

A photograph of a man and a woman lying in bed, hugging and smiling. They are covered up to their chests with a white blanket. The background of the entire image is a light-colored floral pattern. A large, red, scalloped-edged frame surrounds the central text.

Conflict To Cuddles

Dissolve Conflict and Confusion and INSTANTLY
bring harmony into your relationship

Nadine Piat

Conflict to Cuddles

Audio Transcript

BY

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HEALTHY YOU
HEALTHY
LOVE

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Nadine is a certified Professional Personal Coach and Behavioral Change Coach and she shares her knowledge, learning's, tips and advice as guidance and as entertainment only. We encourage you to make informed decisions in your life and to seek professional support as necessary.

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INTRODUCTION

Hi, it's Nadine Piat here and welcome to Healthy You, Healthy Love. Today we're going to be talking about Conflict to Cuddles, and this is such a wonderful topic because so many relationships fall apart because of conflict. Let's face it, when you're relating and when you're dating, there's always a lot of uncertainty. Well, there can be, and it's because you're one person and that person in front of you that you care about is another, and we have different ideas and different perspectives on things and sometimes we clash...

So today we're going to be breaking things down and I'm going to be giving you some awesome tips to bring a relationship closer, to create intimacy, love and connection, and to bring more cuddles into the connection, into your dating and relating. This topic is great for someone who's new in a relationship, something early, or someone who has been in a relationship for a while. So, hold tight.

Have you ever been with someone where you just adore them on so many levels, yet you seem to be conflicted a lot? There seems to be tension. There seems to be points of contention that regularly arise...

You may find them sexy, you may think they're funny, you may even have things in common, yet when it comes to communicating about things that are a little bit sticky or a little bit stressful, you have a very different way of approaching these

things. This is very common, so we're going to be talking about that. And let me assure you that there are certainly ways that you can diffuse conflict and create more love and intimacy.

Even as a dating and relationship coach, I too have to know how to do this in my relationships because this is not just about a lover, or a life-long partner. We relate with people day in and day out. People at work, family, friends, the bus driver, your on-site manager in your building, your neighbors, and the way that we communicate and relate will have a very, very strong effect on these relationships. So we're going to be breaking this down and if you're single at the moment, you can start practicing what I'm going to speak about with anybody.

Let's face it; we've all said things we wish we hadn't. We've all blamed people and wish we hadn't. We've also been blamed, shamed, ridiculed and put down by people. It happens. The thing is - it's easy to say other people are doing it, but it's possible we all do actually contribute to the way that we communicate. And sometimes we actually have no idea that we're saying certain things and doing certain things. We can't see ourselves. When we get caught up in something where we're really upset about something, or we're triggered or we're emotive, we're emotionally engaged in something, we can lose our sense of rationality and we can create more problems, bigger problems than what the issue was to begin with.

So, this works both ways and there are plenty of people listening to this that sometimes catch themselves with insane levels of jealousy, or neediness, or insecurity and self-doubt, and I want to assure you that we all do experience levels of this from time to time. But the thing is, are you regulating these things? Are you able to look at these feelings, these emotions from an objective point of view? This now leads me to the number one thing that will allow people to cultivate a more connected relationship... and this *one thing* that allows a couple to move from conflict to cuddles and intimacy is emotional stability and awareness.

EMOTIONAL STABILITY AND AWARENESS

If you want to have a beautiful, loving, warm, gorgeous connection with someone and if you want to be able to move through your challenges with relative ease, which enables a relationship to grow through these challenges and to become closer, then both of you need to have emotional stability and awareness. In fact, you can have the perfect man in front of you as far as interests, personality and attraction is concerned, but if one or both of you are emotionally unstable, then guess what happens? Conflict is created.

So it's got to be one or both of you. You'll have a better chance at resolving conflict if one of you is more emotionally stable than the other, and there will be times when one of you is. We're not perfect human beings; we are triggered, things happen and if one of you can hold it together, then you have a chance of moving through it.

Though, having said that, if the other person is completely unstable and is always finding issues and drama in the relationship, then it's going to actually make it very difficult because both of you have to have a decent level of emotional stability for a relationship to prosper and develop. That's why healthy relationships just don't happen. It's out of conscious choice to want to grow and develop.

