



## Successful Relationships

Relationships need positivity than negativity to flourish and survive. Showing interest, affection, care, love, respect, appreciation, concern, empathy, acceptance, humour, enjoyment are essential. Relationships need to be nurtured and developed throughout time; without such, it will perish.

### Conflict

Managing the inevitable conflict (some problems can be resolved; some can't). Consider the following 5 Points of Negotiation:

- (1) Start an argument about an issue softly and gently, not harshly (hard to turn around);
- (2) Repair as you go along, admit when wrong, acknowledge and appreciate partner's attempts of kindness, respect, repair, etc.;
- (3) Self-soothe, do something to relax (breathe better, walk, time-out) to avoid losing control of thoughts, speech, actions, etc.;
- (4) Accept partner's influence, his/her point of view, and the fact you may be wrong; and
- (5) Compromise where possible, negotiate, and identify that which is non-negotiable to help keep your core values intact and your needs respected and fulfilled.

### Types

Whilst there are many types of relationships, research suggests three supportive, successful, stable types:

- (1) A "volatile" couple, are supportive of each other's independence, frequently tease and mock each other, and have big, passionate, expressive rows which they see as a sign of caring and enjoyment—but not as enjoyable as the make-up;
- (2) A "validating" couple, place great emphasis on unity and companionship, are sensitive to the needs of the other, rather expressive and passionate in rows that may eventually erupt after a slow start, but will mostly focus and/or end with validations of their partner/relationship; and
- (3) A "conflict avoiding" couple, who explore rather than explode, agree to disagree, emphasise their friendship, acceptance, and admiration of each other, and rarely leave an issue unfinished. Regardless of the pairing, similarity in approaches is the key.

Ultimately, mismatches require more hard work or most likely end in separation as they experience a disconnection in the relationship that overall feels "off" or lacking of meaning or true connection and plagued with negativity.

### 4 Problem Behaviours

There are four behaviours mainly responsible for conflict and/or separation:

- (1) Criticism, implying something is wrong with the person;
- (2) Defensiveness, warding off a perceived attack;
- (3) Contempt, behaviour that puts one person "above" another; and
- (4) Stonewalling, withdrawing from a conversation.

Such behaviours can appear in all relationships, and performed by either partner but generally speaking, when compared to women, men are more likely to stonewall and less likely to criticise.

### Consider

Regardless of the state of your union, whether good or bad or happy or sad, consider the following:

- (1) Start a conversation gently; don't pick a fight
- (2) There ought to be more positive exchanges than negative exchanges
- (3) 3 Types of Stable Relationships
- (4) 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse
- (5) 5 Points of Negotiation
- (6) Caring Habits: Supporting, Encouraging, Listening, Accepting, Trusting, Respecting, Negotiating differences
- (7) Deadly Habits: Criticising, Blaming, Complaining, Nagging, Threatening, Punishing, Bribing (to control)
- (8) Accept influence, share power and control
- (9) Retain own values
- (10) Do something nice for your partner frequently/daily