

## Relationship Tool Kit

**The Four Horsemen – that will poison relationships**  
**Criticism, Contempt, Defensiveness and 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 THAT WOULD BE DIFFERENT?**  
*If you want something you have never had, then you must do something you have never done.*

**Building friendship – Getting it right and developing Positive Sentiment Override**  
Working on your partner's **love map** by asking questions and showing interest  
**Building fondness** by showing respect and saying thank you for the small things  
**Making bids** for connection and attention and so turning towards.  
**This builds passion, romance and good sex and allows the easy repair of the relationship**

**All relationships have their unique perpetual problems that reflect values, experiences and habits.**

The key question is for both partners: can you live with them or not?  
Can you become a dream catcher, which means building love maps at a deeper level? And then you can be gentle, accept influence and move towards compromise. **And then you create shared meaning.**

### 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