The fact is that conflict actually begins within you. Sure, there are two people relating to each other, though the conflict normally isn't resolved within ourselves. So if we're having an issue in our relationship, normally there's a tug-of-war going on within ourselves that is not being addressed correctly before we actually speak. And this tug of war stems from our self-worth. So if we're struggling in a relationship, then normally we've got something going on with our worth. We're taking things personally. We're being triggered. We're feeling insecure, inferior; so therefore we become reactive in some way.

In my program, 'Never Lose Him', there's a lot of information there about your self-worth because no one can take your worth away from you. So when you really understand that you are a whole human being, that no one can take anything away from you, that you're not less or more valuable based on anything that anyone else does, then you actually put to bed this tug-of-war. There's no longer this constant battle within because you can actually resolve your triggers within yourself first. You can recognize them and then you don't need to act out in order to try and compensate for these insecurities, these fears, and etcetera. And when you resolve this turmoil within you and in an effective way, then you bring harmony into your life in general and into relationships.

So if you don't have this happening within you, then you won't know how to do the following, which are imperative in long-term intimate relationship:

THINKING BEFORE SPEAKING

How many times have we heard someone say that? Maybe we say this to others, “think before you speak”; yet so many people don’t think in an effective way before they speak. Of course they’re thinking because if they weren’t thinking, they wouldn’t have anything to have conflict about, so they’ve got thoughts running in their brain but they’re not necessarily thinking in an *effective* fashion.

This is something that we’re going to talk about. If you were thinking a little bit more clearly, if you were more emotionally stable, then you probably wouldn’t pick fights. You’d actually learn to communicate in an effective way. On the flip side, if your emotional IQ is low or you have fear of communication and conflict, then you may not speak up at all. You end up being a bit of a doormat in a relationship and instead of expressing yourself in a healthy way, tension and resentment builds and even illness. You’d be amazed by the *dis-ease* that is built when we aren’t clear, when we’re holding anger, when we’re holding resentment. It’s really unhealthy for our bodies and our relationships...

Passive-aggressive behavior is also in that band. It’s not worse or better. Though in some ways I think it is worse than expressive anger because passive anger can really eat away at you and the relationship. It’s like this constant punishment and the person who is actually delivering the passive-aggressive

behavior isn't being honest about what they're really feeling. They have fear about expressing themselves and actually asking for what they want. They have fear of expressing what really matters to them and how they're really feeling, and it creates this feeling of punishment and it's very unhealthy.

And look, conversely I would say that as much as this talk is not about whether you are compatible with your partner, sometimes you can actually really adore someone and you can be compatible on certain levels, but when it comes to communicating and relating, you can be worlds apart, that you're never going to be in a healthy relationship together. You have such little moments of the relationship being great but if there's abuse, if there's a lot of anger that's unaddressed and the other person is unwilling because they don't want to be emotionally unstable and they don't want to have that awareness, then you've really got to ask yourself if your values are actually too far off. Because if you do want that emotional stability and you do want to be in a healthy relationship and someone really isn't invested, then there is a problem, and therefore there's conflict no matter what. However, as I said earlier, this information will definitely help you with those situations.

So let's get started. What are some of the behaviors and ways of thinking of an emotionally healthy person?

1. What's Really Going On For You

One of the things that needs to be activated if you want to have more cuddles than conflict is getting to the point where you can stop long enough to understand or get honest about the real issue...

What is really going on?

Why are you annoyed, angry, pissed?

Why are you irritable, frustrated with this person?

Why do you feel sad?

Why do you feel jealous?

What is the real issue here?

Something important to note is; if you're in a relationship with someone who's a bit of a narcissist or quite manipulative, they're very good at turning around things to make out that you're the one that's going crazy and that you're the one who has all the issues...

I remember when I was 18, I was dating a man who was quite a lot older than me, and my mother was having kittens over this relationship (basically she was not happy)!

He was my second boyfriend and I met him after I'd previously been in a mostly healthy longish term relationship. This new boyfriend was so good at trying to turn things around on me - I recognized this was happening early on and I knew that we were not going to be great for a long-term relationship. He was a master manipulator. He never wanted to take responsibility for anything. So you've got to be able to look out for these behaviors and also recognize them in yourself.

