



The Centre for Empowerment, Transformation and Growth

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By Lynda Stockwell M.S.W., R.S.W.

Communication issues arise regularly as the “identified problem” in couple therapy. Here’s some habits that can contribute positively to the longevity of your relationship.

1. Pay Attention:

At the beginning of a relationship, we are generally highly attentive to our partners. We notice details – body language, mood, and we also listen to what our partners are saying to us with great interest. Often, as a relationship matures, we stop paying so much attention. Naturally, we are out of the “getting to know you” stage, and as such, the *pursuit of knowing* declines.

If you truly want to improve the quality of your relationship, you need to go back to the ‘getting to know you’ attitude. Show some of the same curiosity and the *desire to know* that you did at an earlier time in the relationship. Each of us is constantly evolving and growing, so “getting to know” one another should continue throughout your relationship.

2. Really Listen:

Psychologist George A. Miller said, “To understand what another person is saying, you must assume that it is true and try to imagine what it could be true of.” Rather than to dispute or dismiss your partner’s words, which is most often an expression of your own defensiveness, try to understand why these words might be true for them. What does this mean *to them*? This approach will go a long way toward your understanding of your partner, it helps you to avoid conflict and it gives your partner the feeling of really *being heard*, addressing one of the top complaints I hear in therapy.

3. Don’t Judge or Personalize:

Do not tell your partner that his or her feelings are wrong, even if you do not see things the same way. This is the fastest way to close down a dialogue, and build hurt, anger and resentment. Instead, set about trying to understand how your partner came to have the feelings they do about the situation. Do not take them personally, even if they are about you. Your partner’s feelings belong to them, and in order to best understand those feelings, you need to take a step back from them – show curiosity about how these feelings developed, what their meaning is to your partner, and then, only when you truly understand the meaning, should you share the impact of those words on you.

4. Think About Intentionality:

What differentiates a ‘good’ relationship from a ‘bad’ one often revolves around the assignment of intentionality. If you go into any discussion with the assumption that your partner does not intend to hurt you or make you feel badly, then you can balance what you hear from them more easily. When your partner shares with you feelings that you don’t “like” or agree with, or expresses a request for change, you can respond much more positively if you remind yourself that he or she loves you, and in that love has no intention of hurt you. This can help you to think about what might be going on for them, instead of getting lost in your own “hurt” feelings. If you cannot make this very basic assumption in your relationship, then the relationship is indeed in very big trouble. Hopefully, one or all of these tips will help to make your relationship more harmonious and satisfying.

Lynda Stockwell is a Registered Clinical Social worker (M.S.W., R.S.W), who has been providing individual, couple and group therapy since 1990. She is a proud founding member of Aquility: The Centre for Empowerment, Transformation and Growth in Port Credit, and an active member of the Port Credit community.

Life is about Relationships By Patricia Butler B.Sc.

Perhaps the most important relationship of all is the relationship we need to have with ourselves – not the one we have been taught to have with ourselves. As children, most of us were taught to look to others in order to learn who we are and how we fit in. We learned to give our power away to others and to depend on them to define us. Doing this leaves us disconnected from our true selves, which means that we can't truly be who we are. As a result, we will struggle to understand what's going on for us and this confusion will make it difficult to create happiness in our lives.

True happiness comes from the freedom "to be". Creating a healthy relationship with ourselves can have its challenges. The following suggestions will help you learn how to connect with the real you, set healthy boundaries with others, make healthy choices for yourself, and be true to yourself.

1. Take at least an hour a day to meet with yourself and create a life plan that works for you. You are the C.E.O. of your life. If you do not attend these meetings, how will you know who you are and how you feel? What's important to you and what isn't?

2. Write yourself a note "I am worthy and loveable just as I am!" Read this note often and meditate on it. It's absolutely necessary that you see the truth in this note.

3. Get to know yourself really well. As you travel through the course of the day check in with yourself and see if you can determine how you are feeling. When we have ignored our feelings for a long period of time, it can be difficult to recognize them at first. Don't give up!

4. Don't judge your feelings. All of our feelings (including anger) are healthy and helpful. We need to understand them and learn to express them safely. For example, it's wrong to call people names or swear at them as this is disrespectful. It isn't wrong to confront someone who has crossed your boundaries!

5. Make a list of needs and wants. See how many of these needs and wants you can successfully fulfill yourself.

6. Check in with yourself regarding your hopes, your fears, your goals, your fantasies, your truth and your passions. Accept, without judgment, all aspects of your true self.

7. Honour your successes. Most of us tend to minimize our successes and maximize the less perfect things we say or do. By maximizing our successes, we are going to remember what we did well and build on our successes. As an added bonus, this approach allows us the self-confidence to accept our mistakes, learn from them and grow. After all, we are human and that means we are not perfect.

8. Meet regularly with your "Board of Directors" (Dr. Marla Shapiro) – usually good friends who are non-judgmental and supportive. This will allow you to "reality check" your perceptions and insights. Over time, this process will help you to trust yourself first and foremost and learn when to trust others.

Patricia is a founding member of the Aquility Centre and received her degree from Sociology from York university and then completed an internship at The Hotel Dieu Hospital in Kingston. She has worked with a variety of issues over the years but has developed a special interest in helping people develop high self-esteem and work towards achieving their dreams.

OUR MISSION

In a supportive, non-judgmental and safe atmosphere, we, at the Aquility Centre, are committed to help and encourage people to open new doors and discover their own inner wisdom that will instill a new confidence and passion for life.

