

INSTANT Relationship Breakthroughs

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Relationship and Life Coaches and Authors

www.InstantRelationshipBreakthroughs.com
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Introduction

What is an Instant Relationship Breakthrough?

An instant relationship breakthrough is one moment when one or both of you make a shift to do, say or act differently and there's an opening, a new sense of understanding or new feeling of connection and communion in the relationship. If your intention is to create these breakthroughs, then you will create the type of relationships that you want and have more love, passion, intimacy and connection.

To create instant relationship breakthroughs, it takes knowing what you want in your relationships and making sometimes very small shifts in your beliefs, your thinking, speaking and actions.

In our work with singles and couples all over the world, we've discovered that there are two ways people look at making their relationships and lives better.

Some people believe that change takes a very long time to happen. They believe that if you want to improve something, you peck away at it and you'll have one day finally have what you want. Others believe that you can have what you want if you make the shifts now that will bring you those things.

It's been our experience that changes in relationships, whether positive or negative, can happen in two ways: slowly or quickly.

If you want to impact your relationship for the better and do it more quickly, you can create what we call "Instant Relationship Breakthroughs" where one or both of you in the relationship says, does something or has a new shift of perception—an insight or "ah ha" moment. Once you have this insight, this gives you the ability to radically transform this relationship and future relationships. These "Instant Relationship Breakthroughs" can be shifts of attitude, perception, strategy, or ways of communicating.

Creating “Instant Relationship Breakthroughs” is what happens when two people are committed to being the very best they can be without being defensive. It’s when two people are open to the joy that is always possible whether we know it and accept it or not. Instant relationship breakthroughs can also happen when you apply these ideas in your future relationships.

One of the reasons we have such a great relationship is that we continue to create these “Instant Relationship Breakthroughs” all the time. For the people who believe that because we’re relationship coaches and authors of relationship books, audios and courses, nothing ever comes up between us and it’s smooth sailing all of the time--that’s just not true. But what makes couples like us different from people with poor or mediocre relationships is that we have our hearts open more of the time, are clear about our intentions about what want for our relationships and our lives and we have or learn the skills and strategies to be able to heal the conflicts and challenges that come up between us quickly and easily.

That’s what we’re going to share in this guidebook—a few of the ideas that have had profound positive impact on our relationship and the lives of countless others who have great relationships.

The Master Key to Making the Shifts to Creating “Instant Relationship Breakthroughs” is when we Change our “Stories.”

Everything we ever do, everything that ever happens to us, can be interpreted as either good or bad. It’s the way we interpret these things that happen to us that make them so.

What determines how we interpret the events? We do.

It’s our thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and judgments about those events. It’s our choices we make in every moment about what they mean—whether something is a good thing or a bad thing about every part of our life. It’s the way we look at life through our particular lens.

Everything that has happened in your life up until now has helped you to create your beliefs about yourself and the people around you—good or bad, right and wrong, what you want or don’t want. How many times have you told yourself a “story” about someone or some event that turned out not to be true? Because of experiences you had had in

your life, you thought something was one way and reality was really something quite different.

To Illustrate this Point, Here's Susie's story: "I remember when I was in the 2nd grade, I had a teacher named Gussie Egbert and all of the kids were afraid of her, including me. She had a red upholstered stool in her classroom and I truly thought that it was an electric chair where she zapped bad kids. I never saw anyone getting zapped but I sure had a lot of stomach aches that year and tried to stay home from school as much as I could. That is an example of a huge "story" that I told myself and I'm sure that you all have equally bazaar, silly stories."

Isn't that just the way we sometimes look at what happens in our lives and at other people? Maybe we don't have all the information or maybe we just bring our prejudices and past experiences with us into situations and later we might find out that things aren't always the way they seem. These "stories" that we make up keep us stuck—like when Susie was in the 2nd grade.

The question is—how do we consciously create stories about our lives and our situations that move us toward what we want instead of what we don't want.

The way people look at their lives and relationships usually fall into one of two categories or areas in every moment—

1. You're stuck in old patterns of reacting unconsciously, playing any one of many roles—victim, accuser, martyr, soother—you name it; OR
2. You consciously choose creative possibilities

The trick is to consciously become aware when you are telling yourself "stories," determine the meaning of those "stories" and make a shift away from those "stories" into opening into new possibilities. When you do this, you also avoid "faturizing" or projecting into the future about how things may or may not be. You stay in the present moment and focus on what's truly happening.

When one or both people are stuck in patterns or "stories" that don't serve them, there is usually a feeling ranging from frustration to desperation. When there's an "Instant Relationship Breakthrough," those destructive patterns that keep us fearful, defensive and not in

our power begin to crumble and new life seems to begin flowing in the relationship.

So, what we are asking you to do as you go through this guidebook and audios is to first identify your “stories” which can show up as destructive patterns in your life and then identify how you can shift into a space of creative possibilities.

How to Use This Material

In this guidebook and in the audios, we’re going to be explaining ideas that we use to create breakthrough moments in our relationship and in our relationships with other people. To get the most out of the material, we suggest that you listen to the audios and work through this guidebook at the same time.

We’ve constructed activities which are listed at the end of each “Breakthrough” to help you incorporate these ideas into your life. We invite you to answer these questions in writing as you work through the material and come back to the ones that you are drawn to put into practice.

To make changes that last, it’s important to remind yourself often about the new thoughts, beliefs and actions that you want to make.

One way to do this is to put the ideas that you resonate with on 3”x5” cards, carry them with you and look at them often. Don’t be discouraged if you backslide—we all do at times. If and when you do, take your cards out and recommit to making the changes that you want to make.

You may either work with a partner or by yourself. If you are in a relationship where both of you are open to working through this material, we suggest that you listen and read the material, either separately or together, and answer the questions on your own. Come back together and discuss your thoughts, answers and how you can apply the ideas to your relationship. You might complete the material in one “Instant Relationship Breakthrough” per week for 21 weeks or you might go through the material as quickly as you want.

If you are working alone, whether you are not currently in a relationship or your current partner does not wish to participate, we

suggest that you either decide to complete one “Breakthrough” per week or whatever way you are drawn to complete the material. It might be helpful for you to talk the information over with a friend and tell that friend how you are going to apply these ideas.

Even if you are currently in a relationship and going through it by yourself, one person can be a catalyst for breakthroughs in that relationship.

If you aren’t currently in an intimate relationship and want to be, this information will help you to create the kind of partnership that you are looking for the next time around. We encourage you to “practice” on your family, friends and co-workers and watch how your life changes for the better!

We’re offering these ideas to you in the hopes that you will see how they can apply to your life, how you can begin opening to other people—whether you are in an intimate relationship or not—and how you can use them to create the relationships that you are wanting.

Everything you do either moves you closer to or further from the love that you really want

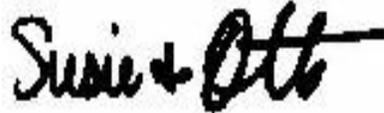
Let’s say you live in Chicago and you want to take a trip out west to Los Angeles, California which is 2000 miles away. Suppose you took a wrong turn getting out of Chicago and headed east toward New York instead. How long after you realize that you’re going the wrong way should it take before you turn around and head west which was your initial destination?

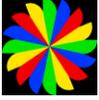
The sad truth is that for many people in their relationships—things aren’t working the way they’d like them to be but they keep doing the same things over and over and nothing changes. They are sort of like the person who keeps driving east while wanting to go west.

These “Instant Relationship Breakthroughs” are to help you to change directions, in small or large ways, so that you can create the relationships and love that you truly want instead of what you don’t want.

We send you much joy and love as you move through this material and if we can be of support to you in your process, let us know.

Susie and Otto, Relationship Coaches and Authors





Instant Relationship Breakthrough #1

Be Proactive and Responsible for Creating Your Life the Way You Want

If you don't have the love you want (or anything else), you're the one who is blocking it. You might think that's a radical statement to make but here's what we mean...Think about your garden hose. What happens when it gets a major kink in it? If the water doesn't flow past the kink, the flow is shut off until you remove the kink. That's the way we believe that it is with us humans. When we block our natural radiance, we block what we want from coming to us.

Now we're certainly not electricians but did you know that electricity flows through the wires in the walls of our homes all of the time? The electrical switch either allows the electricity to flow to the lights or it stops it.

Just like the garden hose and electricity examples—we can choose to allow our life force to flow or not allow it to flow. It's our choice.

At this point might be arguing with us right now and saying "I'm not blocking it. It's because of _____ (you fill in the blank) that I don't have exactly what I want in my life."

