



5 Things to STOP DOING When Your Relationship is Troubled

By Nina Potter, Marriage Crisis Coach

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Introduction

Dear One,

Thank you for taking steps now to start creating more love in your relationship!

If your love partnership is troubled, there are things you're probably doing that need to STOP before you can turn things around to make them better.

I've discovered from enough failed relationships in the past and the subsequent research that it inspired, that there are some basic mistakes *you* don't have to make when armed with the right information.

If you're experiencing a lack of connection, repeated drama, unfaithfulness and other relationship-busting symptoms like fighting or getting the cold shoulder, you need to take immediate action to STOP doing the things that are turning them *off* and making things *worse*!

Here are 5 of the biggest mistakes you need to avoid to keep your relationship from spiraling downward:

- Ignore the issue thinking it will go away
- Complain endlessly about your partner to everyone you know
- Corner your partner and insist on talking about it
- Brood and Sulk and act all hurt and victimized
- Panic
- Bonus one to read at the end

DON'T...

1) Ignore the issue thinking it will go away

In most cases the only thing that will ultimately go away is you or your partner! If you don't take the right steps to improve it now, it will come back around again. Each time it does, it will get worse than it is now until it's just too late to do anything about it.

If you allow resentments and grudges to grow and fester they will rot your relationship from the inside out. You or your partner may be very willing to make the necessary changes if they're known and clarified and presented in a loving, respectful way.

Learn the *correct* attitudes and communication styles to prevent misperceptions, wrong assumptions, or those dreaded stonewalling shut downs. Know how to gently and respectfully assert boundaries.

Work together as a TEAM on the issue. Take responsibility (not 'blame') for your part and don't see your partner as an adversary. They probably aren't doing anything 'To' you as much as they are doing something 'For' themselves.

DON'T...

2) Complain endlessly about your partner to everyone you know or anyone who will listen

Thoughts are Things; the Law of Attraction will kick in and you'll create *more* of what you *don't* want instead of what you really *do* want. The next time you're tempted to complain about your loved one (often because someone *else* is complaining about theirs) use the opportunity to think about and express something you actually *appreciate* about them instead.

You do want a happy, healthy, loving relationship, right? So only make your complaints to the person who can actually DO something about it (this works in the workplace too!). To make things even better, make it a request instead of a complaint.

When you tell others about your relationship issues, you undermine your emotional intimacy with your partner. When they find out what you've been saying behind their back, you now have a whole *new* issue of betrayal to deal with. Don't think they won't find out, they're energetically connected to you and they can sense it even if they don't know what it actually is.

Once you and your partner get things ironed out, all those people you told will have a jaundiced view of your partner and they won't be supportive of your newly improved relationship or your beloved. It's none of their business anyway, so if you need to vent or talk things out to get clarity, find a neutral third party who doesn't know your partner and won't ever meet them.

DON'T...

3) Corner your partner and insist on talking about it

Until you've beaten them down or chased them away if talking about it hasn't worked in the past or isn't working now (which is probably the case!).

They don't want to talk about it, they want it to get better. Start by reconnecting emotionally first and get them open and receptive and show them the love and gratitude you have for them *first*. Ask yourself what you're mad *at them* for not doing that you aren't doing for yourself.

Talking about it makes them feel bad (especially when you blame, shame and accuse them of being wrong). Remember there are always two perceptions in the situation and you're both right even when you don't agree. I would submit that if you're disagreeing; *by definition*, you're both right.

If they don't want to talk about it and you keep trying, It pushes them *further* away and further hurts your chances of creating lasting growth and closeness.

They will feel emotionally *unsafe* spending time alone with you. They will start avoiding alone time and will avoid being present when you are alone. (Think TV, internet, work, kids, friends, exercise, etc.)

You look extremely unattractive to your partner when you are perceived to be whining and complaining. This also hurts your chances for resolution and growth.

DON'T...

4) Brood and Sulk and act all Hurt and Victimized

This drives them *further* away!

