



The 15 biggest mistakes

people make when trying to rescue
their

relationship

And what to do instead...

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Introduction

People don't come with an operator's manual. Very often our upbringing is hit or miss if there isn't a grandmother around who learned child-rearing from her mother before her. Today's parents are all about two careers, two incomes and a lot of recreation.

Relationships don't come with operator's manuals either. The current generation, the "me-too" kids, had no one from whom they could learn about "hooking up." Their parents, most of them children of the sixties, were oftentimes so into themselves and so anti-establishment in their youth that they were poorly-equipped to provide good relationship examples for their children.

So as a result, we now have a bunch of neophytes who are ambling towards separation and divorce as fast as their Nikes will take them. More than half of their marriages will end in divorce. Two-thirds of their second marriages will end the same way and three-quarters of their third marriages are goners, too.

No one today, it seems, knows much about keeping a marriage or any relationship together. It's a wonder that the divorce rate isn't closer to one hundred percent. Fortunately, though, there is enough love and passion to go around, and that is the glue that binds couples together until they learn how to manage a partnership.

There are a lot of mistakes made in relationships. We are going to cover the top 15 in this book. Think of it as an operator's manual for relationships. We are also going to look at solutions to these mistakes. We will consider moves that couples today have to make if their relationships are to remain healthy. These are things that very few people today learn by observing their parents and other couples in the family.

Mistake 1: Difficulty dealing with depression

Clinical studies and surveys of married couples indicate that the single largest problem in most relationships is depression in one of the partners. We are not talking about a bad mood or PMS; we are talking about depression so severe that it causes personal and relationship problems.

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Depression is a recognized disease, and is much more than just moodiness. People who are clinically depressed are so down that their thoughts are often of suicide. Depression can be caused by a number of things: a hereditary tendency to be moody, emotional or unbalanced; a severe emotional trauma like a death in the family; poor self-esteem and a lack of self-worth; drug or alcohol addiction; career problems or upsets, or a number of other potential contributing factors.

According to the “DSM-IV”, the manual used to diagnose mental disorders, depression occurs when someone has five or more of the following symptoms at the same time:

- * A depressed mood during most of the day, most evident in the morning
- * A feeling of fatigue and lack of energy every day
- * Feelings of worthlessness or guilt nearly every day
- * Inability to concentrate
- * Indecisiveness, even regarding simple decisions
- * Insomnia or hypersomnia (excessive sleeping) almost every day
- * Noticeably diminished interest in normal activities
- * Recurring thoughts of death or suicide
- * Restlessness, psychomotor agitation or retardation of activity
- * Significant weight loss or gain of more than five percent in a month

If five or more of these signs are apparent for more than two weeks it is considered to be clinical or major depression. None of these symptoms should be attributable to drugs or other medication to be considered part of the depression. Also, if these symptoms occur within two months of the loss of a loved one, they usually won't be diagnosed as depression.

Minor attacks of depression will usually be characterized by some or all of the following symptoms. The severity, frequency and duration of the attack will vary from individual to individual:

- * Difficulty concentrating, remembering details or making decisions
- * Decreased energy and fatigue
- * Feelings of guilt or worthlessness
- * Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism
- * Insomnia or excessive sleeping
- * Loss of interest in hobbies or other formerly pleasurable activities
- * Irritability

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- * Apparent loss of pleasure in life in general
- * Overeating or loss of appetite
- * Frequent and persistent aches and pains
- * Digestive problems

The last type of depression is bipolar or manic depression. Bipolar 1 occurs when someone has at least one manic – extremely high or elated – episode. Bipolar 2 occurs when someone has at least one hypo-manic – mildly high or elated – episode. Both sexes experience the same symptoms of this misunderstood affliction.

One of the biggest mistakes made in relationships is not dealing properly with a depressed partner. Sympathy and understanding are crucial. It's important to engage the depressed partner in some form of pleasurable physical activity as this promotes an improved feeling of self-worth.

