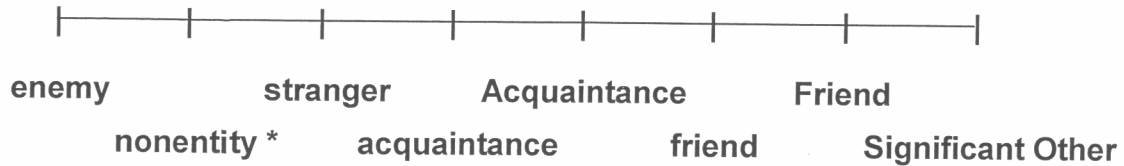


# RELATIONSHIP CONTINUUM



\* nonentity = person of no importance in your life, especially if there was a positive relationship before.

## Notes:

1. **We must always hold others accountable** for: i) how they make us feel (emotion), and ii) be consciously aware of the costs vs. benefits that each person brings into our lives (reason), as in the wise sayings:

- A relationship is a series of tests. If the person passes a test, then the relationship gets stronger; if the person fails a test, the relationship gets weaker and can even end. (Deep & Sussman)
- Hurt me once, shame on you. Hurt me twice, shame on me.

Thus, the relationship continuum is **dynamic**, i.e., persons in our "universe" will typically become either closer to us (greater self-disclosure and intimacy; move to the right) or farther away (increased distance or disconnection; move to the left). Whether we move a person to the left or to the right on our personal relationship continuum will be determined predominantly by two things: i) experiencing, expressing and ultimately acting on our underlying primary feelings, e.g., the key 5 emotion categories of "sad, mad, glad, afraid, embarrassed," etc. (emotion), and ii) the pros vs. cons of his/her presence in our life (reason).

2. Many people don't hold others accountable enough, and often blur the line between acquaintanceship and friendship. This is often due to a lack of assertiveness (i.e., knowing one's fundamental rights as well as expressing and acting on these rights and associated feelings and needs). The major consequence of this lack of healthy **intrapersonal** development (i.e., within oneself) is problems in interpersonal relationships, especially romantic relationships.

3. Most people in our lives will fall around the "acquaintance"/"Acquaintance" area, with increasingly fewer persons fitting into the categories as you approach either end of the continuum ("bell curve").

- See "Solar System Metaphor of Healthy Interpersonal Relationships"