Anytime that you "blame" someone or something else and don't accept that you are the one blocking the flow of love, you are not accepting responsible for creating the life and relationships that you want.

Here's Otto's story—"Recently I went to my uncle's funeral and of course saw family members that I haven't seen in many years. As I was talking with one of my cousins who I had only seen a couple of times in the last 10 years, he said something that illustrated what we're talking about. He told me-- "It looks like you got all the money

this time.” When I told him that he could have what he wants in his life too, he told me that it was too late for him. He’s given up on the idea that he can ever have the money that he wants in his life.” Now this man is only in his late 40’s and he’s already given up on making changes in his life that will bring him what he wants. He believes in his mind that nothing will change and he will always be poor. He believes that he can do nothing to change his lot in life.

This is also a belief that many of us hold about our relationships—that there’s nothing we can do. Of course, this is simply not true!

What You Can Learn from Dave about Creating Instant Breakthroughs in your Life

We read an inspiring story about a man named Dave Pelzer who did believe that he could change his life. Dave has experienced a truly extraordinary life. He nearly died several times by the hands of his mentally disturbed alcoholic mother. Years later it was determined that Dave’s case was identified as one of the most gruesome and extreme cases of child abuse in California’s then history. At age 12, Dave was finally rescued and placed in a series of foster homes until he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force at age 18. Even with all that was against him, Dave was determined to better himself - no matter what the odds. From there, he dedicated his life to helping others and has inspired thousands of people.

Here’s what he said, “I’m so blessed. The challenges of my past have made me immensely strong inside. I adapted quickly, learning how to survive from a bad situation. I learned the secret of internal motivation. My experience gave me a different outlook on life that others may never know. I have a vast appreciation for things that others may take for granted.”

In every moment of his life, Dave is choosing to create a “breakthrough” for him and for others by taking responsibility for being a light for others instead of a victim. He’s choosing to live the life that he wants by being of service to others.

What does this have to do with you? Everything.

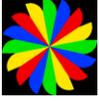
We all have places in our lives where we can “step up to the plate” so to speak and take responsibility for turning our lives around—for

making small or big changes that will make our lives better and the lives of those we come in contact with.

Taking responsibility for creating your life might mean saying something to someone that you've been holding back from saying because you fear that it might "hurt their feelings" or might destroy the relationship. The truth is that those unsaid words have built walls and created separation even though you haven't realized it.

Taking responsibility for creating your life might mean taking an action that you know that you have needed to take and have been too fearful to take it. It might be a small action like asking for what you want (something as small as making a suggestion for which restaurant to go to) or it might be stating a preference that has larger implications like how you would like to spend your holidays.

To help you discover your blocks to creating your life and relationships, the way you want them to be, there are some activities on the next page for you to complete before moving on to the next "Breakthrough" idea.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #1

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

How have you put up walls and barriers to having the love and relationships that you think you want?

Example: "I'm jealous and jump to conclusions that aren't true."

What mental shifts and actions can you make to dissolve the walls and barriers that you've created that are preventing you from having what you want?

Example: "I can shift my thinking to what is actually true instead of making up stories that aren't true."

When are you willing to start making those shifts?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #2

Say “Yes” to You

Now, this may sound completely selfish but actually to us saying “yes” to you is critical to the success of any relationship.

Here’s what it’s not—“It’s about time I get what **I** want.” “It’s time I get my needs met and I don’t care what happens to you.”

Here’s what we think it is—asking “How can I open to creating my life the way I want and still maintain love, compassion in my relationships with co-workers, my partner, my boss, my family?”

It means taking a risk with the intention of creating something good or great.

Here’s Susie’s Story—“During the last years of my 30-year previous marriage, I didn’t tell my husband how I was feeling about our marriage. I was afraid he’d leave because deep inside, I knew he felt the same way. The life had completely gone out of our relationship and we didn’t know how to get it back. I kept quiet about my fears and feelings, thinking they would go away but they didn’t. After my divorce and when I started being with Otto, he was honest enough to tell me that he was dating another woman at the time. I said “yes” to me when I told him that I appreciated his honesty and I wanted him to choose between us before we went any further with our relationship. This was a huge shift for me and a big breakthrough because I wasn’t afraid to say those words. I knew I didn’t want the same kind of relationship that I’d had before and that I had to make a shift and say what was important to me for it to happen. I didn’t want to settle for anything less. In that moment, I was making a commitment to myself—not doing it the way I always had by running away from an uncomfortable situation and not speaking my truth.”

Saying “yes” to you reveals a commitment. If you don’t commit to saying “yes” to you, you are saying “yes” to being a victim, martyr, not your best, and not as loving as you could be.

It may require you to do difficult things and may force you to do or say things that in the moment are tough. While this may be difficult, it also opens the gate to closer, more connected relationships.

Saying “yes” to you may mean connecting enough pain to certain circumstances and telling yourself—“That’s it. I’ve had enough.”

We all have known people who smoke who have reached the point, whether because of current illnesses or potential health concerns for themselves or others, of throwing their cigarettes away and never smoking again. This is a great example of saying “yes” to you.

One of our coaching clients realized that he had gone through life with the attitude that he didn’t need any help from anyone. This attitude had helped to create a string of relationships that hadn’t worked out. Saying “yes” to him meant asking for help and being open to allowing another person to give him that help.

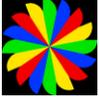
Here’s Susie’s story and an example of saying “yes” to you—A couple of years after my mother had been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease, I began “taking charge” of the meals at family gatherings at my mother’s house. After awhile, I started feeling resentful that I had to prepare all of the meals by myself at these family gatherings. It turned out that my “story” was that I was now head of the family and I had to do it all by myself. When I finally asked for help, my family was more than willing to share in the responsibility and even wanted to do it.”

You don’t know—maybe people are actually waiting for you to say “yes” to you—to state a restaurant preference instead of your standard reply of “anywhere you’d like to go” or take part in making decisions that you’ve encouraged others to make by themselves. It might even mean taking a vacation that you’ve not allowed yourself to take or to treat yourself to something that you think might be a “frill.”

Saying “yes” to you helps you to create “Instant Relationship Breakthroughs” because you are being authentically who you are in that moment. When you aren’t hiding your truth, you are allowing other people to see a “you” that is a strong, vital, alive and wonderful person.

We all have places in our lives where we need to say “yes” to ourselves. When we say “yes” to ourselves, it will actually help our relationships even though we may not realize it.

On the next page, you’ll find activities to help you discover where you need to say “yes” to you.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #2

Activities

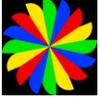
Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

Take a few moments and write down 10 ways that you can say “yes” to you.

Example: “I want more time with my partner.”

What’s one small step you can take to move toward doing one or more of those and when are you going to take that step?

Activity: “I’m going to ask my partner tonight to go alone with me to the movies on Saturday night and we’ll get a baby-sitter for the kids.”



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #3

Understand the Power of Intentions

In order to have relationships that you want to have in your life, you need to be clear about your intentions.

Here's why this is so important...

Your intentions, whether you are conscious about making them or not, are what actually manifest in your life.

We'll explain.

Several years ago, we planned a family gathering of twelve people and we all stayed in the same house.

In past family gatherings of that size, the kids have had what we call "melt-downs" and the adults had become frazzled and irritated as the weekend progressed, making it an unpleasant experience for all of us.

This time before the get-together, several of us decided to consciously intend to create a fun, joyful weekend and believe it or not, it was. Every time our thoughts went to what could go wrong, we changed them to what we wanted. We held the thought and feeling of a fun, joyful weekend instead of one that was filled with stress.

During that weekend, none of the kids had "meltdowns" and we all of us stayed in a positive space.

If you doubt that this is possible, just try it. It's powerful in groups but just as effective by yourself.

The point is that we consciously held what we wanted instead of what we didn't want as our clear intention.

The question is—what are you consciously or unconsciously intending for your relationships and your life?

Is it your intention to be at peace with your family, co-workers or your mate or do your thoughts go to what they do or say to irritate you? Are you thinking that your experiences with them will be somehow a negative one?

Disempowering, limiting beliefs

When you talk about creating intentions, you have to look at disempowering beliefs that may be holding you back. When you become aware of your disempowering beliefs, you can begin changing them, which in turn, unblocks you so you can create what you want.

Here's Otto's Story—"One of the most powerful shifts I've had is a huge shift around intentions for my relationship with my ex-wife. Our relationship has been filled with drama since our divorce and strained when we are trying to deal with issues surrounding our son. I have been fearful and mistrusting and my unspoken intention has been to not have any communication with her. I wanted to change this relationship and so in a group of people, I said that I intended this relationship to be cordial and that we work together for the best interests of our son. In other words, I softened my energy toward her in creating this intention. That's exactly what has happened. We had our first long, civil conversation since the divorce the same week that I made that intention."