Most depression is treated with drugs; antidepressants or mood levelers like Prozac are often prescribed. Some feel, however, that there is a tendency in Western medicine to just medicate a person's symptoms instead of treating the underlying causes of the disorder. In these cases, there are some natural remedies like St. John's Wort and Omega-3 fatty acids that can be good alternatives to standard pharmaceuticals.

If your partner shows symptoms of depression for any noticeable amount of time, encourage them to seek medical treatment. Be gentle with them and encourage them to seek activities involving interaction with other people. Try and reassure them that you are not the cause of their depression, though they may try to blame you or other outside sources for their problem.

If it is within your control, try to remove any possible causes of your partner's depression. Sometimes a change in location will help. Try a pleasurable vacation spot, or someplace that evokes fond memories.

Mistake 2: Not sharing pleasurable activities

The second most common complaint about relationships is a lack of shared interests and activities. Sometimes we get so involved in our careers and forms

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of personal gratification, like playing sports or being sports event spectators, that we forget to involve our partners.

Men, don't spend all of your free time with your buddies – fishing, playing golf or going to the ballpark. Ladies, don't spend all of your free time with your girlfriends – shopping, schmoozing or hanging out without your mates.

The quality of a relationship is measured by how well it meets the needs of all of those involved in it. An occasional meal together and a little sex do not make a relationship.

Being together and enjoying activities is part of a healthy partnership. It is about shared activities, shared friends and families, and having fun together. Develop some hobbies together, play sports, go boating, or go camping or hiking.

Ladies, go to the ballpark with your men, and even if you know all about the game, let them play the “expert” and tell you all about the intricacies of the sport. It's a guy thing that they think they are the only gender with sports interests.

Men, learn to like shopping (well, that might never happen, so you can probably leave that to her girlfriends). But at least learn to like some of the things she does. A relationship should have some common interests. There are many activities that you can enjoy together, such as music events -- the symphony, the ballet, the opera, or a rock concert.

Mistake 3: taking your partner for granted

As partners become familiar over time, some of them tend to take their mates for granted and don't pay them the attention they deserve. They don't pay homage to the relationship and to the importance of their partner in their lives.

The person being taken for granted begins to feel excluded and finds other outside interests and soon each partner has developed a separate life and they drift apart. These couples often stay together, but they begin focusing on their own individual interests, friendships and activities for pleasure and entertainment.

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A relationship is a partnership and each person must contribute an equal amount of effort in order for it to be meaningful. If there is an imbalance of commitment and effort, the party putting forth most of the work begins to feel abused and often becomes resentful.

Both parties in the relationship must work at keeping the other as the central point of their lives. Make a point to think positive thoughts about your mate. Keep their picture on your desk, on the sun visor in your car, and in your purse or wallet.

Make yourself notes to do little acts of kindness, like bringing unexpected flowers or fixing a favorite dessert. Remember birthdays and your anniversary, of course. Surprise your sweetheart with a mini-vacation or a weekend in the country. It is the little things that keep the romance alive and well.

Remember all the little things your partner likes, as well as the big events. Make your intimacy an adventure at times by doing something your partner likes that's different.

Men, you usually have the biggest problem with these little things. Women are generally much more thoughtful and caring, but guys can be a little obtuse at times. Well guys, you know how you keep a calendar of business events and happenings in your “daily planner” or in your contact management program in your computer? Well, be sure to put in your partner’s important dates and make some notes for surprise gifts and events for her. It will go a long way towards making her happy and it will pay huge dividends when you remember birthdays, anniversaries and a few surprise bouquets.

Mistake 4: Weak communication

Many people think that communication should be the number one most important issue in a relationship. Nonetheless, many surveys of married couples and long-term partners cite dealing with depression and addressing the lack of fun in the relationship as more critical for maintaining the health of your partnership.

Men and women sometimes seem to speak a different language. We may say the same things but mean something altogether different. It could be because

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we think with different parts of our brains and respond to things with different emotions.

In the early phases of our relationships we are “in discovery” and are making contact on most of the same levels. As the passion subsides a bit, we have to open new levels of communication. We have to try and understand the other person and how they communicate their desires, their wishes, their feelings and even their contentment.

