



INTERESTED IN OTHER'S INTERESTS

ADMIRATION V. EGOCENTRICITY

In this episode we got to the cause of preoccupation that keeps us from experiencing the transformative power of admiration: egocentricity. All people are understandably and unavoidably prone to be self-centered. After all, we are at the center of everything we experience. How can it be otherwise? It will always take effort on our part to lift our heads above our own limited interests and notice more around us that is good, noble and worthy of pursuit and emulation. But the good news is with practice we can break, or at least counteract, the habit of egocentricity. The following examples show you how to begin practicing. First, a word to the wise: *It's one thing to read these examples and nod your head; it's another thing to notice the opportunities when they come along. Consequently, as you read each one, you might want to pray, "Lord, help me see these opportunities and care enough in the moment to do just what they say."*

- **Your interest is my interest.** Show interest in someone else's interest you're not interested in by asking questions, listening to them talk about it and joining them in it.
- **Your problem is my problem.** When someone shares a problem with you, don't just forget about it as soon as you leave. Keep mulling over it as if it was your problem. Do research, think of a creative idea, jot down some notes and come back to them later with your thoughts showing that you spent time caring about their problem.
- **What's the meaning of this?** Most people decorate their "spaces" at home or work with things that are meaningful to them. When you're in someone else's space, look around and notice pictures, mementos, memorabilia. Ask them about or comment on one or two.
- **Have a "shut up and listen" day.** Pick a day to make this conscious commitment: *Whenever anyone is talking to me, I will listen to them without thinking about what I will say next, and not say anything until they have finished their thought completely.*
- **I feel your pain.** Things disappoint other people that wouldn't bother you. Don't act as if it's no big deal. ("So what? The cookies didn't turn out.") Don't minimize it. Understand it.
- **Keep a list of likes.** Friends and family often make off-the-cuff comments about things they like. But when it comes to birthday or Christmas gifts, we can never remember and come up with gift ideas. The solution? Be intentional about keeping lists. That simple act develops the habit of counteracting egocentricity.

JOT DOWN ANOTHER IDEA THAT MIGHT WORK FOR YOU

