

Ten Tips for Making and Keeping a Healthy Relationship/ Marriage

1. Do you feel sometimes like you and your partner are having the same argument over and over? Or you try to discuss things and you always end up at the same dead end, hurt, angry, shouting, or worse? Remember that the enemy is the dysfunctional pattern, not your partner. See if you can identify what the patterns are, your part in starting them and your part in keeping them going.
2. Examine your behaviour with a rigorous honesty. Acknowledge how it may be causing some of the problems. Ask for time and help to do something different. Ask your partner what she would like to see instead.
3. Reinterpret what you hear. Often, when there are difficult times between partners, they will assume the worst about what their partner meant to say to them. Instead of assuming "She meant to hurt me/insult me", assume she meant no harm. Ask what she meant, "When you said that, my first thought was that you meant ---. Is that what you meant?" Assume the best of her.
4. If you are hurting, your partner is probably hurting too. Try to have the courage to heal his wounds, and be supportive to him. At first he won't trust it, but eventually, he will start to return the favour.
5. Decide what is important. Is winning important or is your relationship important? Ask yourself, if she were killed tomorrow, would I miss the very things I am complaining about?
6. Acknowledge your fears. Are you afraid of being abandoned? Are you afraid of being hurt? Let your partner know when those issues are coming up for you. Ask if she is willing to help you through them. It can be scary to be the one to change first. But someone has to jump.
7. Do the opposite of what you are doing now. Often when a relationship is stuck, people will tend to do more of what they are doing. Try doing something different.
8. Learn some empathy and communication skills. For example "I" statements in which you talk about your partner's behaviour and your reaction. "When you don't call and you said you were going to, I feel like a fool, and vulnerable." Find listening times: make appointments to talk, and then allow each of you the opportunity to make "I" statements until you have expressed everything you and he need to get out. Remember that he is talking about himself and try to hear the meaning to him—what happens to him as he experienced it.
9. Acknowledge the stressors on both of you, and the part these outside stressors may be putting on your relationship. See how you can lower those stressors
10. Remember what it was that brought you together. Look for those things, and also the good, the supportive, the lovingness that you know was in her when you met.