We all have different ways of expressing ourselves and part of the wonder of discovery with a partner is learning all of these means of expression. We also have to expose our wants, desires and feelings with each other as well so that we're sharing our most intimate details.

This is private communication of the most secret sort, so none of it should be shared outside the relationship. Nothing will harm a relationship more than for someone to learn that their very personal feelings and memories have been shared with their partner's friends or relatives. And believe me, it will often come out, usually as a slip-of-the-tongue.

Learn how your partner communicates and establish common levels of contact. Be open and sharing with each other, but keep the details “in-house.” Communication is much more than talking. It also includes moods, gestures, attitudes, body language and caring enough about the other person to be considerate and understanding.

Know the needs of the other person and respond to them with love, affection and interest. Be a real partner in the relationship – it is not a one-way street.

Mistake 5: Poor decision-making

In a partnership, both partners share in the decision-making. In an intimate relationship, there is no senior partner who sets the tone of the partnership. Although there is usually one personality that is more dominant, all decisions should be made with equal participation. Anything other than that is not a partnership.

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Major decisions like purchasing a house or new car are things that should be discussed. Although men are often more informed about automobiles and women are most often the homemakers and decorators, the decisions about these purchases need to be shared between both partners.

Decisions about vacations are definitely a shared duty as well, particularly when there are children involved.

It is a huge mistake for one partner to assume all of the responsibility in the decision-making process. Even if the less dominant partner generally defers, all major and many minor decisions should be discussed. It is part of good communication as well as respect for the partnership that dictates this action.

It is particularly important as the couple matures that both partners are involved in all aspects of their relationship. In cases where the dominant decision-maker dies, the other person is often adrift like a boat without a rudder because they know nothing about the couple's affairs.

Sharing decisions and important matters is also showing respect for the relationship and your partner, making it a true partnership.

Mistake 6: Encouraging outside influences

Too often in a relationship there is interference from outsiders and external activities that divert attention from the relationship. Good friends and family are important and should be a shared focus of the relationship, but when relationship matters are involved, it should only be the partners who participate.

When two people marry or partner in an intimate relationship, their circles of influence overlap, with both of them together in the center. As they each develop separate careers and interests, their personal circles expand beyond their shared circle. If too many outside interests are cultivated by each individual, their common circle becomes a smaller and smaller part of their lives. Finally, they have so little in common they are like ships that pass in the night.

The outside interests have been allowed to interfere in the relationship, diminishing the importance of the partnership.

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Some of the strongest relationships are those in which there are many common interests, both personal and business. Family businesses in which both partners contribute to the operation is a good example. They assume different roles in both their business and personal lives, such as when the man heads the business with the wife's strong support and participation, while the woman runs the household with the man's support. All decisions about both home and business are discussed and made jointly.

The more a couple's circles of influence overlap and include each other, the stronger their relationship tends to be. But there are also instances in which a couple is able to compartmentalize their careers and home lives so they don't interfere with and improperly influence their relationships. An example of this would be where one of the partners is in government service and privy to matters they cannot share with their spouse. They have to keep this part of their life separate from their partner.

Outside career interests are often more easily understood and dealt with in a relationship than are recreational and leisure time pursuits that don't involve both partners. For example, the man is hanging out with his friends at the pub watching sports, or he's at the ballgame, or he's fishing or playing sports. The woman is off with her girlfriends. Many leisure activities are gender-specific, but they should not take up all of a couple's time away from work.

The couple should develop recreational activities that involve both of them, and their circle of friends should be the same way. Sometimes it takes a single active couple to organize parties and leisure events that involve all of their friends as couples. This couple becomes the center of social activities and their activism is beneficial to all those participating.

A huge personal outside influence that affects relationships occurs when one or both partners develop friendships with members of the opposite sex at work or play. These "friendships" often led to sexual affairs, particularly if the couple hasn't been interacting well.

Both men and women have affairs, but it is a more frequent occurrence when the man strays. This is most common between co-workers who see each other at their best all day long. A few occasions of after-work drinks, then a liaison is established and sex often follows.

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More often than not, there is no real romance, only opportunity, interest and a weakness of character and commitment.

