



Sandra's strategies for life and well-being:

Relationships...there is no manual on how to have a healthy relationship, but there are strategies...

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Every week in my office I sit with some unbelievably strong, motivated and inspirational people. A lot of them are couples struggling with their romantic relationships. These couples are smart, intuitive and very much in love.

Why do so many struggle with their relationships? Why are the statistics on marriage and coupling so dismal? Well, we don't get a manual on how to have a successful long term relationship. Instead we grow up watching movies and listening to love songs that suggest that we all will either live happily ever after or be aching for the love that got away.

So why bother? For many reasons (at the top of the list LOVE), relationships can be wonderful, and allow us to grow and share our lives with someone special. It can be easy to get along with yourself... but in romantic relationships you will be stretched for sure. There is an old adage that says if you want to find out YOUR dysfunction-get into a relationship and you will find out!!

We all tend to think we are quite healthy until we meet that certain special person.

At the beginning of a new relationship-we feel so happy-we are at our best, "bouncing off the clouds" and without a care in the world. We find ourselves finishing that special person's sentences and saying things like "This is so amazing.... We are so happy... I found my soulmate...etc." Then one day leads to the next and we start noticing that sharing our life with that special someone also includes the reality that they seem to know how to really push our buttons. Arguments and power struggles arise, and we find ourselves wondering "how did we get here?"

The truth is this is a normal stage of all relationships where you can learn so much about yourself and take your relationship to the next level. That being said, you will need some solid skills to understand (and use) to turn what at one time felt so good - what now feels like nightmare, into a new amazing level of intimacy and love.

If you look at any difficult moment between two people who love each other- at the root of that moment is a yearning question or questions: Do I matter? Am I important to you? Will you be there for me when I need you? Emotional Focused Therapy discovered by Dr Sue Johnson gave us the skills to dissect the language of love, conflict and the research was unequivocal. We all need to matter and

feel secure in our love relationships or our wounds take over and we will shut down our hearts. This will undoubtedly cause trouble for your relationship.

When we can understand the wounds of our partners and they can understand ours- a safe place is created between us. We become a team. Marriage and being a couple is a team sport. I find myself often telling couples that every conflict and every challenge allows them to work together as a team to find a win/win solution. Win/lose will ultimately destroy love. Win/lose is a recipe for resentment and resentment is a slow poison to love.

Learning about how to create a team, a safe haven and a close intimate relationship is a wonderful thing to do together. Perhaps it is time to invite your partner on a team excursion. Consider this an invitation to bring "your team" to our free lecture on the latest research on couples on June 3rd (or even just attend yourself). Maybe you would like to learn more about relationships and your "team" would consider doing an intensive relationship course (with a manual) . Consider joining me at our couple's retreat in the gorgeous Mexican Riviera and learn how to really master relationships, and intimacy while at a beautiful all inclusive hotel. Sun, beach, yoga, learning with your partner to be the best couple you can be...it does not get better than that. Enter our contest to win a half paid scholarship to retreat - by emailing me at info@helpforanxietydepression.com why this retreat appeals to you (all is confidential) and see you on the beach.

Whatever road appeals to you, know that life and relationships are a journey. Working through difficult times together with your partner can be quite magical and wonderful if you have a road map to guide you. Call us anytime for more information, take advantage of our free 15 minute consultation, enter our contest to win a half scholarship to our couple's retreat and/or come by and say hi on June 3rd. Love is in the air...Keep your eyes on the stars...

Sandra

Sandra Reich is the Clinical Director of The Montreal Center for Anxiety and Depression as well as the best selling author of "Once upon a Time ... How Cinderella Grew up and Became a Happy and Empowered Woman" available on Amazon.com or at The Montreal Center for Anxiety and Depression 955 St Jean suite 301 514-777-4530 or 514-796-4357.