



Addressing  
communication  
patterns and  
problems in a  
relationship.

## Couples Communication

Do you....

- ◆ **Feel your relationship is more difficult than it should be?**
- ◆ **Find simple conversations become explosive arguments? Sometimes? Always?**
- ◆ **Feel your spouse doesn't understand you...& you don't understand your spouse?**
- ◆ **Avoid your spouse because you're afraid a certain topic will be discussed?**
- ◆ **Feel as if you're repeating the same mistakes you've made in the past?**
- ◆ **Regret things you've said in an argument?**
- ◆ **Believe talking won't do any good, because it never has?**
- ◆ **Feel something's missing in your marriage?**
- ◆ **Feel isolated and alone, even if together?**
- ◆ **Desire to understand your partner in a deeper, fuller way?**

- ◆ **Want your relationship to be easier?**
- ◆ **Desire a more fulfilling relationship?**

*If you identify with these questions, it may indicate a desire to improve your relationship.* Having a fulfilling, intimate relationship may not be as easy as we think it should be or would be. Relationships require nurturing and communication. Conversations between two people may become difficult, especially if there are feelings of hurt, anger, betrayal, insecurity, guilt or fear.

There are many different reasons why communications within a relationship may need help. From childhood, boys and girls are often influenced by culture and society to develop different ways of expression. Adults model their own family's style of communication when dealing with problems. When each partner has his or her own style of working things out; it may result in unresolved issues. Over time, patterns develop in the way a couple relates to each another, which may be productive or destructive. Often, there is a lack of understanding about effectively applying communication to real life. Communication breaks down when trust has been affected through infidelity, misunderstanding, dishonesty, violence or when the hectic, everyday pressures of life prevent time together to deepen relationships.

Unfortunately, many couples believe they will never be able to have the relationship they desire so they delay seeing a therapist until they

are ready to walk out the door. It's important to address problems and concerns as they occur. You **can** learn to talk to your spouse and find fulfillment in your relationship. You can have the relationship you want, but it takes some effort and a willingness to make needed changes on the part of both partners.

Couples counseling focuses on building strengths in your marriage, developing new ways to relate to one another, and addressing unresolved issues or patterns in your relationship. An experienced, 'third party', such as a professional therapist, will objectively facilitate conversations when couples are unable to do so alone. A therapist helps you learn more effective ways to talk to one another and solve problems.

Couples counseling may be appropriate when a couple desires to improve their relationship, when couples are contemplating marriage, when facing life changes, when there are problems in the bedroom, with children or with other family members, or if it seems the relationship or time together isn't as good as it could be.

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