I mean, you don't have to be a master manipulator to try to want to change someone's mind or mind-set to think and believe what you're saying at all times. I mean yes, that is one of the other issues in a relationship and that is wanting to be right, and we'll get into that a little bit later.

So back to the point... knowing what is the *real issue* for you will make all of the difference when you want to overcome a challenge in a relationship?

2. Knowing What You Actually Want

The second point is knowing what you actually want. What do you really want? Do you want love or do you want to be right? Do you want to win something? Do you want the other person to feel less and to feel insecure and to feel shamed and blamed, or do you want to actually build a loving connection? When you answer these questions, then you'll get an idea of

what you actually want, which will then create different outcomes in the way that you communicate.

3. Non-Verbal Communication

Also before you say one word, did you know that your facial expressions can actually say much more than you realise?

Passive-aggressive behavior can also be a lot about body language and facial expressions. Dr. Albert Mehrabian is the author of 'Silent Messages' and he conducted several studies on non-verbal connection. He found that 7% of any message is conveyed through words. Only 7%! 38% is through certain vocal elements which links to tone, and 55% of communication is non-verbal.

So facial expressions, gestures and postures - much of what is not actually spoken is communicated with 93% of communication being non-verbal or non-word message specific.

What are you not verbally saying yet saying through other ways? This is why it's really important that we keep neutral facial expressions when faced with conflict.

Someone who's emotionally stable, even though they're thinking certain things, they're able to be more rational and they're able to be more neutral until they've got all the information, until they've heard everything before they actually respond. They're able to process things in a more healthy fashion. I mean, how many times do we see facial expressions from someone that we're having troubles with and they're not speaking but they're basically disregarding everything we're saying and they're being quite aggressive but they're doing it in a more passive, non-verbal way. This is huge.

4. Ego, Blame & Shame

Also ego, blame and shame. Your ego can wreak havoc. The more stable you are, the healthier you are emotionally, the less ego you will throw around. And ego comes with controlling and power playing. So if you want to have a healthy, loving connection, then you've got to stop power playing and you've got to get over the ego. You've got to believe in your worth enough to not feel like you need to play games to actually have the relationship that you want. Because to have a healthy relationship, both people need to contribute, work together, share, and care. And blaming and shaming another is all about control and it's not about harmony and kindness and love. So you've got to snap out of the cycle.

You may have heard this before. A lot of these things that I'm sharing with you aren't necessarily things you haven't heard, yet most people *don't act* on the things they've heard. What is it going to take for you to want to break a cycle or pattern? And as I said before, with power and control, you can't have a healthy, loving connection and move towards the cuddle side of a relationship when you're trying to prove something all the time...

If you need to be right, if you've got that really strong lens of needing to have the upper hand, your relationship is going to fail. And it's likewise with your partner; if your partner is in that mind-set and you both get into a battle, then it is detrimental.

How do we break this cycle?

How do we put an end to the pain, and the shame, and the guilt, and the blame, and move into love and connection?

5. Move Into Your Heart

The first way to do that is to start moving into your heart. When we're feeling conflicted, we're normally a little bit out of our bodies. We can tend to go

sometimes into fight and flight. Our adrenalin is starts pumping, particularly if we're really in a point of conflict. Other times, it's that *constant eating away feeling* that something in the relationship is just giving us the -- ugh.

So how do we break that? The easiest way is to get into your heart. We've got to get into our body. We've got to actually learn to sit with ourselves; to really start communicating with ourselves, with the love and kindness that we want.

It's very hard to communicate what we really want and how we really feel when we're not really honest with ourselves.

For example: If someone is doing something and we start taking what they're doing or saying really personally, then within you, there's a part of you that's feeling neglected, rejected, attacked maybe, discarded, and the truth, the way someone treats you largely has nothing to do with you.

I'll repeat it... *The way that someone treats you largely has nothing to do with you.*

The way someone treats you has more to do with how they feel about themselves and how they relate to people in general. If someone is moody or if you're moody, if you tend to be aggressive in your behavior then that reflects more about what's going on inside of you. If you feel the need to yell and scream at someone, or your partner does, then that reflects what's going on within you or them personally. Sure, you can be angry and frustrated with someone, but how do you personally deal with your anger and frustration?

