

Your Spouse Is Not Your Problem

7 steps to help you turn your dyeing, stuck and stagnant relationship into an enchanted, holy union.

If you asked the majority of people in our society – whether married or single, “would you like to have a beautiful, loving romantic relationship? I think it would be safe to say that the answer would be “yes”.

Yet, if this is what the majority of folks want, why are so many people experiencing the exact opposite. Are they just unlucky? Did their partner all of the sudden turn into a tyrant causing the whole family stress and negativity? Did all of their partner’s bad habits and baggage push them over the edge making them want to leave the relationship?

Seriously, what in the world is going on that couples are so unhappy in their relationships – past or present? *If our partner is not our problem*, then where is the source of pain and frustration coming from?

The answer lies in us.

That doesn’t mean our partner does not have a responsibility in the quality of the relationship, they do. But we cannot be overly concerned with how they show up in the relationship because we can never change or control what they do. We can support them, encourage them, offer insight if they are open to it and simply love them - *unconditionally*.

Ultimately we cannot control how they behave, the actions they take or the words they speak. That is not our job. Our job is to hold ourselves accountable with how *we* are showing up in the relationship.

If we are at a place where we are ready to throw in the towel because our relationship isn’t working, we need to first take a good look at ourselves and see how *we* are contributing to the demise of our marriage or committed relationship.

If we don’t, we will certainly have the opportunity to do this work with another person. And I think that is where a lot of folks get confused . . . just because we enter into a relationship with another person does not mean we will have a different experience. We will have a different experience when we turn to ourselves and deal with our own baggage. And that is important to remember whether we are single or married.

So how do you even begin to start transforming the quality and depth of your marriage or committed relationship? It all starts with *YOU!*

1. Take full responsibility for your disappointment and frustration. Really become conscious of how you are projecting your negative emotions onto your partner. Though you may be impacted or affected by their energy and behavior, you still get a choice as to how you want to deal with it. You have to be willing to see that it is a “call for love” when your partner shows up in a way that is defensive, shutdown or angry. Your thoughts and actions towards your partner will always be consistent to the quality and outcome of your relationship. You may not like what they say. You may not like how they act. But you always have a choice in how you respond and interpret their presence in your life.
2. Forgive yourself / forgive your partner. All that forgiveness means is that you’re willing to be in full acceptance of what you have thought and how you have acted in relationship . . . **WITH NO JUDGMENT**. Maybe you have spoken harshly, withdrawn your affection or have withheld your emotional availability. Maybe you have been just as hurtful towards them as they have been towards you. Someone has to take the high road and begin the process of forgiveness. If you are unhappy in your relationship and you are choosing to stay, you have to be willing to do what it takes to shift the energy and dynamics between the two of you. Your first step is to take responsibility for your part and then lovingly forgive yourself for the ways you have shown up negatively.
3. Practice the principals of letting go, surrender and detachment. Practice letting go of what you think will “fix” your partner or the relationship. Practice getting out of your head and into your heart where your real love exists. Be open to allowing a deeper truth to surface within you. If your partner complains that you are controlling or selfish . . .consider that they may be right. Before you answer with an attack, go within. Be willing to see that it’s possible that you have acted in a selfish and controlling way. You have to be willing to not be right.
4. Make a wholehearted commitment to the truth that your past is over. If you need to grieve a past relationship or the history of your current relationship, then do so. If you need to process some painful experiences, give yourself the opportunity to do so. But

always, always bring your attention to the present moment and learn to discern what you felt in the past and what you are feeling in the present moment. This will really help you move away from projection and blame towards your partner.

5. Practice having a different conversation in your head about who you are and who your partner is. If you have a critical voice running in your head, practice evolving it into a voice of understanding and compassion. Remember, it is vitally important that you feel loved yourself. But you can't always depend on getting it from your partner. You have to have the courage to do your inner work so that you can be receptive to love in all the wonderful ways it can come to you.
6. Have the courage to change your world view of humanity. No one, including your partner (past or present) intentionally hurts anyone. Sometimes spouses can act mean, malicious and hurtful when they don't feel unconditionally loved. They have the potential to manipulate, lie and seek revenge when their heart is empty and they feel alone. We do the exact same thing. We too behave in a way that is spiteful and condescending when we don't feel loved.
7. Find a spiritual path and commit wholeheartedly to it. Find a path that empowers you to live your genius. Live your brilliance. Express your deepest desires. Find a path that challenges you to become vulnerable, intimate and open.

The love affair that we seek is actually inside of us, waiting to be lived. Become emotionally available to yourself. Love you the way you want your partner to love you. Think of yourself in the same way you would want your partner to think of you. Spend time with you, cultivating your gifts, talents and abilities. Focus on creating a vision for your life, one that is worthy of your time and energy. Think about what you want to give most deeply to this world. And then find opportunities everyday to share it.

The most important thing you could ever remember about your romantic relationship is this – if you are aligned with you and your truth, your relationship will unfold exactly how it is suppose to. You never have to manipulate or calculate anything in order to get the love and connection you want. Simply be true to you and true to loving yourself and your partner
unconditionally.