

What Makes a Relationship Work Well?

by Terrence Real

1. **Being able to hold the relationship in warmer care in the face of its imperfection.** Each of you as partners has imperfections as well as the relationship.
2. **Being able to speak relationally.**
3. **Being able to listen to your partner relationally.** This means being able to hold onto yourself (your feelings, thoughts, perceptions, etc.) HALE stretching to see and experience your partner's reality as valid for them as well. It's both/and, not just my way.
4. **Being able to negotiate rationally.**
5. **Being able to hold onto your skill and immaturity even when your partner isn't able to do that.** You must be able to stay on track when your partner isn't.

Precursors for Intimacy

1. **Is there a reasonable time and space to be intimate friends?**
2. **Sobriety is a must. Any addictive behavior must be addressed and eliminated.**
3. **All exits closed.** Terry refers to "exits" as "outriggers", the small craft attached to a boat that serve to stabilize the larger boat. He says you must rid the relationship of any "outriggers", anything that stabilizes the misery in the relationship.

What is Important for the Relationship to Thrive?

1. **You must get to the point in the relationship where you have a self-enforcing loop.**
2. **All couples need a recovery sub-culture --, a grouping of friends, family, support group or networks, etc. that are "relational cherishing" sub-cultures.** He mentions that no one recovers relationally all by oneself.
3. **Men need to become "vulnerability cherishing" instead of "vulnerability despising".**
4. **Women need to reclaim their "voice" and learn how to express themselves without shaming or blaming.**

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