

Relationships

Difficulties in relationships can cause profound misery, disappointment and insecurity. These in turn can lead to rows, sleeplessness, depression, anxiety and apathy. Many people use self-destructive behaviours to cope, which only makes the situation worse.

Whether a couple is married, engaged, living together or dating, much of their social identity is invested in the ability to create and sustain a relationship, and when this breaks down, it can equally cause individual breakdown. Communication is key, and where resentments, hurt and misunderstanding thrive, communication suffers.

Some relationships suffer because one or both parties had family backgrounds that have caused an unhappy echo in their own lives that continues to erode hope and self worth. Stress and traumatic life events will also impact a relationship and learning how to deal with these issues, to communicate around them and to learn how to give and take support often lies at the core of resolving the relationship problem. Many difficulties in relationships are born of change (for example, after the arrival of children, or a career change), where people feel that they have 'moved on', or aren't who they used to be, or that they simply just don't feel the same way towards their partner any more, communication assumes even greater importance.

Making full use of a therapeutic environment can help heal a relationship, promote growth within the relationship, or when necessary aid conclusion of that relationship with minimum damage caused. Where there are entrenched opposing points of view, or in relationships where divorce is inevitable, it is even more important to resolve

differences with the least possible damage to one another and to any children involved.

Working with couples is complex: it is important to consider not only each person and their histories, but also the relationship dynamic and context. When a couple has been together a long time, lives and identities are usually intertwined, and there may also be children and other family members involved whose needs are significantly affected. It is important to consider the needs and demands of all those involved to gain a true perspective of where the problems, and often the solutions, lie.

In a relationship where one person is engaged in addiction, the partner needs to find a way to stay safe in that relationship despite not feeling safe, and make decisions he or she can live with. This is hard: when you love someone (but not their addiction), until the addict puts down their using for good, their partner is always holding their breath. It is also hard when an addict's partner feels responsible for that person's wellbeing: this can be a suffocating trap to live in, and involve a seemingly endless cycle of worry, desperate but thankless attempts to help, anger and shame.

Sometimes the addiction may involve infidelity, or the excessive use of pornography, which is hurtful and offensive to the partner. Partners in these situations benefit from learning how to respond according to their needs rather than being controlled by the illness – this takes practice, specific support around this traumatic discovery, and strategy.

If you think you suffering with relationship issues then give us a call, we can help

Call 020 7323 4970

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