Our services at Aquility include:

Counselling and Psychotherapy for individuals, couples and families, Hypnotherapy and Neuro-linguistic Programming, Psycho-educational groups for women, Meditation groups, Professional Speakers for community events and Workshop facilitation

At Aquility we offer:

Free Initial Consultation

Day, Evening and Weekend appointments

Same week service in most cases

Excellent Location in the heart of beautiful Port Credit

Professional, Confidential and culturally sensitive service

LGBTT +

Improve your relationships by reducing Stress and Anxiety

By Fabiola Miguel, Certified Hypnotherapist, Master NLP practitioner

Stress and Anxiety seem to be the plague of our time. Nearly 80% of diseases are Stress related.. But Stress and Anxiety can also affect our relationships in many ways because sufferers can develop negative feelings and habits such as Sadness, Depression, Anger Negative Thinking, Worrying too much, Drinking, Smoking or Eating as a way to relax, Irritability, Sleeping too much, Insomnia low energy, lack of interest and concentration which can make it a real challenge for family members, friends or co-workers.

If you, or someone close to you suffers from a High level of Stress or Anxiety, it is important to take action and develop a plan. These days, many doctors suggest alternative treatments to treat the problem as a complement to medical treatment. While it is true that we cannot completely remove stress from our lives, it may be possible for most of us, to have a healthy level of stress that can give us the energy we need to complete tasks or the motivation to achieve goals.

Here are some things you can start doing now:

- Learn Stress Management Techniques to relax mentally like breathing techniques, Hypnosis and meditation.
- Be more aware of your thoughts and replace negative thoughts with positive ones
- Realize that the day only has 24 hours and there is so much you can do so make your health one your top priorities.
- If possible, identify the cause of your stress or anxiety
- Focus more on the present, rather than the past or future.
- Exercise regularly to get a better sense of well-being and empowerment.
- Learn to prioritize and manage time better.
- If you suffer from chronic stress or anxiety, maybe it is time to seek professional help.

When worrying or stressing have been a long-term behaviours and nothing seems to help, Hypnotherapy can be a good complimentary treatment to get to the root of the problem and establish new healthy positive behaviours and new ways of thinking and reacting to problems and situations.

According to **Newsweek** magazine: "Despite widely held misconceptions about hypnosis (in part because of its long history as a type of entertainment), a growing body of research supports the ancient practice as an **effective tool in the treatment of a variety of problems, from anxiety to chronic pain**. Today, as practitioners work to assess and refine the clinical applications of hypnosis, they are also exploring its underlying mechanisms, using state-of-the-art imaging technology to document changes in the brain that occur when someone is in a hypnotic state. This increased understanding of how hypnosis works and what it does makes it a legitimate option for patients whose needs have not been met by more traditional methods."

Fabiola is a Certified Advanced Hypnotherapist and Neurolinguistic Programming Master practitioner. She is a founding member of the Aquility Center and helps people reprogram their minds to get rid of unwanted behaviours, develop healthier habits and achieve their goals.

Some of the Hypnotherapy Services offered at Aquility:

Stop Smoking, Lose Weight, Stress and anxiety Release, Stop nail Biting, Overcome fears or Phobias, Increase Motivation and Confidence, Hypnosis audios and mp3s downloads available for sale.

Corporate Workshops

Relaxation, Stop Smoking and Weight Loss workshops can be available at your place of employment.

Please contact Fabiola to request more information
Tel. 905-277-1113

"Every moment of your life is infinitely creative and the universe is endlessly bountiful. Just put forth a clear enough request and everything your heart desires must come to you".

Mahatma Gandhi

To Receive our Newsletter by email send a message to:
newsletter@aquility.ca

FORGIVENESS QUOTES

Paul Boese

Forgiveness does not change the past, but it does enlarge the future.

Les Brown

Forgive yourself for your faults and your mistakes and move on. As forgiveness allows love to return to my awareness, I will see a world of peace and safety and joy.

Norman Cousins

Life is an adventure in forgiveness

Mahatma Gandhi

The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong. If we practice and eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, soon the whole world will be blind and toothless

George Herbert

He that cannot forgive others, breaks the bridge over which he himself must pass if he would ever reach heaven; for everyone has need to be forgiven.

Martin Luther King

Forgiveness is not an occasional act. It is a permanent attitude.

Marianne Williamson

Forgiveness does not mean that we suppress anger; forgiveness means that we have asked for a miracle: the ability to see through mistakes that someone has made to the truth that lies in all of our hearts. Forgiveness is not always easy. At times, it feels more painful than the wound we suffered, to forgive the one that inflicted it. And yet, there is no peace without forgiveness. Attack thoughts towards others are attack thoughts towards ourselves. The first step in forgiveness is the willingness to forgive.

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FEELING GOOD: A WOMAN'S GROWTH GROUP

Would you like to feel better about YOU?

Do you have difficulty expressing your feelings, especially anger and hurt? Do you question yourself and your own perceptions?

Do you have difficulty making important decisions?

Do you tend to take on too much and then feel exhausted and unappreciated?

Would you like to have more fulfilling relationships?

If so, then this is the program for you.

In a small group of women who are experiencing similar feelings, you will learn skills and strategies to help you to make critical changes in your life. This program will move you forward in your life and help you to live more authentically.

The cost is \$300.00 for the ten two hour sessions. Payment plans can be arranged. Fees cover the sessions, refreshments and handouts for each session.

Next group will be starting in **November**, and registration is now open to get your name on the waiting list.

Please contact:
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