

REALISM

What we can **realistically** expect is not cast in stone. It's a creation—a result of the way we think and act. If we treat people badly, it's **realistic** to expect they won't like us. If we treat them well, we earn their loyalty, cooperation, and love. *Always*, we are potters working with the clay of this world.

George: *George has two friends: one expects the best of him, the other expects the worst. They bring out two different Georges. What kind of George would you bring out? It would depend on your approach, don't you think?*

Realism and relationship. Statistically, over 50% of marriages end in divorce. What that means is, over 50% of people fail to meet the requirements for enduring, fulfilling love. But if you want to know what *your* chances are, it depends on what *you* do, and the heart you do it with.

Man #1: *He loves his wife generously, he cares to understand her, and in practical matters he's responsible and supportive. HIS chances for lasting love are very high.*

Man #2: *He is generous in financial terms, but emotionally inattentive and dismissive. For HIM, it would be UNrealistic to expect success in love.*

What generalizations can be made about love, then? None! It is **realistic** to expect love to fail if you create conditions in which it *must* fail—with selfishness, reac-

tivity, insensitivity, etc. But if you offer consistent love and care, and choose a genuinely loving partner, you have reason to expect beautiful results—**realistically**.

Realism and past experience. Most people think it's realistic to expect the past to repeat itself. But is it? Only if your *approach* stays the same. If your approach *changes*, things will be *different*. Have you ever noticed that when you change, your whole world changes? Everything and everyone seems different. Interesting, huh?

True realism. You determine your own odds in life. You're not a mere statistic, but an individual creating your own destiny—either mining or undermining life's possibilities by the way you think and act. You won't always get what you want even if you do your best. Sometimes circumstances or other people's wills prevent the fulfillment of your dreams. Even so, a person who brings love, care, and intelligence to all of life will create beauty and goodness—just as, **realistically**, a lazy, careless, stingy, fearful, or loveless attitude will bear *different*, more bitter fruit.

A **realistic** farmer knows what it takes to grow healthy crops, and labors lovingly to create the right conditions. Similarly, life, love, and relationships have requirements that need to be met if they are to flourish. Truly **realistic people** work to meet those demands in a good spirit. For them, **realistically**, bountiful harvests are most likely.