They can't read your mind and it will make you crazy trying to get them to when they really *can't*. When you play the 'silent treatment' game, you only end up hurting yourself in the long run. If you haven't let them know what it is you really want in a clear and unambiguous way, then politely make a specific request and give them a chance to do it. If you told them and they agreed to do it, then find out what prevents them from wanting to do it for you.

No one likes to be around an unhappy person. It's just no fun. If you just can't get yourself out of a resentful mood, get yourself out of their space before they notice they don't like you right now. Go for a walk, a drive, to the gym or visit a friend (your friends probably don't like you brooding and sulking either). Avoid eating and shopping as they tend to create relationship problems down the road when you gain weight or have financial stress!

Ask yourself "What am I mad at them for doing that *I'm* doing or have done in the past myself?" Anytime you have your finger pointed at someone, notice you have 3 fingers pointing back at yourself. We tend to react the most to those qualities or behaviors that we either dislike in ourselves or have disowned in our self.

You know those past behaviors you did that make you cringe to think about? Those are likely to show up in your life over and over until you forgive and accept yourself.

You need to genuinely LIKE yourself in order to be attractive (and irresistible!) to your partner. When you take the time to look *inward* instead of blaming others for your unhappiness (or non well-being), you create the opportunity to actually create the love and the life you've always wanted.

DON'T...

5) Panic (sounds like the title of a great App from “The Hitchhiker’s Guide to The Galaxy”)

Your knee jerk reactions will *not* be well thought out. You want calm, measured responses to situations that will allow you to create the outcome you desire; not a drama sequence that makes the problem worse. The only way to disrupt unhealthy patterns between you is to stop feeding into them.

Manipulation and Game Playing will backfire and are not representative of your inner integrity. You need to be focused on who you want to be so you aren’t acting out behaviors that will cause you to not like yourself.

Avoid the temptation to be clingy and follow them around like an eager puppy. It makes you seem pathetic and undesirable at a time when you most need to shine the true light of who you really are.

Bonus Don't...

6) Criticize them in front of others

I made this very fatal mistake in my first marriage and 25 years later I'm still a bit embarrassed but am forgiving myself as I no longer feel deep shame about it.

I honestly thought that if I criticized him in front of others, it would get his attention and he would (finally) hear me and do or don't do whatever it was I wanted. Of course, I was also doing all the other Don'ts listed above so there really wasn't much chance of him *wanting* to cooperate. You may guess (and you would be right) that the public humiliation didn't do much for the love in our relationship and certainly didn't get my wants or needs met.

We all do the best we can given our model of the world and our own up-bringing, perceptions, personality characteristics, fears, and desires. We model what we observed in our parents and that means we're bringing a lot of differences into the relationship.

I like to think of a lack of knowledge or judgment as similar to a baby pooping in its diaper. It doesn't know any different and it can't do much different given its level of development. As the baby grows and develops it has new awareness and capabilities and only then does it have more choices.

We might not like that we have to deal with the poop but we don't blame and criticize the baby for it. We (hopefully) patiently teach and affirm right behaviors that are helpful and there isn't even a *need* for forgiveness. We might be peeved that they do it right as we're walking out the door (late again) but we don't hold a grudge with deep resentments against the baby. We help them grow and evolve and we celebrate their wins like they are our own.

Bring an attitude of unconditional love (for yourself *and* your partner) to your relationship and work at not making these 6 Big Mistakes that send you into a downward spiral. Play more and love more and remember that happiness is an inside job. No one can 'make you happy', only you can.

Final Word

Do you want to learn more about the RIGHT things to do and HOW to do them when your relationship is struggling? Do you need help learning how to stay calm and focused when you're in an emotional storm? Do you want to learn how to grow together to make your relationship blossom into something more beautiful than it's ever been before?

Call, text, or email to schedule a consultation with me to assess your situation and get a plan for restoring your relationship to a state that's better than it's *ever been!*

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