This is why I said before that it's imperative to find out what is going on within you, and then learn how to articulate your needs, your values, your wants, and your priorities in a way that is heartfelt, honest, clear and graceful.

So you've got to get into your body and stop being out of your body. We all hold a lot of tension in our stomachs, which is also where we hold a lot of

judgment - judging others and ourselves. We've got to try and soften that part of our bodies. Put your hand on our heart and talk from the heart. Soften your throat chakra, the third eye where we really beam in on things. Soften that, ground and center. There are 7 key Chakras. Do some research on that. I could do a whole audio on this but I don't have time to do that today, but get connected to your body. Feel your feet on the earth. Be confident.

Be courageous enough to be honest with your own heart and to know that people aren't generally intentionally trying to hurt you. And if they are, then why would you want to be with that person? That is about them. It's not about you. It's about their desire for control and manipulation or to put people down. It's not about you.

So you've got to get really, really clear about that. When you know that, the way that you articulate, the way that you communicate, will be more heartfelt, will be more honest, and will allow for more intimacy, which creates more tenderness, kindness and connection - alright?

6. Humility and Vulnerability

Humility and vulnerability are your golden ticket to authentic connected and lasting love. You've got to nurture these traits, and this links back into the heart, grounding work, and also links to my first point which is about getting to the real core issue, getting to know what you really want. Think before you speak. What is really going on inside of you?

So humility is something that is really important and I can't stress this enough. If you don't feel comfortable showing humility, it means you're also not comfortable with vulnerability. They go hand in hand. And the more confident you are, the easier it is to show vulnerability and humility. For me to admit that I have done something that I wish I hadn't is showing humility, but I also need to be okay with being vulnerable and admitting that I may have

stuffed-up - to admit that I'm not perfect, to admit that sometimes I get confused, to admit sometimes that I made a mistake...

For example:

- ❖ I wish I could take back those words I said to you and I'm sorry.
- ❖ I realized that I was kind of power playing.
- ❖ I realized that I was trying to hurt you because I was feeling insecure.
- ❖ I realized that sometimes I act without thinking and I know that I need to work on that.
- ❖ I would love to work on that with you darling or sweetie.
- ❖ I know that my behaviour is sometimes hurtful and I really want you to know that it's not about you.

These examples show humility and vulnerability. This is a way to let someone know that you're not perfect...

How do you think the other person feels when you're able to express that? All of a sudden, they think, I feel acknowledged. I feel like I'm not going crazy. I'm feeling like this person is able to work with me. This is huge. Really, really, really important and I actually get goose bumps when I talk about this topic because no relationship can survive without this.

Find a way to be kind to your own heart, which allows you to be kind to another. Kindness just doesn't happen. Kindness and being thoughtful and caring is a conscious choice. And why are we being kind? Are we doing it to control and manipulate? Then that becomes a problem. That then takes you back into the ego and power playing and control based behaviour.

You've got to see relationships as a big picture. I don't believe in the word sacrifice. I sacrificed myself to make you happy. No, no, no. You don't say that to a partner. It's not healthy to think like that.

Rather, "I decided to not go out with a mate, or I decided to not go to the event because I really wanted to support you" - which means you're supporting the relationship. Sometimes you have to say no to certain things. Sometimes you won't do things because you're thinking about the greater picture of the relationship. Are both of you being kind and caring towards each other? Do both of you have healthy boundaries? Do both of you give and take in a level way, in a healthy way?

If you want to move from conflict to cuddles, then learn to have humility and vulnerability. You've got to have these traits. These will absolutely bring you closer together.

7. Humor, Fun & Play

Humor is another really important and effective way to defuse conflict. *Now beware, humor is terrible if you're someone who's always laughing at everything and rarely takes anything seriously. Humor is not your friend when you're that person. Though humor is brilliant if you're a person that takes things too seriously most of the time.

I welcome you to start laughing at your intensity. Start laughing at your insecurity. Start making fun of the stuff that we can take so seriously.

One example: Instead of getting really intense with your partner, say you're in the kitchen and you're arguing about something, laugh it off by breaking state (this is an NLP term, when you say something to break a pattern, and change the state of the situation). You could say something like - "Oh my goodness. What is going on? I'm getting upset with you because you're not cutting the tomatoes the way I want you to, or - you're not folding the laundry the way I really think it should be folded, sorry honey, I'm being ridiculous (haha)"...

