- **Relationships involve two dynamics**
  - Aware – What do I know? (Knowledge)
  - Engaging – What will I do? (Action)



And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.\*\*

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another,

as God in Christ forgave you.\*\*” (Eph. 4:30-32, ESV)

The gospel provides the motive, pattern and power for relational wisdom (Eph. 4:30-32; 5:1-2; Titus 2:14).

7. Relational wisdom involves six relationship-building and preserving skills or disciplines:
- **God-Awareness** (remember) is the ability to view all of life in the light of God’s character, works and promises<sup>1</sup>
  - **God-Engagement** (faithfulness) is the ability to trust, obey, and imitate God in a way that pleases and honors him<sup>2</sup>
  - **Self-Awareness** (humility) is the ability to accurately discern your own identity, emotions, thoughts, values interests and abilities<sup>3</sup>
  - **Self-Engagement** (discipline) is the ability to manage your thoughts, emotions, words and actions so that they advance God’s purposes<sup>4</sup>
  - **Other-Awareness** (compassion) is the ability to understand and empathize with the experiences, emotions, values and interests of others<sup>5</sup>
  - **Other-Engagement** (service) is the ability to love, encourage, serve and resolve differences with others in a mutually beneficial way<sup>6</sup>

8. In real life, people live both inside and outside the circle (1 Sam. 17, 24; 2 Sam. 11). Peacemaking, a special application of RW, is how we draw people back inside the circle (1 Sam. 25).

9. Relational wisdom is so simple a child can apply it, yet so complex you can spend the rest of your life developing it. You can start growing today by memorizing and practicing four simple acrostics.



#### PRACTICE THE SOG PLAN

- **Self-aware:** How am I feeling and acting?
- **Other-aware:** How are others feeling? How am I affecting them?
- **God-aware:** What is God up to?

#### FOLLOW A TRUSTWORTHY GPS\*

\*God Positioning System

- **Glorify** God (Trust, obey, worship)
- **Pursue** God (Seek him earnestly)
- **Serve** God (Do what pleases him)

#### READ Yourself Accurately

- **Recognize** your emotions
- **Evaluate** their sources
- **Anticipate** the consequences of following them
- **Direct** them on a constructive course

#### SERVE EVERY PERSON YOU MEET

- **Smile** (Home, workplace, store, telephone)
- **Explore and Empathize** (Show interest and compassion)
- **Reconcile** (Be a peacemaker)
- **Value** (Express appreciation and respect)
- **Encourage** (Give heart, inspire, put wind under their wings)

10. God designed and empowers us to grow in relational wisdom as he sanctifies and transforms us, conforming us to the likeness of Christ (Rom. 8:28; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 4:22-24; James 1:5; 2 Pet. 1:3-7).

- Change and growth take deliberate prayer and practice (Eph. 3:14-19; 1 Tim. 4:15)
- Subscribe to *RW Blog* ([www.rw360.org/blog](http://www.rw360.org/blog))
- Download the *RW360 Smartphone App* ([www.rw360.org/app](http://www.rw360.org/app))
- Improve relational skills through our online course, *Discovering Relational Wisdom 3.0* ([www.rw-academy.org](http://www.rw-academy.org)). **Christian Heritage 50% coupon: "hmschl50"**

<sup>1</sup> 1 Chron. 16:12; Ps. 77:11-12; Ps. 111:2-3; Ps. 103; Rom. 8:28-39; Eph. 3:14-19; 2 Pet. 1:3-8 • <sup>2</sup> 1 Kings 3:6; Prov. 3:5-6; Matt. 25:21; John 14:15; 1 Cor. 10:31-11:1; Eph. 5:1-2 • <sup>3</sup> 1 Peter 5:5; Ps. 139:23-24; James 4:1-3; Mark 7:21-23; 2 Tim. 2:22 • <sup>4</sup> Gal. 5:22-23; Matt. 16:24-25; John 8:29; Titus 2:11-12 • <sup>5</sup> Mark 6:34; Luke 10:30-37; 1 Pet. 3:8; Phil. 2:3-4 • <sup>6</sup> Mark 10:42-45; John 12:24-26; 1 Thess. 5:14-15; 1 Pet. 3:8-9