

## Solving Relationship Problems

There is nothing more rewarding than being involved in a loving relationship. Life is made complete by sharing time with someone who offers and accepts support, enthusiasm and pleasure, whether a platonic friend, a family member or an intimate partner. It's a feeling that we hope will last until the end of time. Loving someone is easy, but it takes care and effort to make the feeling last.

Life's greatest joy can lead to great sadness and distress if one or both partners fail to address the basic elements of a good relationship. While relationship problems can be extremely stressful, they do not necessarily lead to ultimate failure. If both parties are willing, there is always the chance to fix the problem and revive the relationship.

When problems arise, it does take a little extra effort to keep your relationship intact. Many couples take things for granted, hoping and assuming that their problems will fix themselves or simply disappear. These couples will ride the wave, then reconcile without stopping to examine the cause of the problem or consider solutions to the problem.

This sense of indifference can create an unnecessary series of problems for many. In reality, many relationship dilemmas can be solved rather easily through caring discussion. Others difficulties can require the help of a counselor or mediator. Couples often find that professional guidance helps them to recover their relationship, enable them to discover different ways to work out their problems, and resolve to keep the problem from reoccurring. It is essential that every couple deal immediately with their problems, to get back on the right path and begin improving the relationship. If you still hold feelings for your partner, find a way to relight the fading intimacy of love.

Relationships are a natural part of human existence, as are relationship problems. Few people, if any, have experienced a purely problem-free relationship. There are several basic causes to these partnership breakdowns.

Experiencing close intimacy can give us moral support and joy, but being too close, or being "smothered" by a partner, can create a source of grief, disappointment, jealousy or misery.

Another common cause of relationship stress is the natural fluctuation of attraction. Sometimes we anticipate seeing our partner and are overjoyed at spending time together. At other times, we are passive and not overly eager. Or we might not feel the need or desire to see a partner, wanting simply to be alone. The natural ebb and flow of these feelings can definitely strain the relationship, but little can be done to control it.

Relationships can also be negatively affected by outside influences, like work demands or financial stability. These are two of the greatest sources of relationship strain, but unfortunately they are necessary evils in life that we can't do without. Our jobs, and our money, provide the basics of life. Man, and woman, cannot live on love alone.

Differing goals and opinions are also potential relationship killers. If what we expect from each other varies greatly from one partner to the next, relationship problems will most certainly surface.

There are many complex issues that can cause wear and tear in our relationships, but only a few tried and true ways to treat them. Good communication, effective problem solving, mutual support, patience, and the willingness to spend quality time together are steps to solving virtually any relationship problem. Practice these with your partner, and eventually you will find that you are growing together.