An affair is very hard for the injured partner to forgive and it's even worse when the guy says, "She didn't really mean anything to me!" So that means you're inclined to casually violate your marriage vows, or pledge of commitment? If you are stupid enough to have an affair, be smart enough to end it cleanly, renew your commitment to your mate and get on with your life, with no more straying. Your wild oats should have been sown before your relationship, not during.

Mistake 7: Weak emotional investment

Picture a relationship as being like your investment portfolio. You put in your money and expect to get a return on your investment. The more money you invest, the bigger the return. You do have to invest, though, to take a risk with your money in order to get any return. You don't get a return if you don't put money into your account.

In a relationship, the currency is you and your emotions. The more of yourself that you put into the portfolio, the greater the return will be for both parties in the relationship. If both parties are investing in the same stocks, they multiply their returns proportionally.

When you enter into a relationship, the initial attraction is usually physical and then only later is it emotional. After the relationship has matured, you fall in love. If you are both investing yourselves into the relationship you will both get huge returns, far greater than by being the sole investor.

It is the failure of one or both partners to become invested in the relationship that makes for an unsatisfying partnership and one that is probably going to end in a divorce or break-up.

Statistically, about half of all first marriages end in divorce. The probable underlying cause in most of these is the lack of investment made by one or both parties. When you have invested in something you tend to protect your investment with vigor.

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A relationship without enough investment is one that is easily broken or is one in which actions by one or both parties leads to a dissolution of the marriage or partnership.

Mistake 8: Not opening up in a relationship

When asked in a survey about relationships, respondents said that the number one thing they would change about their partner is to have them open up more. Some people are so guarded and private that they have a difficult time sharing themselves and their personal thoughts with anyone else, even an intimate partner.

In the beginning and during the initial phase of any relationship there is usually a sharing of personal details and innermost thoughts with each other. Some people are unable to open up and share themselves. They may be products of a childhood situation where silence was the best policy. Or they could have been traumatized by an unfortunate prior relationship in which personal secrets were used to hurt or embarrass them.

Patience and understanding will often bring down that barrier and allow full intimate sharing. It is important to let your mate know how important they are to you and how much you want them to open up to you as you have to them.

Let them know that the greatest intimacy in a relationship isn't the sex, it is the sharing of your innermost person with each other.

Don't press them too hard to open up. When they begin to do so, be circumspect and don't comment, just let them flow. When they finally do open up all the way, your relationship will rise to the next level.

Mistake 9: Annoying habits and other personal issues

During the beginning of the romance, both parties are on their best behavior. They cater to each other's whims and they are attentive, affectionate and loving. As they become more familiar with each other and move out of the "honeymoon

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phase”, they let their guard down and many of their personal habits cause irritation in the other party.

Classic causes of irritation may be as simple as where you hold the tube of toothpaste when you squeeze some onto your toothbrush, to leaving the toilet seat up, to being slow in getting ready to go out and to being late to everything.

These issues arise on both sides of the partnership with equal frequency. Some of these annoyances are a “male thing” while others are committed by women, but they basically exist in equal proportions.

Serious issues can be caused by annoyances such as poor driving and directional skills, not sharing the household chores, leaving a messy bathroom and food issues such as bad table manners.

Other common annoying bad habits include poor clothing choices, bad personal hygiene, being critical of the other person in public, control of the television remote and choice of channels, and other inconsiderate behavior.

For some people, minor irritations come with the relationship and are to be ignored. If you can accept these foibles, then they will never become an issue in the partnership.

Others become upset over their partner’s bad habits. If you are one of these people, you can attempt to change your partner’s habits, but be prepared for them to try and change some of yours too. Otherwise you can discuss each issue with your partner and you can both attempt to make appropriate changes . . . or learn to live with them.

Men, you and your buddies may think that bodily noises are hilarious, but few women think the same. Ladies, your lingerie hanging over the bathtub or in the shower to dry is not the type of obstacle course that men like to run through.

High levels of annoyance may indicate a deeper problem than the habits themselves. One partner may feel disrespected because their wishes for changes in a number of areas are ignored.