Many of us have these ideas of how everything should be and must look like. When you realized what's happening, you can add in some humor. Laugh things off... "Oh my, can you believe we're fighting about this? This is hilarious. Sweetie, let's not fight. Let's just take a breather for a few minutes"...

One of your biggest allies is just taking a break from the situation and really giving the situation some thought without acting sometimes.

Another great tip to move from Conflict to Cuddles is to pick your battles. Not everything has to be an issue. If you want to find fault in your partner, you will find fault every day, 10 times a day if you really want to. Get clear about what really matters and what doesn't? You've got to know how to discern what really matters and what's not that important. This is why it's so important to manage your emotions and express them in a really healthy way...

One way that you can do that is you can start speaking in a way that shows you are able to own your emotions. So you're not telling someone what they should be thinking or what you believe they are thinking. The best way to communicate and overcome conflict is to - one, invite the person that you're in conflict with - (your partner, your boyfriend, whoever it is) into the conversation. I have written this in my eBooks. I've done blog posts about this topic. It's so important...

You can say, "Hey, I'm feeling really troubled about something or something that happened the other day and I feel like I'm starting to go into passive-aggressive (or pull away) and I don't want to do that - I'd love to talk to you about it. How do you feel about that?"...

Most people when they're approached with that, they'd say, sure. Let's talk about it tonight. Let's talk about it in the morning. Let's talk about it whenever. You work out a time, or right then and there could be the perfect

time. Invite them. Another example - "Hey babe, I'd love to talk about this. I feel like I'm getting really funny (and angry or agitated)and I don't want to and I'd just love to discuss this with you. Are you open to that?"

So invite someone into conversation and when you do start speaking, no blaming, no shaming... For example: "Hey sweetie, this is something that's come up for me and I'm feeling this. My perspective is this." Not, "You're doing this... and I think this is why you're doing it". Or "When you do that, this makes me feel like this".

Don't blame them. Don't make them responsible for your feelings. You could say, "When this happened, I felt like this (x). I'm starting to feel really yucky about something that was said the other day". Or, "When we were out with your friends on the weekend (or last night or today), I know it might be in my head, but I felt really disregarded. I started to feel a jealous when you didn't come over and speak to me for most of the day. I'd really love that we can go to an event together and we can do our own things, but sometimes I feel like we're so separated. I value a healthy relationship that's respectful and kind. I'm starting to feel doubtful and it would be great to work this out. I haven't said something for the last four times we've gone out, but I've noticed this". How much more effective is it to say that than saying, "When we were out yesterday, you were speaking to your mates (or other women) the whole time and I don't think you care about me. You were flirting with everyone but me. If you really cared about me, then you would spend more time with me when we're out".

That's jealousy and insecurity; that's projecting something on to them and you don't know that to be true. He may think that you are 100% capable of doing your own thing. You may tend to walk away from him a lot and he might think the same thing about you. You don't know what a man's thinking and feeling (anyone for that matter). Maybe he just wants to give you space or maybe he's just not aware of how you feel, because you have not told him.

By letting him know how you're feeling in a *healthy way* you can resolve it. It doesn't always have to be a conflict. When you get clear about how you're really feeling, then it just makes life and relationships so much easier.

Next I'm going to talk about some words to avoid when you are communicating in your relationship. Though before we do that, I want to just share something really fascinating...

#1 REASON WHY A RELATIONSHIP ENDS

I don't know if you've heard about a study or there were actually lots of studies done in the 70's, 80's and 90's by a man called Dr. John Gottman. He's a psychologist and in the 70's, a group of social scientists began to do a lot of research on why there was such a huge increase of couples divorcing. And one of the key psychologists or key researchers with this study in the 1970's was John Gottman - and John Gottman continued to study and do research and joined forces with his wife who is also a psychologist...

What they found is that the number one factor that will deteriorate a relationship is *contempt*, so contempt is huge. When your partner is always looking to criticize and put you down, or you often criticize and put your partner down, then as I've said to you before, the relationship is set to fail. And what Drs. John and Julie Gottman discovered was that there were two types of couples: the '*masters*' where the ones that survived and didn't divorce and were happy, and then there were the '*disasters*'.