Otto had the belief that he was going to keep being hurt by his ex-wife. After making his intention of being cordial with her, he decided how he would make changes in that relationship. When he felt the fear of being hurt again, he would go back in his mind to his intention of being cordial and working with her in the best interests of their son. He found that moment by moment he was changing his belief system about her and seeing her in a new light.

Notice that he had to choose an intention that he could somehow embrace and believe. Being cordial with her was something he didn't have to stretch too far to believe.

Nothing is ever created by accident. We may not think we have intentions that are counter to what we say we want, but if we are honest and look closely, we can usually discover the truth.

It may sound simplistic but we suggest that you create intentions for how you want your life and relationships to be. You can do this in

every moment. You can simply say “Here’s how I’m intending this to be”

To help you, there are some activities on the next page.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #3

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

Write one intention that could cause a breakthrough in one of your relationships.

Example: I intend to listen without criticizing when my partner speaks.

Are there any limiting beliefs within you that may sabotage this intention?

Example: I know that I can “fix” my partner if he/she would just listen to me!

What’s one small step you can take to create this intention and to act on it and when?

Example: I can remind myself about my partner’s wonderful qualities when I begin to criticize.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #4

Make Completions that have Kept You from Moving Forward in Your Life and Relationships

Most of us have an awareness of things that have been left unsaid that needed to be said or things that needed to be done that weren't done. These things are what we'll call "incompletions."

"Incompletions" can be a number of different things, such as unsaid words, broken promises, unkind acts or even something like not forgiving someone who has asked for forgiveness.

What we sometimes don't realize is that these "incompletions" keep us from what we want in our lives and our relationships because we're holding onto our negative thoughts which are usually anchored in the past. These negative thoughts usually keep us from imaging and intending what is truly possible and what we want in our lives.

Completions happen when we do or say something that makes us (or someone else) feel "complete" about one or more situations where we may have been stuck.

If you need to do a completion about anyone or anything in your life, it can be a breakthrough moment, as well as relief, for you and for the other person as well when you do.

"Cathy" took one of our courses and told us later that she had made two completions. By doing them, she has created space for something wonderful to happen and is moving forward to having what she wants in her life. She returned all of one man's things that were left at her house, including a computer, several months after they had broken their relationship and also she decided to break it off with a married man she'd been seeing every now and then for years. These things from a former lover and the relationship that wasn't going anywhere were holding her back from being with someone who could love her the way she wanted to be loved.

Completions aren't always as dramatic as Cathy's but they always free up energy for something more wonderful and powerful to come into our lives.

Recently, we saw an interview with a couple who had been married 40 years. When asked how they kept their spark, they said that they never go to bed mad at each other. That's a great example of a completion—of not allowing resentments to build—of saying unsaid words that may be getting in the way of a great connection with a partner.

We all have ways that we can make completions in our lives that will free up energy so that we can have what we want. Anything left unsaid is an incompleteness. Challenges or problems around sex are almost always about unspoken truths, withheld emotions and incompleteness.

We invite you to look at the completions that need to be made in your life and complete the following activities on the next page.



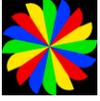
Instant Relationship Breakthrough #4

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

We want you to think creatively now—What is one completion that you've needed to make with someone or something?

What's one small action that you can take to start this completion process and when?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #5

Become Emotionally Transparent and Authentic in a Way that Shifts Your Relationship

What's emotional transparency? To us, very simply, it means what's on the outside is what's on the inside.

We love the Bruce Springsteen song "If I should fall behind." One of the lines in the song is "Make your steps clear so the other can see." We think this is great relationship advice and often so hard to do because of old experiences and old "tapes" that run in your head. You do this by clearly letting the other person know what's happening inside you.

One of Susie's old high school friends was married to a man who changed jobs frequently. They moved from city to city and each time, she had to change jobs too. She really didn't let him know how resentful she was and then one day, she just told him that she wanted a divorce. She had kept how she was feeling to herself until she just had had enough.

We all probably recognize that this woman could have handled this situation in a different and better way. But the truth is that we all do this to one degree or another at various times in our lives. What gets in our way of expressing and living from what is true for us is that there are emotions that we consider to be unacceptable to express.

Here's Susie's Story: "I grew up never seeing my parents angry with each other and no one ever seemed to be upset, angry, afraid or sad. Whether this was true or not, who knows, but I thought that anger, fear, sadness were unacceptable emotions. I learned that you just cover up uncomfortable emotions and pretend you don't have those feelings when indeed they are there. In my first marriage, I married a man who had a tough time expressing those emotions also. Because of this, I continued to stuff and deny those feelings inside me.

Fast-forward several years later and a breakthrough moment for me was when Otto was open with his emotions and encouraged me to

express mine. Now, it's still sometimes tough for me to know when I'm angry, fearful or sad. Otto may say something about how I'm acting or I may realize that my solar plexus is tight, I'm breathing shallow, or my heart is heavy. When this happens, I take a moment, breathe, quiet myself, and feel what it is that I'm trying to suppress.

Just the other day, I had the opportunity to be more emotionally transparent. Otto and I were working on a presentation and I had a heavy feeling in my chest. A breakthrough moment for me was when I told Otto that I needed to stop and go inside and feel what the heaviness was all about. When I turned my attention inward, I realized that I felt sad about my mom who has Alzheimer's disease. If I had not taken the time and the attention to be transparent, neither Otto nor I would have known what was going on inside me. When I talked about the sadness and cried, I felt better and we continued with our planning."

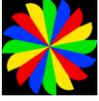
If you don't share what's going on within you, that's when resentments and grudges are created. We've also realized that one big reason people have affairs is that they are not transparent with their needs and desires.

Emotional transparency is one powerful way to keep your connection and keep trust strong in this moment and in future moments. You might think that you are better off keeping certain emotions and thoughts to yourself. If that is the thought, then we suggest you look at the motivation and fear underneath that thought.

Ask yourself these questions..."Will I become resentful and angry if I keep that thought and feeling to myself and not express it. You might also ask yourself what would be your motivation in telling the person your feelings. If it's that you are holding onto being right and want to prove you're right and hurt the other person, dig a little deeper and get to the bottom of your fears.

We've found that it's very difficult to have love, compassion, and intimacy if you don't tackle resentments as they come up and let the other person know what's going on inside you by becoming emotionally transparent.

To help you with this, complete the activities on the next page.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #5

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

Are there any emotions that are unacceptable to you? What are they and why are they unacceptable?

Example: "anger—My father showed a lot of anger as I was growing up and I'm frightened of it."

How can you be more emotionally transparent and with whom?

What's one small step you can take to do this?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #6

Speak Your Truth and Make a Request so Another Can Hear

Speaking your truth can be one of the hardest things we have to do at times and speaking it so another can hear it can even seem impossible. We want to give you some ways to do this that can create breakthroughs in your relationships.

Imagine this scenario—He's late again for dinner. When he finally comes home, she says "You're always late for dinner and I'm sick and tired of it. You never help with the kids and I'm tired of doing it all."

She is tired, irritated and doesn't feel loved. When she tells him how she is feeling, he immediately becomes defensive and either shuts down emotionally, withdraws physically or lashes out at her.

A shift would be for her to tell him how his being late makes her feel and to tell him what she would like instead of just lashing out at him.

Something like this might create a shift in their relationship...
"When you are late and you don't call, it makes me feel that I'm not being honored and respected. I don't feel loved and I feel unimportant to you. I want to have a closer, more loving connection with you and I'd like to spend more time with you. Can we talk about how we can do that?"

Now if you're really angry, it's much easier to react from past patterns and do what you've always done. So it's a good idea to admit you're angry and take a moment to feel it and if you need to be by yourself for a time, do it. Then say what you need to say.

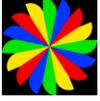
Susie gives an example from our lives—"Otto and I have very different body temperatures and when we go on car trips, we're always trying to get it so the temperature in the car is comfortable for both of us. In our previous relationships, we would just argue with our partners about what should be the "perfect" temperature in the car. What's different in this relationship is that we both are willing to open our hearts to each other—to say what's true for us and to make a request

in a way that can be heard. Occasionally Otto will say 'Is that too much wind for you?' If having the window down is too uncomfortable for me, he will shut his window enough so that we both can have what we want. If we're on a long trip and I know Otto wants the air conditioning on, I'll take a blanket and dress in layers so I can adjust to the temperature. The point is that we talk with one another and tell each other what we want and then remain open to creating a win/win situation.

