

Sir Godfrey Gregg

Let's face it at some time or another almost every healthy relationship suffers a breakdown where one or both parties are ready to walk out the door. This is the natural ebb and flow. As much as you want your intimate relationship to work out sometimes it just does not seem possible. The differences between the two of you may seem to create a chasm where all the unmet needs and hurtful words get dumped like an emotional landfill. The power struggle stage of any relationship is inevitable and will most likely surface around year three after the lust, attraction, and love drug phase wear off.

Suggestion #1

Many times the way your partner relates to you speaks to you, or mistreats you is not directed at you, but an old wound from his past directed at his parent, an ex, or an employer. Each time he mistreats you ask him this:

How much of this is in the here and now and how much of this is your past coming forward?
Any chance you are projecting your feelings for your ex (Mom, Dad, or boss) on me? That will cause him to stop and think. You may not get the satisfaction of admittance, but you may settle down a heated argument and make him aware.

Suggestion #2

Think about the main need not being fulfilled in your relationship. Now take a slow deep breath and be honest with yourself. What is the relationship need that you may be looking to your partner to meet that you are perfectly capable of meeting for yourself? When and where have you decided that he was the only means to getting this need met?

This concept is to empower you, not blame yourself. Many times we show up in our relationships as an unempowered guest that gets disappointed by the host. Make an empowered list of ways that you can meet this sexual, emotional, physical, financial need independently. That will liberate you and remove your own frustration and disappointment.

Suggestion #3

Decide what your role is in the relationship. Often we enter into relationships and set up one or more of these roles for ourselves: cleaning lady, care giver, mother, financial provider, sexual liaison, mistress, selfless martyr, etc without being totally aware. ~~Perhaps your partner took advantage of your kindness; perhaps you gave out of neediness. Perhaps you took advantage of your partner's softness. Now go back to the beginning of the relationship.~~ What role may have you inadvertently set up with your partner that you or he never agreed to? What possibly did you over give sex, money, cleaning, childcare, availability, career, values, or time? What did you overtake or control? Where did you settle for less than you deserved or compromise yourself or compromised your partner against your better judgment?

Define a new role for yourself. Ask your partner to define his new role. Create balanced relationship agreements that fit with your own needs and lifestyle. Go back and gently reclaim what you once gave away. Remember this change may upset the dynamics of the relationship that may have previously tipped the scale in your partner's favour or vice versa. It is better to upset the dynamics than to continue compromising.

Suggestion # 4

Expectations and Fantasy set us up for disappointment. Expectations are not who your partner is, fantasy is not who you are, reality is who you both are. Look for areas in the relationship that leave you or your partner feeling let down. Whether it is in the bedroom, domestic chores, paying bills, being more romantic, spending more time together, how do you feel your partner never delivered what was expected of him? How may your partner feel you never delivered what was expected of you?

Now take a minute and ask yourself if these are expectations you assumed he would fulfill because that's what you saw your father or mother do? Are these expectations that an ex partner once fulfilled? Or being very honest with your self did these agreements happen in your head? Now ask your partner the same questions. Now both of you ask yourselves this: Did I directly ask for my needs with "I need" statements, not "you don't" statements?

Men need details laid out in exact terms before hand, not after the fact. Most guys don't possess the intuitive or nurturing qualities that women possess. Believe it or not he will need to know there is a benefit in it for him. So voice your needs, then let him know what's in it for him and you will get a better response. If you still can not seem to get his participation, repeat suggestion # 2 and gently let him know the benefit he will miss out on.

Suggestion # 5

Forgiveness is not a verb; it is a process for a woman. For a woman to achieve forgiveness she needs to go through the grieving cycle like a death, the death of trust. When trust is broken for a man he leaves the relationship or flips a brain switch which allows him to move on. This is not physiologically or emotionally possible for a woman. A woman's brain is wired to release forgiveness in small bits as she grieves. Forgiveness comes from self soothing, talking about the pain, hurt, and betrayal, going through anger, denial and tears. Each time you bring up the injustice you are needing validation and remorse from your partner. This process will be repeated many times in order for the female brain to make sense of the pain, release bits of forgiveness, and complete healing. If your partner thwarts this process in an attempt to stop his own discomfort, he interferes with this healing and forgiveness cycle.