

Personal Relationship Values

In relationships, just as in every other aspect of life, the spirit and attitude with which you do things is at least as important as your actual actions. Embrace and incorporate these powerful values, and you will start living with more integrity, honesty, compassion and enthusiasm. This, in turn, will breathe new life into your relationship.

Own Your Own Relationship

You are fully accountable for your relationship. You can never again believe you're a martyr suffering in your relationship because of an unworthy partner. Only when you stop seeing yourself as a victim will you start to see yourself as a fully competent and potent force in your relationship.

Accept the Risk of Vulnerability

Do not let fear paralyze your life. Wanting, reaching out and letting yourself hope make you vulnerable. At least by putting yourself on the line, you have the chance of getting what you want, as opposed to hurting with no chance of getting what you want. Not to venture is to lose yourself.

Accept Your Partner

If your partner experiences in you the spirit of acceptance, then it is most likely that he/she will find you approachable. Two partners who are moving toward each other, rather than both trying to seek safety from pain, have a dramatically improved chance of reconciliation.

Focus on Friendship

You have to take a step back from the problems and pain of your intimate interactions, and focus on your partner's positive qualities. Turn back the clock and recall what it was that started the friendship that matured into an intimate relationship.

Promote Your Partner's Self-Esteem

You must bring the spirit of acceptance into affirmative, interactive action. Find the courage and creativity to promote and protect your partner's self-esteem, even when you feel compelled to be critical. By using the value of self-esteem, you provide a much more nurturing atmosphere, one your partner will not want to abandon.

Aim Your Frustrations in the Right Direction

Work at sorting out the causes of your frustration, and resist the impulsive temptation to pick at your partner. Once you start seeing

that the negative things you perceive in your partner are often things you see in yourself, you will literally alter the nature of your interactions with your partner.

Be Up Front and Forthright

Nothing can be more frustrating than what is referred to as an incongruent communication, where an individual says one thing yet indicates something dramatically different with his or her nonverbal conduct. Strive to express your feelings in a mature and responsible way. By being honest about your emotions, you base your relationship upon integrity rather than lies and deception.

Make Yourself Happy Instead of Right

Start evaluating the things you do in your relationship based on whether those thoughts, feelings and actions are working. For example, you don't have to prove over and over that you know what you're talking about more than your partner. Instead, choose a different emotion such as tolerance, understanding or compassion that does not escalate hostility in your relationship. By deciding to be happy rather than right, you will be receptive to your partner's attempts to de-escalate hostility and return to civil interactions.

Allow Your Relationship to Transcend Turmoil

Rough times and arguments happen, and one way or another, they are going to impact the relationship. You must vow to no longer use threats as a lever to manipulate and control your partner. By doing so, you are setting a clear limit on the places a spirited discussion with your partner will not go.

Put Motion Into Your Emotion

You must turn the concept of love into a proactive behavior. Don't be so consumed with negative messages that your expectations are low. You must require yourself and your relationship to truly be better.