When I have a "complaint" about Otto, I've discovered that he is much more open to listening to me and doesn't emotionally shut down when I first admit how I have contributed to the situation. If we start the conversation this way, he will soften, not get defensive or retreat or get angry. I can also "hear" Otto when he has a complaint about me if he does the same with me. We look each other in the eyes and we feel our hearts opening to each other and not closing in fear, judgment and criticism."

You have to discover ways that you each can talk with each other so you each can say what it is you need to say and the other person can hear it. It helps to talk about ways of doing this when you are close and feeling connected to each other. You might think that this is "opening a can of worms" but actually it might be very freeing to both of you.

Complete the activities on the next page to help you discover some ways to express your thoughts so another can hear them.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #6

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

What's one truth you'd like to express and to whom would you like to express it?

What's one way you can say those words so the other person can hear them?

When are you going to do this?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #7

Acknowledge Your Fears and Move Through Your Challenges

All of us have fears from time to time and our tendency is to either withdraw and stop doing what it is we are fearful of or get angry and mask the fear.

One of our favorite quotes around the topic of fear is:

“Most people think fear is a sign to withdraw when it’s actually a sign that we’ve already withdrawn too much.”

Here’s Susie giving an example of this idea in action—“Early in our relationship, Otto had some challenges that were getting the best of him. I told him ‘I’m going to love you anyway.’ In the past, his ex-wife closed down and emotionally withdrew when he had those challenges but when it happened in our relationship, in one instant, I stepped forward instead of running away. That one moment created a lot of trust between the two of us—that both of us were committed and we weren’t running away. I knew from my last relationship that I tended to withdraw emotionally when things got tough and I wanted this relationship to be different. I knew that I had to feel the fear, decide whether this was the relationship that I wanted or not and take a step forward. When I did that, Otto knew that I was here to stay. Now, no matter what comes up between Otto and me—when I have the feeling of emotionally withdrawing, I know it’s a sign for me to go inside myself, feel what I am feeling and then take a step forward. Am I perfect at it—No!—but I am seeing the wonderful results when I do.”

Fear is natural when we’re doing something that is different from our patterns and what we are used to. As we’ve said earlier, find your way of acknowledging your fear, center yourself and open to allowing yourself to come from a place of love.

When we talk about this idea, we often quote Marianne Williamson because she says—“There are only two emotions—love and fear.” So if you are reacting from fear, you are not allowing love to flow through you.

Here are some activities to help you apply these ideas in your life:



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #7

Activities

How can you acknowledge your fears and move through challenges that come up in your life?

What's one small thing you can do to begin doing this and when?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #8

Make More Definite "Yes" or "No" Decisions

We are all constantly making choices, either consciously or unconsciously, about how we will use our time, who we will be with, and what we will do. All these decisions (or lack of decisiveness) positively or negatively affect our happiness.

What happens when we don't make a definite "yes" or "no" in all of these decisions is that we get stuck in "maybe" land and others usually decide for us by default how we'll live our lives.

When people get stuck in "maybe" land, they tend to become angry and resentful but the fact is they didn't take the opportunity to make a choice.

Here's an example of the problems that staying stuck can create and how you can change it..

Imagine you and your partner or you and a friend decide to go to the local movie theater this Friday night. There are several possible choices of movies at your theater and you begin talking about what you'd like to see with your partner or friend.

Imagine that your partner or friend has a strong preference toward one movie and you'd really like to see another but you don't say anything. You give your partner or friend a weak, "maybe" or "I don't care" and end up seeing the movie they want to see. Later, you feel resentful and angry because this always seems to happen and you "never get to see the movie that you want to see."

A breakthrough moment can come when you empower yourself and express what you want, giving a clear "yes" or "no." It can be a breakthrough moment because you are actually "showing up" in your life and acting from a place of you really are.

A lot of people feel anger and resentment toward others but what they actually may be feeling is anger towards themselves for not having the confidence to go for what they really want. Maybe they were taught from an early age that everyone's desires should always come before their desires. Maybe they have felt that they didn't have the right to have desires. Whatever the reason, when they begin to act from a place of knowing making a definite "yes" or "no," misplaced anger and resentments towards others seem to melt away.

To us, this means that every step we take, every choice we make should be either a "yes" or a "no" and not a "maybe." Whether we realize it or not, our ability to make conscious decisions about the things in our relationships and in our lives will largely determine our happiness.

So how do you know whether a decision you are faced with is a "yes" or a "no"?

We've discovered that you can use the feelings inside you as a measurement tool for making quicker decisions on how you want to run your life and for getting unstuck. Here's the way we do it...

1. When someone asks you to do something or a choice is before you, take a moment to quiet yourself and breathe.
2. Check in with how you are feeling inside.

To practice this, think of a definite "yes" in your life, something you are absolutely certain about. It might be "I'm a great dancer" or "I'm a good cook" or even "I have green eyes." When you think of the "yes," what do you feel inside your body? Where do you feel it?

When there's a "yes" for Otto, he feels strength inside himself and a sense of expansion.

Now think of a definite "no" in your life. What does it feel like in your body?

When there's a "no" for both of us, there's a sinking and heaviness in our solar plexus and chest. This feeling may be somewhere else for you and it might not be a sinking feeling or heaviness. It might be a

dull ache or feeling of being uncomfortable. As strange as it sounds, some people might even laugh or giggle nervously when it's a "no."

Whenever we are faced with a decision, if we take the time to go within, we can feel whether something is a "yes" or a "no." By doing this, we bypass the wishy-washy place of being stuck in "maybe."

This doesn't just apply to making decisions about which movie to see. We invite you to do this exercise of consciousness on a regular basis about all the things in your life.

When you do, you will be clear about who you are and what you are feeling so there's no chance of assumptions and resentments being created that get in the way of a connection between you and the people in your life.

To help you become more emotionally aware of your "yes" and your "no," complete the activities on the next page.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #8

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

What are some important reasons for moving out of “maybe” and being more clear about what’s important to you and what you want?

In what areas of your life do you need to give a clear “yes” or “no”?

Where do you feel a “yes” in your body?

Where do you feel a “no” in your body?

What are you willing to begin doing to practice feeling and communicating your clear “yes” and “no”?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #9

Ask "What Can I Learn from You or this Situation?" when there are Differences Between You and Another Person

Have you ever wondered why you are in a relationship with someone who is so different from you and what you can do to make your relationship easier?

Most people, when they get into relationships, have an unspoken and even unconscious agenda that they want to make the other person just like them. The thought is--"Everything would be okay if you're just like me, if you like what I like and if you do things the way I like them to be done."

It may seem obvious (but we have to say it anyway) no two people are alike. No matter how similar and how well matched you think you are when you get into a relationship, you are two radically different people with different experiences, values, beliefs and desires.

What we have seen over and over (and we're sure you have too) opposites do attract.

One of the reasons that we believe we all come together in relationship is to learn, expand, and grow from the differences that are inevitable between us.

What we mean by that is that when you recognize and embrace different or unique qualities of another person that you may not have, you become a better person because of it. If you are with someone who is very different from you, you have a choice in the way you react to those differences. You can either come from a place of fear, righteousness and judgment or from a place of love and openness to growth.

What we have discovered is when differences come up, instead of making the other person wrong, you have to embrace the differences between the two of you and use them to create a better relationship.

Sound impossible? It isn't and here's why.

The two of us have the same interests and values when it comes to learning about love, relationships and spirituality. At the very core of our relationship, there is a strong "glue" that holds us together. In spite of this, we are very different people with very different ways of looking at life. This fact often makes being married business partners a challenge!

Even though there is a strong foundation that holds us together, the challenge in a relationship, like ours, when major differences are present is how to grow and to become better people because of the differences instead of allowing them to divide and possibly end the relationship.

Throughout the years, we have learned and are still learning how to look at these differences as growth opportunities. Shifting our attitudes from blame to openness to learning has transformed our relationship and we know it can yours too.

One of those major differences between us is the way we have dealt with painful issues that we need to process, whether those issues are ones between us or not.

Here's Otto giving an example of this breakthrough idea in action:

"There are times when I need some time and space to get to the bottom of some anxiety or upset within me. When we first got together, it was difficult for Susie to understand my process for working through things.

As Susie began to understand, honor and appreciate my process, she really "got" that there were times in her own life when she needed to dig a little deeper within herself as well. She discovered that taking some time and space to sort out her feelings that she hadn't realized were there was actually very helpful.

