Maintaining and repairing relationships

Conflict management
Achieving simpatico
How do you feel about conflict?

- Toxic, and to be avoided
- Inevitable, and to be managed
- Volatile, and to be minimized
- Exciting; bring it on!
Options for responding to conflict

- Withdrawing
- Capitulating
- Competing
- Compromising
- Collaborating

High

Low

Steve Covey, *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, 1989
Relationships that stand the test of time

- Commitment
- Having a long-term view of the relationship
- A sense of companionship
- Communication, the ability to express themselves in a constructive way
- The ability to manage conflict, change and adversity
Suggestions for fair fighting

1. Conflict can provoke eustress or distress.
2. Fighting and loving are not mutually exclusive.
3. Mental game playing is not fair fighting.
4. Focus upon the present issue at hand.
5. Considerate fighters are honorable, graceful, and empathic.
6. Communication is not a panacea.
Suggestions for fair fighting

7. Fight only if things will improve.

8. Take responsibility for your feelings and actions.

9. To every thing, there is a time.

10. Compromise, capitulation, and competition only manage a conflict. Collaboration resolves it.

11. Sometimes things are bigger than we are.

12. When you’re wrong, apologize and mean it.

Nan Peck
Stages of relationships

- Sparkle/limerant (p. 219 Harvey & Weber)
- Disillusionment
- Mutual acceptance, “love in plain clothes” (p. 215 H&W)
Predictors of success/failure

- Harsh Startup
- Flooding
- Physiological Changes
- Failed Repair Attempts
- Bad Memories
- Four Horsemen

John Gottman and Nan Silver
The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work, 1999
• Criticism

• Contempt

• Defensiveness

• Stonewalling

John Gottman
Problematic behaviors

Gottman’s 4 horsemen
- Criticism
- Contempt
- Defensiveness
- Stonewalling

Covey’s 6 cancers that inhibit people’s greatness
- Cynicism
- Criticism
- Comparing
- Competing
- Complaining
- Contending
Relational repair

• Use prosocial communication (be positive)
• Use direct metacommunication
• Take responsibility for the transgression
• Demonstrate a willingness to engage in problem solving

It takes five positive interactions to undo the impact of one negative interaction.

John Gottman
*What Predicts Divorce?* 1994
Repair after a transgression

Paradoxical quality to forgiveness:

Forgiver gives up resentment, to which s/he has a right

Forgiver gives the gift of compassion, to which the offender has no right.

If a person doesn’t believe that the partner will change the hurtful behavior, forgiveness is unlikely.

ACHIEVING SIMPATICO
Establishing rapport

- Mutual attention
- Shared positive feeling
- Well-coordinated nonverbal duet

Ending relationships

NEXT WEEK
"He could not hurt a fly," Megan McAllister said in an e-mail to ABC's "Good Morning America. "All I have to say is Philip is a beautiful person, inside and out," she said in the e-mail read on Tuesday's program.
**Physical Violence**
- Use Coercion and Threats
  - Make threats to hurt her
  - Make her drop charges
  - Make her do illegal things
  - Threaten to leave her, to commit suicide, to report her to welfare

**Sexual Violence**
- Use Intimidation
  - Make her afraid
  - Smash things
  - Display weapons
  - Destroy property
  - Abuse pets

**Economic Abuse**
- Prevent her from a job
- Make her ask for money
- Give her an allowance
- Not let her know about or have access to family income
- Take her money

**Emotional Abuse**
- Put her down
- Make her feel bad and guilty
- Call her names
- Humiliate her
- Make her think she is crazy
- Play mind games

**Male Privilege**
- Be the one to define men's and women's roles
- Make all the big decisions
- Treat her like a servant
- Act like the master of the castle

**Use Children**
- Make her feel guilty about the children
- Use the children to relay messages
- Use visitation to harass her
- Threaten to take the children away

**Isolation**
- Control what she does, who she sees and talks to, what she reads, where she goes
- Limits her outside involvement
- Use jealousy to justify actions

**Deny, Blame & Minimize**
- Make light of the abuse
- Not take her concerns seriously
- Say the abuse didn’t happen
- Shift the responsibility
- Say she caused it

Adapted from
Domestic Abuse Intervention Project
206 West Fourth Street
Duluth, MN 55806
The cycle of violence

http://www.aedv.org

http://www.hsvcity.com/police/
Words of advice

Don't sweat the petty things. Don't pet the sweaty things.
Problems in a marriage may increase your risk of getting sick by 35 percent and reduce your life expectancy by four years.

For singles, stress can be created during the search for a significant other.
"Working briefly on your marriage every day will do more for your health and longevity than working out at a health club."

John Gottman, a psychologist at the University of Washington in Seattle
Judith Morton Fraser, M.F.T.
Marriage and Family Therapist

OR WHATEVER YOUR DECISION IS ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP.

Academic Disciplines: Psychology, Sociology
Course: Introduction to Psychology, Introduction to Social Psychology, Human Rel
Topics: Love
Time: Present

Description:
Many relationships seem almost effortless in the early stages. But making the transition from pure chemistry and romance to something deeper and longer-lasting can be a challenge.

Featured Experts:
Cheung, Ilin, Ed.D., California State University, Northridge
Fraser, Judith Morton, M.F.T.
Golant, Diane, Ph.D., California State University, Northridge
Couples often describe the middle stage of married life as not better or worse, just different. Being in a loving, committed relationship benefits health and longevity, emotional well-being, sexual satisfaction, financial and career achievement, and their children's lives. As couples age together, their long-term relationship often reverts to the closeness they had in their earlier years. It is a time to focus on each other and the richness of their life together.
The Anger Habit in Relationships

- End argument starters with communication starters
- Understand why you fight and how you can avoid fighting
- Identify your self-importance in your major relationships
- Cultivate gratitude in your relationship
- Learn to wait for the anger to leave when trying to resolve problems
- Get rid of old habitual unhappiness and shortening your laundry list of hurts that make you unhappy
- Recognize that angry feelings from your body are different from your angry thoughts; recognize what your angry partner wants and what your anger wants
- Turn judgmental thinking into factual thinking
- Increase interactive conversation with your partner

Carl Semmelroth