



5 Relationship Killers and How to Avoid Them

By Margaret Paul, Ph.D.

As a relationship counselor, I am constantly being asked why so many relationships fail. In the 37 years that I have worked with couples, I have discovered five major relationship killers:

CONTROLLING BEHAVIOR

Most people enter a relationship with a deep fear of rejection, and this fear motivates various forms of controlling behavior. Controlling behavior falls into two major categories – overt control and covert control.

Overt control includes many forms of attack, such as blaming anger, rage, violence, judgment, criticism and ridicule.

Covert control includes compliance, enabling, withdrawal, defending, explaining, lying and denying. Often a person at the other end of attack will respond with some form of covert control in an attempt to have control over not being attacked.

Controlling behavior always results in resentment and emotional distance, bringing about the very rejection that it is meant to avoid.

RESISTANCE

Many people enter a relationship with a deep fear of being engulfed and controlled – of losing themselves. The moment they experience their partner wanting control over them, they respond with resistance – withdrawal, unconsciousness, numbness, forgetfulness, and procrastination.

When one partner is controlling and the other is resistant – which is really an attempt to have control over not being controlled - the relationship becomes immobilized. Partners in this relationship system feel frustrated, stagnant, and resentful.

NEEDINESS

Many people enter a relationship believing that it is their partner's job to fill their emptiness, take away their aloneness, and make them feel good about themselves. When people have not learned how to take responsibility for their own feelings and needs, and to define their own self-worth, they may pull on their partner and others to fill them with the love they need.

SUBSTANCE AND PROCESS ADDICTIONS

Most people who feel empty inside turn to substance and process addictions in an attempt to fill their emptiness and take away the pain of their aloneness and loneliness. Alcohol and drug abuse, food, spending, gambling, busyness, Internet sex and pornography, affairs, work, TV, accumulating things, beautifying, and so on, can all be used as ways to fill emptiness and avoid fears of failure, inadequacy, rejection and engulfment. And they are all ways of shutting out your partner.

EYES ON PARTNER'S PLATE

Many people are acutely aware of what their partner is doing that is causing relationship problems, but completely unaware of what they are doing. For example, you might be very aware of your partner's resistance or withdrawal, but totally unaware of your own judgmental behavior. You might be very aware of your partner's anger, but completely unaware of your own compliance. You might be very aware of your partner's addictive behavior, but very unaware of your own enabling. As long as your eyes are on your partner instead of on yourself, you will continue to believe that if only your partner changed, everything would be okay.

RESOLVING RELATIONSHIP KILLERS

All relationship killers come from fear – of inadequacy, of failure, of rejection and of engulfment. As long as you are coming from any of these fears, you will be behaving in one or more of the above ways.

The way out is to develop a loving adult self who knows how to take full responsibility for your own feelings and needs. You will move beyond controlling, needy and addictive behavior only when you learn how to fill your self with love and define your own inner worth. When you are willing to take your eyes off your partner's plate and turn your eyes fully on yourself, you can begin to do the inner healing work necessary to heal yourself and your relationship.

A good place to start is to download our free Inner Bonding course and begin to practice the Six Steps of Inner Bonding. The daily practice of these steps will move you out of your addictive and controlling behavior and into the personal responsibility necessary to heal your relationship.

Margaret Paul, Ph.D. is the best-selling author and co-author of eight books, including "Do I Have To Give Up Me To Be Loved By You?" and "Healing Your Aloneness." She is the co-creator of the powerful Inner Bonding® healing process. Learn Inner Bonding now! Visit her web site for a FREE Inner Bonding course: <http://www.innerbonding.com> or email her at margaret@innerbonding.com. Phone sessions available. Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Margaret_Paul,_Ph.D.

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