So instead of being judgmental about how I was different from her in the way I process things internally, she began to embrace and practice the same type of process which usually has led to a deeper understanding of herself and what she wants in her life."

Because this is Otto's process, this does not mean that all men take a lot of time and need a lot of space to process what's going on inside them.

These kinds of differences can exist between people of either gender in friendships, intimate, business, or family relationships.

It's all about shifting your perception about those differences that either makes the relationship great or tears it down.

The point is that if we agree to learn from each other, the differences can serve as a catalyst for creating better relationships and lives.

Our commitment to each other is to learn from those differences.

Here are a few ways that we have found helpful to do this:

1. Recognize that the differences do exist and don't dance around them. A friend of ours used a great metaphor to describe it when you don't. She talked about "dancing around the elephant in the room." We suggest getting the "elephant" out in the open and talking about it.
2. Make it "okay" to have differences in your relationship. Don't assign blame because one person wants to do something a certain way and you just don't see it that way. The exception to this idea is that you never make harmful speech or violence okay in the relationship. Just because you're making differences okay, it doesn't imply superiority.
3. Create a conscious strategy about how you are going to deal with those differences before they come up. If one person wants to "go to the cave," decide ahead of time that when that happens, the two of you will come back together after an agreed upon period of time and reconnect. Then stick to your agreements.

We've found that just because two people are different, it doesn't have to be a bad thing or indicate incompatibility. If both people are committed to creating a great relationship, the differences between them can actually serve to make them and the relationship stronger and better.

To create an instant relationship breakthrough, whenever you are "hit" with someone's differences, change the way you normally look at

those situations. Shift from annoyance, anger or judgment to openness, wonder and love. Ask one of our favorite questions—“What can I learn from you?” By acknowledging that this person may also be a powerful teacher for you, there may be a softening and better energy flow between the two of you.

If you use the moment you feel judgment toward another person for being different to appreciate them instead of making them wrong, you’ll create an instant relationship breakthrough every time you do it. Instead of making someone else wrong, always ask “What can I learn from you?” If you do, we assure you that you will experience a relationship breakthrough each time you do it.

We invite you to learn more about differences by completing the activities on the next page.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #9

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

What differences of another person drive you the most crazy?

What ways can you begin looking at those differences in a new way?

When are you willing to begin doing it?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #10

Ask “Is This How You Would Treat a Best Friend?”

In most relationships, whether there’s a marriage or not, there is usually a “honeymoon” period. During this “honeymoon” period, both people usually show their “best” selves to each other and give each other a lot of care and attention. After the “honeymoon” period wears off—whether it’s a matter of months or years—many people find themselves taking the other person for granted. They may create spoken or unspoken expectations for each other and how they should behave or they may adopt the attitude that the other person will always be there so they can dispense with simple kindnesses and courtesies. When this happens, there’s always trouble.

The following is an example of the challenges that are created when you hold a partner or someone close to you to a different standard than you would a best friend:

Here’s Susie’s story—“Although Otto and I had a very different relationship from our previous marriages, I began to treat Otto like I treated my ex-husband. I began holding him to a different standard and I began taking him for granted. The old “I’m married and I can treat him this way” attitude started to creep in. In the midst of one of those times, I suddenly realized that I had been saying that Otto was my best friend but I had not been treating him the way I treated my best girlfriend, Melissa. We’ve been best friends for over 25 years, walking/running/exercising every day together. We tell each other things and we listen to each other. We are supportive of one another, we stand up for one another and we are kind to one another. We don’t take each other for granted.

When I discovered that I was lapsing into treating Otto a little like I had treated my ex-husband at times, I stopped myself and brought myself into the realization that Otto was my best friend, loved me and although we might not see things exactly alike at times, we were there for each other. Even though Otto and I have always had a great relationship, that positive thought took me out of old patterns and

helped me to radiate more from love than fear. This was an idea that was very helpful for us at the beginning of our relationship.”

What we have discovered is that sometimes we hold our partners or anyone in our life to a higher standard than someone we consider to be a best friend. For example-If your best friend is late, you give them the benefit of the doubt why they are late and usually don't jump to faulty conclusions. You wait to find out what happened before you throw out the accusations.

When a best friend is going through hard times, you love them anyway and try to support them. But often we're critical, impatient, and not compassionate when a loved one is having problems.

Another great example of what we're talking about happened several years ago after one of our seminars. The seminar was held in a meeting room in a local store and as we walked out of the room, we heard the employee behind the counter talking with someone on the phone. She was irritated, sarcastic and even unkind. After she hung up, she turned to us and told us that that was her husband on the phone and she could talk to him that way.

We disagree. If you want a close, connected loving relationship, an instant relationship breakthrough that really works is in every moment—especially those difficult ones—think of how would you would treat this person if he/she was your best friend.

To help you begin thinking of your loved one in this way, we have an activity on the next page for you to complete.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #10 Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

How can you begin treating others as you would treat a best friend?

When and with whom are you willing to start doing this?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #11

Give up the Need to be Right

Anytime you are stuck in your wanting to be right, then you are expressing the feelings of being a victim or being a martyr.

There are many reasons why people blame, judge and have the need to be right, especially with an intimate partner. Much of it is done unconsciously. They may have seen their parents blaming and judging and it feels “normal” to them. There might be the unconscious or conscious idea that the more you blame, judge and prove that you’re right, the more likely he or she will change and do what you want. If you just “shout” loudly and often enough, the other person will change.

We’ve discovered that it just doesn’t work that way.

No matter what reasons we choose to use, fear is at the bottom of blaming, judging and the need to be right—fear that our needs won’t be met, fear that we’re not enough, fear that the other person isn’t who we want them to be so we try to make them into that person.

We’ve discovered that pointing a finger outward, blaming and judging someone else, allows a person to hide from looking inward at themselves and their life.

One common pattern that we’ve seen between two people is when one person is the criticizer and the other person is trying to work hard to get approval, while expecting criticism.

The important thing to realize is that both people are part of the relationship challenge—by playing the martyr and/or the victim—and these roles can shift from moment to moment. Whatever the role that’s being played, it’s usually a familiar one and whether we realize it or not, a comfortable one.

In our view, when you start blaming, judging or feeling that you are right and the other person is wrong, you have two choices:

1. To continue to act out of fear and entrench yourself as the martyr or victim, telling all of your friends or the other person (over and over) how he or she is wrong and you are right; Or
2. You can begin the healing process by giving up the attachment to the need to be "right" and spend your time and energy on whatever is necessary to heal the relationship.

If you are being criticized and allowing yourself to become the victim, you can either stay stuck or decide that you will stop the "dance" (as we call it) that the two of you are doing, and begin the healing process. In some cases, it may not be possible to heal the relationship, but you will heal yourself when you let go of blame and grudges.

Letting go of the need to be right or no longer holding onto the desire to be a victim can help you build closer and more connected relationships.

Here's an example in Otto's words of how letting go of the past can build better relationships-"I made a shift made around my father recently. I've been upset my entire life by the way he's been toward me and the way he's lived his life. Now I realize that he faced daily choices and decisions that I hadn't understood and I now understand his motivation behind his choices. For many years, I blamed him for moving from a neighborhood when I was young and uprooting me from my friends when actually he was trying to protect his family. He chose instead of staying in a hostile environment, to remove himself from the vicious battle that he and a neighbor woman were in. He saw that the only way to do this was to turn the other cheek and move away from the situation. Would I have made the same choice? I don't know but I now understand why he did what he did. In the moment that I understood, I felt compassion for him rather than anger and resentment that I've held for so many years."

Otto's Instant Relationship Breakthrough allowed him to see his father in a new light and look at what was going "right" in this relationship rather than to dwell on resentments he's held for him most of his life. When he allowed himself to understand his father instead of criticize him, he let go a lot of hurt that he had been carrying with him for many years..

All of us like to be right, want to feel important and validated but when it comes between you and another person, we suggest you put that "rightness" aside. When we have hung onto "being right," a breakthrough question for us has been--"Will this attitude move me closer to what I want or further away?" Since what we want is a closer connection, we usually can let go of "being right" pretty quickly and we suggest that you ask that question to help you move through this harmful attitude.

TIPS for stopping blame, judgment and the need to be right in your relationships:

- 1) Know and understand that underneath this issue is fear. When this issue comes up, go underneath the pain of the moment and try to determine what you fear.
- 2) Identify your pattern of blame, judgment or the need to be right.
- 3) Make an agreement to help each other when blame or judgment creeps in between you or if one person is trying to "fix" another.
- 4) Stop your unhealthy behavior by taking responsibility and acknowledge what you are doing.
- 5) Choose a way that would be helpful to you to interrupt the pattern and be willing to ask your partner or another person for help.
- 6) It's a good idea to make asking permission to interrupt the pattern as part of your agreement.

