

Relationship Breakers

Relationships are beautiful and they add colour and spice to our lives but they are also highly fragile and delicate and have “Handle with care” written all over them. Nothing adds more meaning to our lives than loving relationships. Man craves for the love and acceptance which comes from caring relationships. A relationship that turns sour however robs us of our peace, joy and for some the very desire to live.

Let's together take a closer look at some of the relationship breakers and work at getting rid of them from our lives.

1. **Familiarity:** “Familiarity breeds contempt” it says. Sometimes we become too familiar with the one we love and he/she loses the ability to surprise us and the relationship begins to stagnate
2. **Taking the relationship for granted:** We become so comfortable in our relationships that we begin to take it for granted. We never have to exert ourselves to gain the others attention and so no effort is taken to please or impress them and make them sit up and take notice.
3. **Too Busy, Too Tired:** Both the partners in today's hi-tech world usually work in settings where the competition is cut-throat and specially in these times of recession when retrenchment is a by-word, every one has to be on their toes to see to it that they keep their jobs and consequently the bread on the table and the one thing they do not have time or the energy for, is to nurture and care for their family relationships.
4. **Too Critical:** It has been said that “Love is Blind” but “Marriage is an eye-opener”. Often irritating habits, mannerisms or behavioral patterns which have been merely minor imperfections in an otherwise near perfect person, during the courtship period become major hurdles when the daily grind of living together day after day begins. What follows is criticisms, nagging, whining, shouting...until each begins to wonder what drew them together in the first place. Finally the position reached is, “nothing I do pleases him/her anyway so why bother”....
5. **Sarcasm:** It is really hurtful and harmful. It sounds witty and makes one feel good but it really deflates the one targeted and can be a major relationship breaker.
6. **Lack of Appreciation:** After a busy day at work, the wife rushes back home, straight into the kitchen and hurriedly prepares what she thinks is a pretty elaborate dinner. As there is no comment forthcoming from the partner she shyly asks, “Did you like the meal”. The reply received is, “As there is nothing better on offer, this will have to do”. What has been rejected is not the meal but the love that went into the preparation of it.

The list can go on and on and I am sure you can add quite a few original reasons why love runs cold...But let us look instead at just a few suggestions that can keep the love light burning:

1. **Surprise your partner:** Do something that you know he/she likes even if it is something that you particularly don't like doing. It would show that you were keen on pleasing her/him.
2. **Revisiting the Courtship period:** Actually trying to woo your spouse. You will definitely end up being surprised yourself and it injects freshness and vitality into a jaded relationship.
3. **Praying together:** Not the two minute prayer at the end of the day but a time set aside for the two to pray together about the issues, life throws up. Going for a prayer walk, going to a quiet place where you will be undisturbed and spending time together alone with the Lord really draws you closer to each other and to HIM.
4. **Taking a Holiday:** We do get busy at work and at home and often the children and the spouse begin to feel neglected. It really pays to take the day off or a few days off to go off together as a family and spend the time doing things that you always dreamed of doing together, but never had the time to. Often holidays only mean visits to the numerous members of the extended family and at the end of it you are more tired and less rested. Family ties are important and must be given its place but a few days alone just for the immediate family is invaluable.
5. **Family meal times:** Nowadays mealtimes are mostly spent in front of the TV and half the family may be missing anyway. In the olden days meal times were precious times of sitting together as a family, talking over the days activities and getting to know what happened in each one's life during the day. It is good to get back to this old fashioned routine.

Finally, no one can better the prescription offered by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 13, "True Love is:

- Patient
- Kind
- Does not envy
- Does not boast
- Is not proud
- Always protects, trusts, hopes, perseveres
- Not rude
- Not self seeking
- Not easily angered
- Keeps no record of wrongs

May we religiously guard and protect our relationship from stagnation. It has been said, "Marriages are made in heaven, but the details have to be worked out on earth". With God's

help let us work at keeping our relationships healthy and vibrant reflecting His love in and through our lives.