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Another relationship issue is the refusal to let an argument die a natural death. Some people feel they have to make their point again and again until their opponent collapses in defeat. This type of tenacity is self-defeating and may cause extreme resentment in the other party.

Mistake 10: Failure to settle arguments or disputes

Disagreements are common in any intimate relationship. You will run into conflicts with family and friends, sometimes over the most insignificant things. Conflicts may be handled if you approach them properly. Here are several actions you can take to settle a dispute:

- * Admit it when you are wrong – Sometimes it's hard to acknowledge when we are on the wrong side of an argument, but owning up to our errors will often settle the issue right there.
- * Try to turn the argument into a discussion, or even postpone the argument by saying, "We are too heated up to think rationally; let's talk about this in an hour." You might defuse the issue by suggesting another venue to have your discussion, one that is favorable to settlement, such as a favorite pub or a bench in the park.
- * Acknowledge that you are having a dispute. Sometimes people try to ignore their conflicts because they think it reflects poorly on them. If you admit there is a conflict, then a solution is close at hand.
- * Offer solutions to the dispute, focusing on those in which no wrongdoing is admitted and which are fair to both parties. Be diplomatic, not aggressively contentious. Encourage your partner to offer their solutions and listen to them.
- * Settle the matter on a good note. If no complete settlement is forthcoming, then call a truce and schedule the matter for discussion at a later time. End the conflict with a hug and a kiss to show there are no hard feelings.

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Mistake 11: Neglecting your appearance

Personal appearance is often the force behind the initial attraction, particularly for men (men tend to be more visual, while women respond more to emotions). As a couple grows closer and more committed, appearance is less important.

While not as important, though, concern about appearance can still be an issue, particularly if one or both of the partners lets themselves slide. Weight gain is usually the main issue. Men often see nothing wrong with having a beer gut hanging over their belt, but have a problem if their mate gets a little broader in the beam.

While a man's belly may not be as big an issue for a woman, personal grooming often is. And that beer belly is often part of the grooming issue.

One of the best ways to solve the issue of weight gain in your partner and yourself is to join a health and fitness club together. Schedule times to work out that are convenient for both of you and stick to the schedule you set. You will be able to encourage one another and it's tougher to ignore your workouts when your partner is pushing you to go to the club.

The short-term effect is trimming and conditioning your body. The long-term effect is that you will improve your health immeasurably.

Another related issue is wearing apparel. Guys, if you don't have good taste, let your partner choose the clothing you buy. Also let her select what you are going to wear when you go out.

When you think that you look attractive, you feel attractive. When you feel attractive, you are attractive. It shows in your attitude, your carriage and your demeanor. When you make a conscious effort to improve your appearance it does show and it is appreciated by your partner.

Physical appearance does play a part in how attractive you are perceived to be, but it is not the most important issue. The dominant power behind your attractiveness is how you think of yourself. A confident, self-assured person who is well-groomed is attractive to others.

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Mistake 12: Financial Mistakes

Almost all couples have money problems, particularly during the early years of their relationship. Usually they are just starting out in their careers and their take-home pay isn't very much, or they have very bad money management problems, because before they were married they had no commitments or discipline to rein them in.

When you are single, you can find a lot of things on which to spend your money. When you are a couple you can find more than double that number of things on which to spend money. So what you have to do is work up a financial plan.

The first item on the credit side of the ledger is the list of both of your incomes. Then you begin the debit side. The first item should be a deduction of ten percent of the combined net wages. This goes into a savings account for "a rainy day." It follows the old adage to "pay yourself first."

The debit side continues with all of your joint expenses: rent or mortgage payment, utility costs, telephone and other regular expenses. Then list all of your individual expenses such as car payments, car insurance and any other debts.

Add up both columns and deduct the debits from the credits. The remainder is how much you have to spend for food and drink, gasoline and other monthly expenses.

"Don't spend money you don't have" is the cardinal rule of a sound financial plan.

"Don't borrow money to pay borrowed money" is another good rule to follow.

If you are not planning on combining your earnings and financial matters, you should still establish a plan. List all joint expenses, plus establish a budget for food and beverages. The total of this will tell you how much each of you should contribute to the household fund.