We are giving you some activities on the next page to help you let go of any need to hold onto being right or being the victim or martyr.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #11

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

When have you blamed or judged a person and held onto being right?

How can you begin to let all of that blame and judgment go?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #12

Listen to Understand without Judging or Fixing

Many of us may know intuitively that if we want to have the best relationships possible we should do our best to listen to understand the people in our lives rather than judging or trying to “fix” them. But sometimes it takes awareness and presence to actually “do” it on a regular basis.

Here’s an example from Otto of this in action: “Several years ago, I published a coupon and special savings magazine in our community. One time, Susie made some unsolicited comments about how she thought I should run this business. She had fallen into the trap of trying to change the way I did my work and felt that her way was better.

I could have reacted in some very negative ways. I could have thought and said things like—“Why are you telling me what to do? I’m the advertising guy!” or “I’ve been in advertising all my life. How dare you!” But in that instance, I didn’t shut down, react negatively or withdraw.

Instead, I listened to understand her ideas and fears, and I also listened to what I was feeling. I was feeling that her way was not the best way for me to conduct my business. When I told her how I was feeling, she listened. She took responsibility for believing that her way was the “right” way and for trying to fix my problems without being asked.”

In this instance, we both felt listened to and understood. For us, feeling understood by the other person, even if we don’t agree with them, helps us to keep our connection. We had to each put aside our “rightness” and listen closely to what the other was saying.

There have been other times in our relationship when we have learned a “better way” from the other person just by being open to what he or she has to share and giving the space to be heard and understood.

What we've discovered is that it's okay for us to have two different opinions about how something should be done and that most of the time there's no right or wrong way to do something—only our preferences.

We kept our connection in this instance because we were willing to listen to each other and to what we were feeling inside. We were willing to move past the old fears and judgments and to open to each other. Although we aren't always able to do this 100% of the time, we are finding that we are able to be in that "understanding" space more of the time.

This is a wonderful example of how we use listening to understand and to connect in our relationship.

Listening to understand means listening with your full attention without becoming defensive about what's being said.

It means focusing on what the other person is saying and not on what you are going to say next or trying to fix the other person.

(Did you get that last one? It's a big one that many people don't do.)

Listening to understand is listening with the intention of creating a deeper connection with another person and not just to further your agenda.

Very often people think that if they truly listen with the intention to understand someone, they are agreeing with them. We don't think that's necessarily true.

Just as we shared in our example, Otto truly listened to understand where Susie was coming from but he didn't necessarily agree with what she was telling him.

Listening to understand is not judging, it's not agreeing and it's not listening from your own agenda. It's listening—truly listening to someone and suspending fear, doubt, judgment and other defense mechanisms that prevent you from creating deeper connections of the heart.

One of the deepest needs that we all have is the desire to be understood and to feel important. One way another person can truly feel understood is if you listen to them to connect rather than to react or respond.

We struggle with this like everyone else. When we find that we are not listening to each other, it is our agreement that we acknowledge that it is happening. Then we do whatever is necessary to bring ourselves back into a place where we can listen.

It may be that we need to simply turn and face each other, stop what we are doing, and make eye contact to listen with the intention to understand.

It may mean giving each other physical or emotional space to discover feelings that have come up that may have prevented us from listening with an open heart and mind. When we do that, we always set a time when we will discuss the issue again.

To help you with this, we're giving you a few activities to do on the next page.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #12

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

What do you do that distracts you from listening to understand another person?

Are you willing to make listening to understand and your desire to connect with the other person more important than your desire to be right, to fix or to stroke your own ego?

If so, how can you improve your listening and with whom are you willing to begin doing it?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #13

Commit to Being Both Powerful and Vulnerable

Many people talk about creating balance in their lives. We've found that in order to have balance in your relationships, you have to be willing to be both powerful and vulnerable. Often times, partners play certain roles, usually learned from their parents. Being both powerful and vulnerable allows your partner to get to see the real you with your defenses down. No hiding. Not from yourself, not from your partner and not from the truth.

Understand that this idea of being both powerful and vulnerable is really a paradox and can transform the quality of your relationships instantly. Most people think that you have to be either one or the other. Not so. What we've discovered is that you can consciously be both powerful and vulnerable and when you do, you can create relationships that are deeper and filled with more love and be stronger and have more self esteem within yourself.

The dictionary meaning of vulnerability is "capable of being wounded or open to attack." We're saying that there is great strength in vulnerability and that you actually gain strength from showing true feelings even if you perceive it as weakness.

Allowing yourself to be both powerful and vulnerable also presents the possibilities of creating relationships with more passion, connection and depth.

Here's an example of this in Susie's words: "Otto is not "Mr. Fix-it" as my ex-husband and father were. Since we live in a 130 year old house and it doesn't have central air conditioning, we install window air conditioners when it gets hot in the summer. The first time Otto asked for my help with installing the window air conditioner, it took courage for him to be willing to be vulnerable to ask for help before he "destroyed" it. By asking for help, he gave me the opportunity to be powerful in an area where I normally hadn't been. My ex-husband had never asked for my help and I had the hidden fear that I couldn't do some of the maintenance things he used to do around the house. I

found out that I could because Otto was able to ask for my help. When I didn't make Otto out to be a wimp, a deeper level of trust and partnership was built between us."

What vulnerability means to us is letting your partner in and not closing down and putting up barriers when you might feel vulnerable or when things aren't going quite right.

Breakthrough moments in our relationship have happened when we have asked each other for help.

True power is internal and not external. Most people believe true power is going out accomplishing something in the world. While accomplishing things is great in the external world, it's the power that comes from within that creates outstanding relationships.

Neale Donald Walsch in Conversations with God book 3 says, "Power comes from inner strength. Inner strength does not come from raw power. In this, most of the world has it backwards. Power without inner strength is an illusion. Inner strength without unity is a lie."

Maintaining that balance within your relationship of each person allowing themselves and the other person to be both powerful and vulnerable is one of the ways that keeps the relationship and passion alive.

Please understand that we're not talking about making yourself "more or less" superior or more or less inferior to your partner or the people in your life.

What we're talking about is consciously making it okay to be both powerful and vulnerable—coming together as equals to create a relationship and synergy that creates possibilities that wouldn't be possible unless each person acts from a place of power and vulnerability.

Here are some activities on the next page to help you understand how power and vulnerability are at work in your relationships.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #13

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

Are you happy with the balance of power and vulnerability that you have with the people in your life?

If there are relationships that are in where there is an imbalance of power and vulnerability, what steps can you take in your own mind and in the relationships to create ones that are more in balance?

In what ways can you allow yourself and/or your partner to be vulnerable?

In what ways can you embrace a more powerful you?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #14

Create Conscious Agreements to Help You Create the Kind of Relationships You Want

If you want to create instant relationship breakthroughs, forming conscious agreements with each other is one of the best places to start.

So what's a conscious agreement?

A conscious agreement is between two or more people about what they expect from each another in a given situation. Ideally, you would create these conscious agreements in advance before the situations became real problems. Of course, following through on these agreements is an important element to their success.

Creating conscious agreements can have many purposes and there can be a lot of different reasons for creating them. Here's an example of one we created and an explanation for why we created it--

Early in our relationship, Susie had jealousy and abandonment issues from the past, especially in social situations. So what we did was create a conscious agreement we both could live with that would help us keep our connection, help us create trust between us, and eliminate the possibility of jealous feelings before they came up.

What we decided to do in social situations such as parties or large get-togethers was to connect with each other intermittently throughout the evening by making eye contact or by coming together for a quick hug.

In creating this agreement before the next social event occurred, we were able to talk about what we each would like in those types of situations and how we would like to be treated. Because of this agreement and the follow-through, the healing of old issues began and now the jealousy is not an issue in these situations.

Most people don't create conscious agreements for how they want their lives and their relationships to be in advance. They might fear

that if you begin making conscious agreements in advance, the "mystery" and fun will disappear from their lives.

We disagree because when you don't create conscious agreements, your relationship is ripe for fear, futurizing, disconnection, assumptions and worry about things that may or may not ever happen.

What we know to be true is that each time an agreement is honored, respected and kept, it's an instant relationship breakthrough and safety and trust is built between the two of you.

Conscious agreements can ward off problems and can be created for any relationship in any area of your life.

