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# HOW TO TALK ABOUT THE HARD STUFF



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Some people thrive on stress, drama and conflict. There are others who avoid it at all cost. Confrontation is hard, stressful and sometimes necessary. In order for us to be emotionally connected and authentic in our love relationships we have to tackle every subject that comes up. No matter if the conversation is easy or difficult, the list that follows is a great guideline for you to talk about the hard stuff and still be in love with each other at the end of the conversation.

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## Get Vulnerable

This is a must to have an emotionally close relationship. True communication can only happen when you are emotionally vulnerable. Those walls that you keep to protect yourself must come down and you have to show your true self to your partner in order for you to get to the heart of the matter.

## Look Inward

Realize that each of you is an individual with your own thoughts and opinions. The challenges you are facing have origins and consequences for you both. You need to look at yourself truthfully and ask what your stake is in this discussion. How can you act and speak in order to allow an emotionally vulnerable conversation to happen? What is it that you can do to help make this conversation easier for your partner?

## No Blaming

Sometimes the hard discussions that we have are about mistakes or poor choices we have made that affected the relationship. You need to be able to listen and internalize what your partner is telling you with going on the defensive and turning it around to find fault with them personally. Your partner has to trust that you are going to allow them to be emotionally vulnerable in a place of safety and without judgment.

## Take Responsibility

You each have to be able to admit mistakes and faults and take responsibility for your role in the issue. In order to have a close and connected relationship, you each have equal responsibility to handle the challenges you face as a couple. These conversations are hard, but if you will stand up and say “I know I am responsible for what is happening because of my actions, words or choices” you then allow your partner to enter the conversation and work together to resolve the issue.

## Apologize


If you’re taking the responsibility, you’re also taking on the consequence for that. A sincere apology is needed when your partner has suffered some kind of emotional pain or relationship injury. Mere words are not enough, though they’re a good place to start. The best apology is changing your behavior and making sure you don’t repeat the mistakes that have caused the issue. This takes becoming emotionally vulnerable to your partner and showing them you never want to hurt them.

## Forgive

Forgiveness is sometimes the most challenging aspect of having difficult conversations. In order to heal and move forward and to stay in a healthy place with your partner you have to be willing to forgive them. First for bringing up the hard subject, second for their responsibility in creating an issue or problem, and third, forgive yourself for your part in the problem, your feelings of anger and/or resentment. Forgive each other regularly and stay

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Stick to these guidelines in having deep, emotionally vulnerable conversations with your partner and you will not only be sorting out your most challenging issues in a way that you both end up feeling loved and important but strengthening your bond of connection even more.



# How much better could your relationship be if you and your partner met with a couples counselor

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The key to keeping your relationship healthy and happy is to continue to work on the relationship and not just expect it to take care of itself. A couples counselor can help you do that.

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