You may each arrange for a direct deposit of your share of the household expenses into a joint bank account from which all these bills will be paid. You should each have an ATM card on the account so that you may pay for groceries and other household items from your joint account.

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Each of you should pay your own individual expenses after first “paying yourself.”

At the end of the year, or at a predetermined time, any excess funds in the joint account can be used to throw a party, place in a joint savings account (the smartest move) or buy something nice for the house.

If you failed to establish a budget plan before you began cohabitation, you may have incurred some debts you need to handle jointly. Set up a plan after-the-fact and proceed as above. If the debts are large, you may consider a joint loan to pay them off, with the payment amount being added to the household debit side of the ledger.

If the financial problems are greater than you both can cope with, consult a financial advisor, who will probably take the same actions as described herein.

Financial problems can put a lot of pressure on a relationship, maybe even fatally damaging it, so don't neglect them.

Mistake 13: Dishonesty

Lying is a major issue in some relationships. All of us have told a few “white lies” from time to time. Most often it is to keep someone from being hurt – “She really didn't mean to say that, dear” – or to keep yourself from being hurt – “No honey, that dress doesn't make you look fat.” But some liars do so without concern for the people they are affecting.

Dealing with a liar is problematic. Avoid a relationship with a pathological liar at all costs. When you are involved with a compulsive liar, encourage them to seek treatment. Have an intervention with them, enlisting the aid of friends or family who they respect. Convince them to change their ways, but understand it is an easy habit to fall back in to.

Mistake 14: Playing the blame game

Some people avoid responsibility for their actions by blaming other people, things or events for their problems. This is fairly juvenile behavior, but is too common.

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Blaming others for our foul-ups never solves anything. It only causes denial and creates more problems.

Playing the blame game is a characteristic of mentally unbalanced people. In shrink-speak this is called “projection of blame.” The idea is that a disturbed person is avoiding the pain of their actions by transferring the blame to someone else.

Any intimate relationship will suffer if one of the partners plays the blame game. Often the blame will be transferred to the partner rather than a third party. No one wins in this game, so don’t do it yourself and counsel your partner against it if they try it.

Accept the ownership of your flaws, mistakes and shortcomings. You may get a dressing-down from your partner, but admitting mistakes shouldn't damage your relationship.

If your partner plays the blame game with you, the first thing you should do is avoid getting angry. Then ask why they are blaming you for something they did. The matter can be settled easily when the blamer accepts the responsibility for their actions.

Mistake 15: Other relationship issues

Many of the reasons for relationship failures or difficulties are in categories that overlap or may be broadly described as “communication failures.” We covered communication as the dialogue between a couple that develops a mutual understanding, respect and affection.

Communication, however, is also about intuition, a sense of what your partner needs and wants. It is about common interests and the enjoyment of each other. It is about shared activities and it is about trust, faith, understanding and commitment.

Communication is also about listening. Are you really hearing what your partner is saying? Are you reading between the lines and getting the real message? Are

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you empathetic and sympathetic with your partner? Are you hearing your partner's expressions of feelings?

Relationships, like plants, require nurturing. They need food, good soil, water and sunshine. Your relationship needs the investment of both of you (food), a good foundation of mutual interests and activities (good soil) and a shared commitment and common goals (water and sunshine).

Over time most relationships are confronted with many small problems and a few large ones. We are flawed beings, after all, and we do make mistakes. It is how we respond to mistakes that determines our character.

If you have a contentious problem in your relationship, you have to eliminate the causes of the problem, then eliminate the problem itself and mend the breach. Failure to erase problems and their causes will allow them to continue to be an issue in your partnership.

If you caused the problem you also have to ask for forgiveness. If your partner was the cause, then you have to be the one forgiving the mistake. "To err is human, to forgive is divine."

Marriage or any other type of intimate relationship requires more than just being there. You should cultivate mutually pleasurable activities. You have to consider and address your partner's needs and wants, not allow other people to interfere, make a commitment, and work out your differences.

What if Your Relationship Is Failing?