The real power in using conscious agreements is that they can build a framework for a relationship that is filled with more life, passion and possibilities.

Conscious agreements can be used for many different reasons in your relationships. They can be used for deciding how often you're going to see each other if you are dating, how money is managed in your relationship, how often you have sex, how many children you'll have (if any), how they will be raised, where you will live, and a million other ways that can help the two of you form better relationships.

Conscious agreements require you to take an inventory of what you want and to be honest with each other.

Opening up and telling each other how you feel is a beginning step to making agreements. Then you have to do your best to honor those agreements.

Here are some additional ideas to help you create and keep agreements:

TIPS in forming and keeping Conscious Agreements

- 1) Make clear agreements, not fuzzy ones, that fit your intentions and take time to understand what you each are agreeing to.

- 2) Make agreements in advance of problems when you both are in a more open, friendly and connected space.
- 3) Don't make agreements you don't want to do. Only make agreements you want to make. Don't say yes when you mean no. No is better than a yes that never gets delivered.
- 4) Change agreements when they don't work any longer. It's okay to renegotiate. Tell the truth about what you can and cannot do, what you are willing and not willing to do.
- 5) If one of you or both of you do not keep an agreement, take some time to either recommit to the agreement or to change it.
- 6) When you break a promise, acknowledge it, tell the truth about it and accept consequences. Rationalizing and getting defensive only further destroys trust and makes it worse.

To help you apply agreements to your life, do the activities on the next page.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #14

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

What are some conscious agreements that you would like to create that will help you build more trust and feel more safety in your relationships?

What are some conscious agreements that you would like to create that will bring more fun, joy, passion and love into your life?

How can you begin to create agreements with the important people in your life?

What topics are you willing to tackle first and with whom?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #15

Stay in the Present Moment

Think back to a time when you were in grade school. The teacher probably called the "roll" the first thing each morning. In order to let her know that you were there that day, you were supposed to respond by saying "present" when she called your name. When she heard your response, you were officially "present" that day.

An important instant relationship breakthrough happens when you are entirely "present" and truly "there" for each other each day.

Here's an example of this idea in action:

Some years ago, Otto was taking some sales training and the first step in this training process was what the trainer called--"Be here now." In sales, the idea of "Be here now" is about being fully prepared to greet customers, knowing the correct pricing of all items, leaving all your problems at the door, and being prepared to focus totally on your customer or client.

The sales trainer gave an excellent illustration of what it means to "Be here now" in our relationships. He said that recently he was having one of those days where a million different things were going on at work. There were problems to solve and a dozen different pieces of paper strewn all over his desk when his wife called to tell him about a problem she was having with one of their young children.

He found himself just saying things like "uh-huh" and "sure" and "wow" and wasn't really listening to the problem she was describing to him. Midway through her explanation of this situation, she suddenly stopped and said to him, "I'm really getting angry with you because you're not listening to me at all."

As you can imagine, this got his attention. He had not really been present with her. He was not really listening to her and was focused on other things.

As you can see by this story, there are really two important aspects to the idea or concept he called "Be here now." One requires that you, the listener, clear your mind of chatter, worry or planning what you're going to say next and focus totally on that person and what they are saying.

We believe that giving someone your full attention is one of the greatest gifts you can give someone. Whether it's the clerk at the local convenience store, your mother, your mate, or your child--give them your full attention. If you don't have time at that moment, tell them that you will give them your full attention when you finish what you are doing and then keep your word.

The other aspect is that if you are the one speaking and you notice the other person "nodding off" and not following what you are saying, it's a good idea to do what this sales trainer's wife did and "call" them on their lack of attention—possibly by asking for their attention. Something like—"I have something I'd like to talk with you and I'd like your full attention. Is this a good time to do that?"

We've learned that many communication problems result from this very issue of not being present for another person. By not being present for that person, you are not honoring and respecting them. And by not speaking up when another person is not totally with you, you risk building up resentments and mistrust.

We've discovered that the concept of "Be here now" is really important if you want relationships that are vibrant, alive and growing.

Being present to us means focusing on what's happening in the present moment with yourself and between you and your partner and not allowing your mind to wander to the past or the future.

This is important because it gives respect to the other person and makes them and the relationship a priority.

What takes us out of the present moment?

When we are too absorbed in the daily nitty, gritty details of life or just get too busy and too much in a hurry, we're pulled out of the present moment. We're also pulled out of the present moment when we don't want to listen to what the other person is saying (maybe it's too

uncomfortable, maybe we're just bored or maybe we're judgmental of the other person) and we don't know how to tell them.

One way you can tell if you're not in the present moment is if you've got a lot of mental chatter going on in your mind. Mental chatter can come in many forms, like judging others and yourself, living in the past or making assumptions about the future.

Whatever form it takes, your mental chatter blocks you from hearing and understanding others and allows very little chance for true connection with yourself and with other people.

A breakthrough can happen when one person decides he/she will no longer settle for disconnected communication. One person can change this dynamic and we invite you to look at your relationships and identify where you can put the concept of "be here now" into practice.

To help you do this, we're giving you some activities to complete on the next page.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #15

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

How much of the time do you give people, especially those closest to you, your full attention when they are talking to you?

Are you truly present with them and are they present with you?

Where do you need to improve and with whom?

What one thing can you do today to begin doing a better job of "being here now"?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #16

Stop Living by the Golden Rule and Start Living by the Platinum Rule

When we were young, most of us were taught "The Golden Rule." It may surprise you to know that we think that if you use the Golden Rule as a guideline for your relationships, it can lead to big trouble.

The Problem with the Golden Rule

The Golden Rule says to "Do unto others as you'd have them do unto you." The problem with the Golden Rule is... No one else in the entire world is exactly like you.

As we've said earlier, no matter how close, how connected and how much you love someone else, they are not exactly like you. Because they are not exactly like you, they have different wants, needs and interests, some more important than others. They also come from a different set of life experiences and circumstances.

The truth of the matter is other people don't want to be "done unto" as you'd like to be "done unto." They want to be "done unto" the way they want to be "done unto." This is the "Platinum Rule."

Here's Susie's story to illustrate this point: "Several years ago, when I was a library director at a university library, I had my staff take the Myers-Briggs personality inventory. The results were eye-opening when they discovered that each person had different preferred ways of doing their work.

Before taking this inventory, misunderstandings arose when it was assumed that everybody worked the same way. Some preferred to communicate by telephone and others by email. Some preferred to break projects into several deadlines and others preferred a more holistic approach. When the staff talked about how each best liked to do her work, this discovery led to better understanding, more mutual respect and a much more congenial environment."

The same thing happens in your relationships. You mistakenly believe that everyone else in your life wants to do things and live in the same way you do. A great example of this is cleaning up the kitchen after a meal. Some prefer to do it immediately and some prefer to wait to clean up the kitchen when it's time to go to bed.

We recommend that you tell your mate, partner or people in your life how you would like to be "done unto" instead of allowing guesswork, assumptions and misunderstandings to ruin relationships.

This involves taking a risk. Perhaps for some people, maybe the biggest risk of all is working through fears of not being liked or loved if you say what you really want or how you really feel.

One of our coaching clients is working on this with her boss. In the past, when her boss has said what she perceives to be critical remarks about her work, she's stuffed it down and has become resentful. The last time this happened, she asked him what he meant by his remarks and told him how they made her feel. He was surprised by what she said and seems to be more aware of how he's coming across to her now. She's showing him how she wants to be "done unto" in a way he can hear it.

What About Expectations?

One of those Golden Rule topics for a lot of people centers around gift giving to each other. The two of us consciously decided that we would buy something together at Christmastime because neither one of us like surprises. It so happened that we agreed about this subject but it could very easily have escalated into trying to fulfill expectations that weren't really there.

One woman Otto used to work with became very upset and told everyone in the office about how she was very disappointed with her husband because he hadn't sent flowers to her at her office. It turned out that he had sent flowers but he had sent them to their home. He wasn't loving her the way she wanted to be loved. They hadn't talked about expectations and she hadn't told him what was important to her.

So we suggest, while we agree with the essence of the Golden Rule that it's important to treat each other with love and respect, it's more important to find out how each of you want to be loved and how you

want to be treated. Take our word for it—an instant relationship breakthrough can happen when you honor how the other person wants to be loved and they honor how you want to be loved.

To help you with this, complete the activities on the next page.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #16

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

In what ways can you let others know in your life how you want to be treated and in what situations?

What beliefs are you holding onto that will need to be looked at, challenged or let go of in order to allow this idea of loving someone the way they want to be loved to work?