The masters were kind to each other, caring, thoughtful. When someone was speaking or making a comment like, "Oh what do you think of the new chairs", or "What do you think of my shirt" and if you just ignore them and don't look up and

actually give them proper attention, then you're kind of being a little dismissive and you're not actually connected.

So when someone's speaking to you and asking you a question or sharing something, what do you do? Are you acting in the 'disaster' category or the 'master' category? Are you present, looking up, getting some eye contact? Or are you keeping your head down and looking at your phone, watching TV, or even saying "oh god, can you tell me later?" Or, "I'm busy right now". Or, "Yeah, yeah", whatever this kind of response doesn't feel like the person really cares.

That was a quick example of the difference between the master couple and the disaster couple. This information was very, very interesting.

So the disaster couple would be very much dismissive, where the masters are attentive and connected. So the difference is about turning towards, engaging, looking at your partner, caring what they have to say, truly acknowledging your partner. This is perfect.

Now you can also say something nice *but you're still not present*. For example: a kind of typical thing is where a wife will ask the husband something and the husband's heads down reading the paper and will say, "Lovely darling, that's wonderful darling". He may have actually heard what she said but has not acknowledged her properly. This is where we can get a bit lazy and the other person can feel like they're not being acknowledged or *seen*. Acknowledgement and caring and sharing is so very important.

For example: I had a client who came to me and he shared with me that as much as he was really into and attracted to his girlfriend, they had a lot of conflict, and he brought up something that was quite interesting. He said, "She never asks me about my day and when I do talk about my work, she never asks any questions". Most of the time, he felt that she was not engaged and he was really feeling upset about it. He also shared with me that he has a female friend that would always ask him, "So how's work or how did that contract go?"...

He's in real estate. She'd also ask, "Did those people end up signing on that house?", "Did it come to an agreeable offer?" He was wondering why his female friend was far nicer and sweeter to him, while his girlfriend just didn't seem to care. It was something that was really eating at him and he couldn't understand that if you really love someone and you really care for someone, that you wouldn't be interested.

So these are the little things that make a difference and if they're not addressed, they create conflict. This is not just about dealing with conflict at the time - there are ways to stop conflict from happening (prevention), and I've already given you some great tips for that.

So... how mindful and caring and thoughtful are you? When you're tired and you're stressed and you feel crappy after a busy day, what do you do for each other? IS he supportive of you? Are you supportive of him? Do you know how to articulate what you value? Are you sometimes just a little bit crappy in your behavior and a little bit dismissive when you don't really need to be? Because if you want to be in a healthy relationship sometimes we have to push ourselves and make that extra effort - something so small can make the world of difference.

I have caught myself out many a time when I've wanted to say something to somebody - I'm annoyed at you, I've been frustrated, though instead of reacting I just come back into my heart and I think about it and I think, gosh if I say that, this could happen. Oh my, it's going to cause more problems...

What's the real issue? It's really important to do a self-audit before you speak, to get to the core of the issue. Am I just being lazy? Why am I in a bad mood? Why am I not making an effort? And if you are really exhausted, sick, and tired, you talk to your partner about it and if they're an attentive person, then they probably won't bring up certain things when you're actually sick or you had a really bad day. They'll be mindful of that and talk to you about things and instead ask what you need. It works both ways...

Perhaps get your partner to listen to this. This is not just about you changing; it's about you being aware and mindful. This isn't just about men or women dating men. It's not about wronging males or wronging a woman. We just need to communicate more effectively - and men can be great communicators just as well as women, though just because a woman is communicating, it doesn't mean that she's clear about how she's feeling and vice versa. Just because you're angry and shouting certainly doesn't mean that you're clear or accurate about what you're thinking and feeling. It means that you're triggered, and you're upset, and you're angry. It doesn't necessarily mean that you're dealing with the core issue.

Love and compassion is the answer here. There is nothing wrong with telling a partner that you're not coping with something. If you've got kids and family and you're dealing with financial stress and all these things, it impacts on your life. You've got work and you got to clean the house and all these things, though most women, a lot of women are often naggy and they don't clearly state what they need. Just get clear about what you really want. Don't expect your partner to know how you're thinking or feeling.

