



This article is all about relationships ... intimate relationships. But this week it's about what makes a relationship (rather than breaks them). Read on to discover the top tips for relationship success.

And don't forget, our last article discussed four things that can break a relationship. Click [here](#) to find out more.

5 Top Tips That Can Make A Relationship

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While there's no 'right' or 'wrong' way to be in an intimate relationship, there are some things that will help your relationship last. So if you're not in a relationship but want to be in a relationship, or if you want to strengthen your relationship, read on to find out what these relationship builders are.

1. **Trust** : Without trust in your relationship, don't worry about the rest of the tips that make a relationship. Trust is by far the most important predictor of long-term relationship success.
Ask Yourself : Can you count on your partner to 'have your back', and can they do the same with you? Has your partner proven over time that they are dependable and reliable (and have you proven the same for them?)?
What To Do : If you can't answer yes to these questions, maybe ask yourself 'why' you can trust each other. Has there been past hurt that hasn't been healed? Do you

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have evidence that your partner can't be trusted, or are your thoughts creating stories about what they might be doing or have done? If you can't trust your partner, maybe consider seeking some professional help to heal this fundamental part of your relationship.

2. **Intimacy** : Intimacy comes in many forms and helps us to feel understood, desired, and important in our partner's life.

Ask Yourself : Do you and your partner match with your desired levels of emotional, physical, intellectual and shared interest intimacy?

What To Do : Understand each other's wishes of emotional, physical, intellectual and shared interest intimacy. If you can understand each other's priorities, then you can choose to connect in ways that are important to you both.

3. **Communication** : The way in which we communicate with our partner can lead to a healthy relationship, or a very unhealthy relationship (see last week's article on The Four Horseman).

Ask Yourself : Are my partner and I honest, respectful, and open when we communicate? Do I talk to my partner about what I think and how I feel?

What To Do : If you answered 'no' to these questions, ask yourself why this might be. Are you afraid of how your partner might respond, have you fallen in to some 'bad habits' in your relationship, or have you mentally and emotionally 'checked out' of the relationship for some reason? Maybe seeking some professional help might assist you and your partner to work through these issues.

4. **Conflict** : If your idea of conflict resolution in your relationship is to 'argue until I win', 'ignore it and hope it will go away', or 'just say yes, you're right' you might want to think about how successful these strategies are for you and your relationship. Often these strategies can lead to holding grudges, emotional shutdown, or resentment.

Ask Yourself : Do I resolve conflict by

having to win, ignoring the issue, or conceding?

What To Do : If you answered yes ... or even yes, yes, yes ... next time you and your partner disagree about something actively try and solve the problem by focusing on the issue, rather than attacking your partner. Firstly, state what you think and how you feel about the problem clearly to your partner. Secondly, ask your partner to do the same ... and listen to and try to see their perspective. And lastly, see if there is some middle ground that you can come to agreement on. And if there's no middle ground possible, agree to disagree ... and then let the issue go!

5. **Crisis** : A true test of a relationship is whether you and your partner can stand together and support each other when times are tough.

Ask Yourself : When we're facing a crisis, do we come closer together or do we push each other apart? Can we support each other through bad times, or do we only feel close in good times?

What To Do : If you don't feel like you become an 'A-Team' in difficult times, then consider why this might be. Do you not trust each other, do you feel like you can't share 'bad' things with your partner, or do you feel like you need to handle everything on your own? It might be time to consider discussing this with your partner, or even a professional to see if you can change this pattern in your relationship.

So whether you're single, dating or in a committed relationship you might want to use these five tips as a "health-check" for your relationship well being.

However, if you feel your relationship needs some extra attention, seeking professional assistance could be useful.

If you would like assistance, please feel free to contact us on 0488 954 195, amanda@awakenpsychology.com.au or [click here](#)

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