We live in a society where everything is disposable, from baby diapers to food and drink containers, to printer cartridges, and to paper or plastic bags. With the type of mentality created by a throw-away world, it is no wonder that we have so many marriage failures.

This statistic has been cited earlier in this piece, but fifty percent of first marriages fail. In 1950 that wasn't the case, so what has happened to our society?

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Sixty years ago, it seemed like the only people who were divorced were Hollywood movie stars. Everyone else seemed to stay married and it was rare to meet a divorced person.

The divorce laws were such that it took “just cause” and a long time before a divorce was granted. The exception in the U.S. was in Nevada, where there was only a six-week waiting period from the time of filing until the final divorce decree was granted.

As a result, it was common for people who could afford it and really wanted a “quickie” divorce to travel to Reno, Nevada, establish residence, file for divorce and six weeks later they would be free. They usually didn’t stay in Reno the whole time, but returned in time to file the final papers.

The laws in other states and countries became more liberal and we are now in the age of “no-fault” divorces, where irreconcilable differences are cited as the justification.

So you find that your relationship is in trouble, but you want to stay together. What do you do? You have several courses of action, depending on your partner’s willingness or unwillingness to try and salvage the relationship.

If your partner is cooperative

Your relationship started with an attraction, a lot of passion and then a commitment. You might consider taking a few steps backwards, back towards the beginning. Visit some of the places where you first discovered your romance and see if you can recapture the mood.

Have a sit-down with your partner and discuss all of your problems and differences. Make a list (yes, write it all down) of everything that bothers you both. This goes on the debit side of the ledger. Then record all of the good things in your relationship, what you like about each other and what is good about your marriage or partnership. This latter list is on the credit side of the ledger.

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On the debit side, discuss each item and plan what you can do to eliminate or diminish these problems. You'll be surprised how many creative ways you will uncover.

The set about getting rid of the negatives and accentuating the positives and get on with your life together.

If your partner is uncooperative

Let's say, though, that your partner seems to want the break-up and you don't. You think that there is a lot of history you have together, much of it good or very good. Get your partner to agree to meet and discuss your potential divorce.

Make up your own list of positives and negatives in the relationship. Make one up that you think your partner would write if they wanted to.

When you meet with your partner, you can begin by saying, ***"Indulge me for a couple of minutes. So I know what I have done wrong; let's go over our marriage/partnership. It will only take a couple of minutes."***

Go over the lists, yours first, covering all the good things and then all of the bad things. Then go over the list you made for your partner and see if they agree with what you put down. Place emphasis on all the good in your relationship. Then close by saying, ***"With all you and I have invested in this marriage, it seems a great shame to cast it away without really trying to salvage it. We certainly are smart enough and strong enough to make it work."***

Unless there have been unpardonable sins committed by either of you, this approach should at least get your partner's attention and may salvage your marriage/partnership.

As they tell any neophyte salesperson, "Don't forget to close the deal." So you need to close on your presentation by saying, ***"I want to try to save us; will you work with me?"***

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Recommended Reading

Relationship Recovery *By Rachel Rider*

<http://getyourexbackbook.com/go/relationship>

I see so many ebooks on how to get the man or woman of your dreams, but very few that offer insights on how to live happily ever after, and win their love for good. When the gloss starts to wear off your relationship, when the times get a little tough, when it's not as easy to love your partner as it used to be, who do you turn to?

That's a problem that plagues me a lot as I contemplate relationships, and it was at the forefront of my mind as I reviewed Rachel Rider's "Relationship Recovery" course recently. I get a lot of ebooks and courses come across my desk, each of them telling me that their method is the magic bullet, so it's not often I get excited.

Until now.

The first thing that struck me about Rachel's book was how attractively it's laid out. Not some hastily prepared ebook so typical of most sites, this book is professionally laid out and graphically designed, a good indication of the level of professionalism I have come to expect from Meet Your Sweet.

The next thing I noticed was the forthright and honest manner in which the author engages with the reader. Rachel is a newer addition to the Meet Your Sweet group of writers led by Slade Shaw and Mirabelle Summers, but she has quickly established herself as a credible source and a talented writer.