Even in the early stages of dating and relationships, if you're very confused about what a guy's thinking or where he's at, then you can process that first. Are you experiencing unnecessary insecurity and self-doubt? Is it too soon to say something to them so early on when their behavior is weird, or you can just say, "Hey, I'm feeling a little confused. I'm really enjoying getting to know you; I'm just not sure if we're on the same page, if we're okay or not, but I'd love to know" - A healthy-minded guy would love that. If he's not healthy, if he's not able to have an emotionally effective connection, then he won't like it and that's okay. As long as you do it from the heart and you do it from a place of wonder versus wronging and insecurity and neediness, then it's brilliant.

WORDS AND PHRASES TO AVOID

So to wrap this up, let's talk about the last point, which are words and phrases that you can say that are really unhealthy for a relationship, and the reasons why.

Never and Always: Every now and again while I've been speaking on this topic today, I've sometimes used the words 'never' and 'always' - these words are something that we can say a lot and not realize that we're saying them...

If you're in a relationship and you would like to negotiate or talk about a topic and you tell your partner that they "always" do something or they're "never" doing something that you'd like - e.g. "You're *always* speaking down to me", "You never help me with the kitchen". These statements are probably not true - it is true that they're *always* doing something, or they're *never* doing something? It's important to be really mindful of these words and not use them unless the statement is 100% true.

The truth is - "It feels like you're always doing 'X' and I know it's not the case, I know that you do help me from time to time", you can correct yourself and package it like that. Or, "I've noticed that I'm feeling a bit annoyed because I feel from my perspective that I'm doing a lot more and I know that you've got stresses with your work, I'm just feeling like I'm probably overdoing it and I have a habit of overdoing

things and I'd love some help. Can we work something out?" That's very different to telling someone that they never do something. As soon as you say that, they'll get defensive and its tops flowing communication.

But: Another common word that's used is the word 'but'. Often someone will say something nice first and then follow this with the word 'but'...

I love you, but...

You're great, but...

Don't use the word 'but'. Use the word 'and' instead.

I love this about you *and* it would be really great if we could work on our communication.

I love spending time with you *and* the same time, I feel like I'm not getting time for myself. I feel guilty if I want to see my girlfriends. I feel guilty if I want to go into Yoga class when we can be spending time together and I'm challenged with that.

Do you see the difference? So use the word 'and' to link things together.

Name-Calling: Also avoid name-calling. Please don't call your partner stupid, dumb, a dickhead, a loser, and any other words that you can think of. There's plenty more that I could be sharing here and you know some of those words start with 'F', so don't use them. They break down the relationships, they criticize, they ruin communication; so avoid them at all costs.

It's Not My Problem: Also saying, 'It's not my problem'. You know you're in a relationship together. Sure you want your partner to be responsible and to also contribute in the relationship, though you're working together as a team. So saying *it's not my problem*, it's yours, this becomes a blaming kind of phrase. Avoid that.

It's Your Fault: If you say to someone, 'It's your fault', then what happens? War! No one wants to be made wrong. It feels terrible. This is not an effective way to start a

conversation. Don't tell someone it's their fault. Talk about it openly. Be open to different perspectives.

Shut Up: Avoid telling someone to shut up. No one likes being told to shut up. Just ask them if you could speak or let them finish first. Sometimes the other person is not over speaking, rather you could be hell bent on getting out what you want to say, that you're actually not listening to them either. So just be mindful of these words. There are other ways of saying something like this.

Further to that, you do need to have an argument to say 'shut up' (though it could create an argument) - you could be over talking or talking while someone is busy. I remember an ex-boyfriend used to say to me, "be shushy" and always with a smirk on his face. It was his way of saying, 'can you just be quiet for a second while I finish something'. Now this is not meant to contradict what I said before about being attentive to your partner... Sometimes we do walk in on someone in the middle of something and they can't speak to us straight away. So he would say something like, "Sweetie, it's time to be shushy for a second." This is particularly good for someone who's a big speaker and rarely quiet (I'm now much better at being more mindful with my talking, though yes, I could sometimes be a bit of a talker). So that's a really nice way of doing it. Well, this style worked for me. Or you can say, "can you hold that thought for one second and I'll be right with you", or "Can you give me 5 minutes (or an hour or two) and you'll have my 100% full attention".

