

SUCCESSFUL RELATIONSHIPS

"I wish you peace and happiness in all your relationships."

Through deep curiosity and the capacity to embrace diversity, you will find the freedom of Openheartedness and the ability to live life with passion and joy."



Diane Strausser MSS, LISW

Welcome to Successful Relationships. I am so pleased you have decided to take a moment to see what we are all about. We have many different programs and products available for you.

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10 TIPS for *GREAT* COMMUNICATION



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YOU CAN BE RIGHT, OR YOU CAN BE IN A RELATIONSHIP !



95% of the world's problems are caused by relationships that have gone haywire.

The best insurance for healthy relationships is the ability to talk and listen effectively. Most of us think we are much better at it than we actually are. These **10 Tips** will give you the edge on great communication and great relationships.

1. **Eliminate the word "but".**

We use the word "but" to join two different thoughts within the same sentence.



Unfortunately, the minute you say "but", you have negated everything which came before it. Substitute the word "and" for "but" and see the difference in the response you get. It will take some practice and it may seem awkward at first. *"I want to believe in you, but you have disappointed me in the past,"* is different from *"I want to believe in you and you have disappointed me in the past."* The last sentence leaves room for hope.

2. **Say what you want rather than what you don't want.**

People will hear you much better if you state what you want. Saying what you don't want may make the other person feel criticized. When the other person feels criticized, you are less likely to get what you want. *"I don't want you to lie to me ever again,"* is different than *"I need the truth from you from now on."*

3. **Use "I" statements rather than "you" statements.** People feel accused when you use "you". It feels like you are pointing a finger at them and determining that they are guilty of something. *"You are more concerned about your friends than you are about me"* is different from, *"I need to be the number one focus in your life."*

4. **State your truth without blame, shame or judgment.** Learn to say whatever you need to say to anyone without using dirty tricks, demeaning, accusing, or name calling. *"I get very afraid and upset when you're late"* is different from, *"You are so inconsiderate and irresponsible. You're too stupid to even call me when you're going to be late."*

5. **Ask someone what they need instead of trying to guess.** You cannot possibly guess what someone needs. Simply ask, *"What do you need from me right now?"*

6. **Be able to ask for what you need.** Don't expect that others know your needs, even if you're married to them. Simply say, *"This is what I need right now. I need a hug (ten minutes alone, an apology, a cup of coffee). I need some clarification."*

7. **Criticism kills.** If you are critical - even slightly - you will shut the other person down and all real communication will stop. You may say more words and the other person may appear to be listening; however, now their defenses are up and nothing good is going to happen.

8. **Think of everyone having an invisible sign around their necks that says, "Make me feel important."** In fact, that is what we all want. A smile, a kind word, or some acknowledgment may be all someone needs to be more responsive to you.

9. **Be conscious of how you show up in any interaction.** Do you show up too much by talking too much, being too loud, interrupting, or talking too much about yourself? Or, do you show up too little by not saying very much, looking bored, concentrating on something else or giving short answers to questions? Balance makes for better interactions.

10. **Be curious!** The most important gift you can give to other people is to be curious about them. Don't assume you know everything there is to know about anyone even if you have been with that person for a life-time. The best time to be curious is when you disagree with someone, especially your partner. Say to yourself, *"Now, why do I see that in such a different way?"* When you're curious, you won't be defensive, withdraw, or attach. Curiosity is pure, in that it does not assume. It leaves room for a different experience.



"What everyone wants, without exception, is happiness." Pascal