

Relationship Tool Kit

The Four Horsemen – that will poison relationships

1. Criticism
2. Contempt
3. Defensiveness
4. Stonewalling

The 5 to 1 rule for successful relationships

There are 5 good encounters for every 1 that is bad.

SO BREAK THE OLD PATTERNS – WHAT CAN YOU DO OR SAY OR THINK OR FEEL THAT WOULD BE DIFFERENT?

If you want something you have never had, then you must do something you have never done.

Communication guidelines

- Be calm – and so have awareness and if needed, ask for time outs
- Be specific – avoid generalisations
- Avoid blame and who is right discussions
- Acknowledge your partner's feelings and point of view
Speak non-defensively by changing your mindset of your partner
Use your imagination to creatively put yourself in your partner's place
- Be accountable for the things you say and do.
- Stay with the recent past when you talk about your problems
- Catch your partner doing something right and give them credit for it
- Find pleasurable activities to do together.
- **Practice Reflective Listening** – repeating back what your partner has said before it is your turn.

And remember

- Men and women do have different thinking and feeling styles
Men are specific, solution orientated and get on with things or when aroused want to be alone.
They worry more about status and are less comfortable with emotion.
Women will talk more, enjoy equality in relationships, be more comfortable with emotions and can multitask better.
- What it was that attracted you to your partner
Recall and feel again those good times.
- Ask yourself the tail end questions
If my relationship improved, then the consequence for me would be . . .
What am I afraid of if this relationship improved?
What would I have to give up and what would I get?

It is so easy and a natural human trait to focus on what is wrong that we often forget or downplay what is good. So begin to open your mind to notice and acknowledge the good in both the past and present of your relationship