

Relationship Rehab Show

Episode 40: Multiple Ways to Ruin a Relationship

I have spent most of the past 28 years teaching couples how to have a healthy, loving, lasting marriage. It occurred to me yesterday that there might be value in pointing out the behaviors that can be counted on to damage or ruin a relationship!

POOR COMMUNICATION METHODS: If you want a fairly comprehensive list of disrespectful methods of communicating, go to www.RelationshipRehabShow.com and email me asking for the “Communication Inventory.” Here are just a few common ways that always create hurt feelings, defensiveness and can escalate an argument.

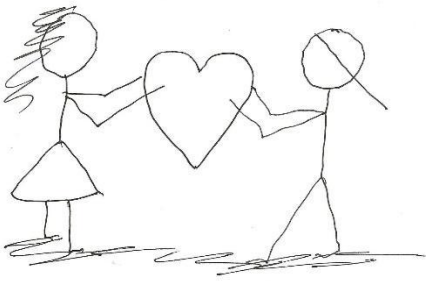
Accusatory “You” statements such as “You left the lights on,” or masked as a question, “Why did you....?” Accusatory “you” messages are attacking, feel judgmental, and nearly always prompt a defensive reply.

Defensiveness: “No, I didn’t!” or, “I didn’t mean to,” only add fuel to whatever fire is brewing.

The use of “always, never, every time, whenever” are called absolutes. The use of absolutes will “ALWAYS” trigger a rebuttal, denial or defensiveness. Rarely is something “always” true so temper your absolutes with words like “frequently” or “sometimes” to reduce the negative reactions.

Giving unasked-for advice will often be offensive. The unspoken message with advice is, “I’m smarter than you. You need my help with this issue.” Notice that your unsolicited advice will often shut down communication. The receiver may just want to be heard or comforted. If you have something of value to contribute, ask for permission before delivering your ideas.

COMPLAINTS AND CRITICISMS: If a complaint is serious enough that you want a change from your partner, ask for a discussion about the issue. DO NOT complain to your children, your friends or your partner’s family! Going outside of your marriage to “air dirty laundry” weakens the sacred boundary of the relationship.



The relationship between you is a living entity that needs and deserves loyalty that protects it from the interference of those who have no power to benefit your relationship. Furthermore, putting your children or either of your family members between the two of you is unfair to them. Their impulse is either to take sides or offer advice, both reactions that cannot help any situation.

More than one of my clients has “run home” to unload about how unfairly they are being treated...always with disastrous results. If things are that bad, seek out professional help.

Complaints and criticisms directed at your partner in attacking language only damages the other’s self-esteem and creates emotional distance between you.

DIRECT FLIRTATIOUS ATTENTION AT ANOTHER: It doesn’t have to be a full-blown affair to damage the integrity of your relationship. “Harmless flirtations” either online or in person are giving attention that belongs to your partner to someone outside of your relationship. Again, a violation of the boundary that is designed to protect your love.

UNCONTROLLED ANGER: Don’t expect your partner to love you more when you vent your anger with ugly language or silent withdrawal. The ugly language doesn’t even have to be directed at you to inflict damage to the relationship. The [“How to Stay Married & Love It!”](#) book has several chapters about how to manage anger safely and it’s covered in **MODULE SIX** of www.MillionaireMarriageClub.com

If you want your marriage or relationship to thrive, weed these things out of your behaviors! The relationship thrives when you contribute respectful behaviors to it.

There are lots of resources to help you at: www.RelationshipRehabCoach.com

You have my love and support,

Nancy Landrum