Fat & Ugly: There are also things like calling people fat or ugly. Don't put them down. Don't comment on someone's physicality, nor on their aesthetics, when you're feeling like you just want to be horrible. Don't tell them that they've got a big, fat belly and they're ugly. Why would you want to be mean like this? It's just not a nice thing to do. This is not love and kindness.

Break-Up, Separate, Divorce: Another word to avoid is bringing up the word break-up, or divorce, or separation. If you keep throwing words around like that, then you start actually pre-empting it more. So don't use the word break-up, divorce as a threat. If you believe in the relationship, you don't need to say those kinds of things and you can just talk about how you feel - be solution-focused and don't use threats.

Keep Others Out Of The Argument: Also, if someone has shared something with you and they've spoken about your partner in maybe a negative way, or you've shared with someone a struggle that you're having and someone has agreed with you, like their sister or their mother or a mate, do not use that against them as ammunition. Talk from your own perspective.

Don't say, "Your mother told me that she agreed with me that you used to do *that* when you were little". Or, "Your mate also thinks that you can be pig-headed or stubborn"...

Talk to him from your own perspective; otherwise get a counselor or a therapist in. Don't use other people to fight your battles, because this breaks down the relationship they have with other people too, and this creates tension in your social life as well with your family life.

I Think We Should Talk: Avoid saying, 'I think we should talk' or 'we need to talk'. Imagine your partner is at work and you send them a message like that, or you call them and you tell them that you need to talk - it's like torture. Have you ever had someone say that to you? It's horrible.

Instead, talk about it at the time or talk to them about it when they're in front of you. Share that you'd love to talk about it, and as I said before, work out a time to talk, but don't use it like a power play. It's really, really horrible.

Get Out: Also another one is telling someone to get out. I know a girl that used to live with a guy and he'd often in an argument tell her to get out of his house and

leave. Now, they lived together and he would use the power play because he owned the house and he would tell her to get out, when in actual fact, they weren't going to break up; it was just this constant, crazy arguing and it was really cruel. Don't do that. So if you own a house or your boyfriend has moved in with you, unless it's a deal-breaker and he's being physically abusive or verbally abusive, even then, you need to get to a safe place yourself and actually not be in that relationship. So that's really important.

The very last thing I want to discuss is to recognize when you need to get professional help. Yes, you can work on things and there are so many tips and tools I've given you today in this lesson, though there are plenty of times when people just need some extra help.

So know when that time is and also be aware of your deal breakers. As I just mentioned, abuse is never healthy; emotional or physical abuse. If you don't feel safe emotionally with someone or physically with someone, then you need to get safe and don't wait for something to get so bad.

Also, walking away from an emotionally charged environment is important. And even with little basic, simple disagreements that aren't necessarily abusive, just know when to walk away and then come back when you both are no longer heated and stressed and easily triggered.

If you really want to have a loving, lasting relationship, then follow what I've shared; even about that study with the Gottman's. Are you a *master* in a relationship or are you a *disaster*? Know the difference. It's awesome. This stuff is amazing information.

How brilliant is it that you can just change a couple of things, little things daily, and create more intimacy, and move a relationship from *Conflict to Cuddles*!

I've given you over 14 great tips here. Use them, practice them and break your cycle and I know they work because I've seen relationships transform almost overnight by making these little changes. So just choose one of these things today. I

hope you've written down some notes. If not, listen to this again and write down the information that most relates to you.

Just choose one thing, then another thing, and then it will all start coming together. And normally when we work on one thing, then all of a sudden it works on other issues. So if you work on your need to control and your ego stuff and your self-worth, then all of a sudden you learn to speak more from the heart. You become more honest with yourself and then you're able to communicate more effectively. It's all is interrelated. Making changes doesn't have to be a big deal.

Again, just start with one of these tips today and all of a sudden, you'll notice how differently you communicate and connect with your partner (or anybody).

It's been an absolute pleasure to have you here with me and I've loved sharing this information with you. May you continue to grow your connections and build intimacy and the experience the love that you want, by moving from *'Conflict to Cuddles'*.

THANK YOU.

LOVE YOU FIRST

NADINE PIAT