It's refreshing to see her approach on how to move forward with saving a relationship. I see a lot of people looking for people to blame when a relationship is in trouble, and from my experience it only introduces a raft of new problems. Rachel's approach where she looks within the reader for a place to start is both poignant and productive.

After all, as our mom's always told us: we can't change how others act and behave, so the best vehicle for change is within ourselves. Examining and challenging beliefs and behaviors is a great place to start, and leading this

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change by example is indicative of Meet Your Sweet's progressive thinking when it comes to personal growth and empowerment.

Rachel covers topics such as soulfulness, understanding our evolution and personal development and the effect this has had on our current state, our belief systems, the life cycle of a relationship, communication processes, healthy relationship values, ways to reconnect with your partner even if you are the only one that wants to, and much more.

Covering nearly 200 pages, this course is a powerful medium for personal change and growth, in the belief that through personal growth and empowerment can come change in external influences such as your relationship and the way you interact with your loved one.

You can read more about here:

<http://getyourexbackbook.com/go/relationship>

Supreme Self Confidence in Dating Relationships and Social Situations *By Slade Shaw*

<http://getyourexbackbook.com/go/selfconfidence>

When I hear about people having dating and relationship problems, I hear every excuse: no time for a relationship, focusing on my career right now, haven't found the right one yet, not living in the right place to meet nice men or women, haven't met one worth keeping, or you simply don't know why love and attraction has eluded you and you feel frustrated.

For all the people that come to me with dating and attraction frustrations, there are as many products out there that promise you the holy grail of getting Paris Hilton-like confidence. They promise to take you in hand and learn how to dress, how to deliver openers and one-liners, they tell you how to behave, how to maximize your statistical chances with the opposite sex, and even how to discover a previously unknown dating rule. Needless to say, when I see a new product come across my desk, I am often a little hesitant to get excited.

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At least until now. Slade Shaw from Meet Your Sweet.com has just released a fantastic new ebook about achieving supreme self confidence that is going to change your dating life, as well as any other social situations you encounter. Want to develop personal confidence and increased self awareness? Want to overcome self-doubt? Want to develop a social identity and life direction? How about tips to overcome embarrassing social situations and making conversation with strangers?

It's all here in Slade Shaw's latest book, "Supreme Self Confidence in Dating, Relationships & Social Situations."

This 184-page ebook is literally bursting with advice about how to turn around your personal confidence, your social confidence, your professional confidence, your sexual confidence, and a host of concrete confidence-building techniques that will take this advice beyond the page and apply it to your life with fast and life-changing results!

Why would you be interested in it? It is because healthy self-confidence is at the root of your life success. Success in your personal life, in dating, in your career, in you reaching your romantic and life goals, is all built upon the belief that you can overcome your fears and setbacks and achieve exponential growth in your life. Without self-confidence, you will never believe you can achieve anything in life.

Do you want to simply accept what life offers you, or do you want to set your own destiny? Are you going to let your life success be determined by the efforts of others, or are you going to make wonderful things happen and inspire others on the way?

Everybody has areas in their life that they feel they can improve on or wish they could do better, and the fundamental first step is in believing that change is possible.

Want to be noticed at parties?

Want to overcome your fears or past experiences?

Want to establish a clear direction in your life and identify how to reach your goals, big and small?

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Want to know the secrets to creating and maintaining great conversation?

Want to overcome the shyness that cripples you at crucial moments in your life?

Want to overcome work stress and excel in high-pressure situations?

Want to become sexually confident in dating?

Want to know how to ignite attraction and master your masculine or feminine self?

Want to know how to achieve unstoppable confidence in relationships?

Even for people that think they have what it takes already, there is still heaps in this book that can guide you towards making further improvements. At 184 pages, it's attractively laid out, professionally designed, and contains life-changing information and skills for people who want to make improvements in any facet of their life.

Achieve supreme self confidence and Slade Shaw's life-changing methods today!

I'm absolutely blown away by the quality of the information, and also the audio bonuses that come with it are packed with such powerful information they are worthy of being sold separately themselves.

See for yourself, here: <http://getyourexbackbook.com/go/selfconfidence>

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