How can you begin treating others more like they want to be treated?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #17

Shift from Negativity and Impossibility Thinking to Possibility Thinking

Because we live in a 130 year-old house, occasionally a bat will get into our house. When we first came together and a bat would decide to make its appearance in the house, we would haul out the "bat tools" (which consisted of a tennis racquet and a shoe box) to try to get rid of it. The bat extraction always involved a lot of drama, shouting and violence.

We started thinking about how there might be a better way to get the bat out of the house without all of the drama.

Now when a bat gets lost in our house, we adopt a more humane and painless way of helping the bat find its way out. We turn on the outside light and open the door. Usually in just a few minutes the bat realizes that the door is open and it flies out.

We feel that this change of attitude and approach to getting the bat out of our house can also apply to creating an instant relationship breakthrough in your life.

If you want something to change in your relationship, one or both of you has to begin changing your approach to the challenge and your attitude toward the other person.

The change of attitude most likely will require you to open your hearts to each other. What we've found is that because of past experiences, many people don't truly open their hearts to the people in their lives. They will let them in just so far before they put up defenses and walls. If you want to make changes in your relationships, you have to open your heart.

One woman we know is trying to do it differently and open her heart to the possibilities of having the type of relationship that she has wanted but has somehow eluded her. She is starting a new relationship without expectations and is just focusing on being real,

authentic and being true to herself. She's not playing any of the roles she's played in the past as she enters this relationship.

There is a different feeling within her about this relationship because of it. She is letting go of some of her "rules" for how a partner "should" be and how relationships have been in the past for her. She is just allowing herself to open to the possibility of something wonderful happening.

One of the biggest reasons that people don't have great relationships is that they don't believe it's possible—that it happens to someone else and not them. Just like the lottery—it happens to someone else and not them.

If you want to create an instant relationship breakthrough, spend your time wondering about possibilities instead of focusing on what you don't have and have never had in your life. That's what we did before we came together. We both focused on the possibilities of having the love we've always wanted. And that's what we continue to do in our lives.

We want to tell you about 3 phrases that can help you open to possibilities with the people in your life.

One of our coaching clients is working on opening himself to possibilities instead of closing down as has been his pattern when someone says something that puts him on the defensive or is contrary to what he wants. We told him about "What if...?" "How can we..?" and "Yes, and." These are some instant relationship breakthrough phrases that we use to move from closing to opening to each other.

These phrases help break out of the box that many people put themselves in. Asking "What if?" and "How can we?" invites the other person to contribute to the conversation and to offer their ideas. "Yes, and" helps you to add onto what the other person has said without putting their idea down and putting them on the defensive.

We'll give you a short example—A couple is talking about where to go on their next vacation. Instead of one person saying "I want to go to the beach" and the other, "I want to go to the mountains" and stopping the discussion because there's no agreement, one person

could say something like “I wonder how we can both get our needs met?” or “What if there was a way we could do both?”

Instead of putting the other person down for their vacation choice, you could say “Yes, and” by acknowledging that you can see how much they want to go to the ocean and you are also excited about going to the mountains. You might say, “Let’s think of some ways that we’ll both get our needs met.”

This is a great example of opening your heart to possibilities. No matter what the relationship, even the person sitting next to you at the ball park, if you open your heart to the other person and not pre-judge or put up walls or close down, then infinite possibilities of connection and love are available.

To help you apply these ideas in your life, we invite you to complete the activities on the next page.



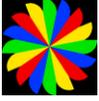
Instant Relationship Breakthrough #17

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

How can you open your heart more to possibilities with the people in your life?

What are you willing to start doing and when?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #18

Make Connection a Priority

As human beings, one of our deepest desires is a connection with other people. This connection means something different to each one of us.

It doesn't matter whether you're talking about an intimate relationship or one between friends or co-workers. We all want to connect with other people.

Very often, the challenge for most of us is that we are either consciously or unconsciously doing things that create disconnection instead of connection.

We define a connected relationship as one where there is strong trust between two people. There is unconditional love and acceptance, even when there is disagreement.

A connection with another is created by focusing on that relationship, giving it the time, importance and energy of something that you value.

It's also created by honoring the other person, wherever they are on their path. In order to create a truly connected relationship, you have to get your ego needs out of the way. Your "ego needs" can take the form of pursuing power over another or insisting on being "right," no matter what.

Every now and then the two of us realize that even though we always have a strong love for one another, we don't always feel a strong connection.

Here's Susie's example of rebuilding lost connection: "One time I remember we'd been working on a lot of different projects and too much work had made us feel that we were out of balance.

We had been creating a brand new personal growth web site and we were going to a three-day seminar that weekend.

We still had to pack, Otto's son had a ballgame that night and we had several appointments thrown in for good measure.

Like many of you, our lives had become pretty crazy from the time we got up until the time we went to bed and we found that we were moving into a state of overwhelm. We discovered that we didn't feel the connection we normally feel with each other.

So, what did we do to get our creativity and connection flowing once again?

We stopped and took time to connect with each other and with ourselves. We just sat for about ten minutes and looked into each other's eyes and just loved and appreciated each other. We told each other specific things that we appreciated about the other person. The point is we took time to connect and allowed good feelings to begin to flow again between us.

The truth is we love our life and most of our projects don't seem like work at all. But, when we start feeling overwhelmed (like that day), we know that it's time to start making some different choices."

Believe it or not, deciding to take the time to connect, whether it's with yourself or with others, is a choice.

Here are some things that we do to regain our connection, with ourselves and each other, when we lose it:
(Feel free to take these ideas and use them as your own. Also experiment with finding your own ways to reconnect.)

- 1) Take the time to recognize what you're feeling. No matter what you want to change in your life, awareness is the first step to changing anything that's no longer working for you.
 - 2) Sit and breathe and calm your mind.
 - 3) If you're with a partner, invite them to connect with you by looking into each other's eyes.
 - 4) Take a mindful walk in the woods. Don't mull over your problems as you walk, but focus on appreciating the beauty instead. Even if you
-

don't live close to the woods, you can still take a walk and appreciate the beauty of your surroundings.

5) Pet your cat or dog and feel how your heart opens.

6) Make a date with someone you'd love to connect with, even if it's just for a cup of coffee at the local diner.

7) Take the time to play a game with your child and really be present while you're doing it.

We could go on, but the point is we suggest that when things get crazy, know that you have a choice. Stop, breathe and create an instant relationship breakthrough by connecting with yourself and with others.

The payoff when you do this is that you'll feel calmer, more centered, and have more love and joy in your life.

On the next page, we are offering you a few activities to help you connect with yourself and with others.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #18

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

Would you like to connect more with yourself—who you truly are?

Are there any people in your life that you'd like to connect with in a deeper way? If so, who?

What can you begin doing to connect with yourself and others in a deeper way?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #19

Don't Make Assumptions that Your Future Will be Like Your Past

Because your brain processes so much information to help you make sense of your world and what's going on around you, it has to create ways to help you process that information and do it quickly.

One of the strategies we all use to make quick, rapid fire decisions about the meaning of things in our lives is by making "assumptions" based on experiences and beliefs.

The trouble with assumptions is that sometimes they work for us to help us create what we want in our lives and other times assumptions can work against us and actually take us away from what we want.

The objective should be to become aware when we are making assumptions and then figure out whether those assumptions are serving us in creating what we want in our lives or not.

Here's an example of how making assumptions can sometimes trip us up...

Some time ago, one of our friends was sitting in her car at a red light and a man began honking his horn and waving at her. Since she didn't know him, she assumed that he was angry and wanted her to run the red light! She had been involved with several angry men during her life and she had just assumed that he was another one. When they stopped at the next red light, he was in the lane beside her and he rolled down his window to talk with her. Since she was still thinking he was going to yell at her, she felt herself becoming more nervous and tense.

What he had been trying to tell her was that her gas cap was on the top of her car! She had just pumped her own gas at a station and had not replaced the cap.

What she feared to be "road rage" was simply a man trying to help her.

Isn't this what we sometimes do in our lives and relationships? We assume that because something happened at one time during our lives that this will always be our experience.

We're here to say that you can change your life by referring to those experiences as "until now." We'll explain.

What the "up until now..." philosophy means is that no matter what mistakes you feel you've made, challenges you've had or problems you've encountered along the way, today is a new day and anything is possible from this moment forward.

Recently we talked with a woman who expressed her concern that her relationships constantly turn out miserably. She's never been able to create what she considers to be a good relationship and is fearful that this will always be the case.

What we told her was that this may have been true up until now but in this moment, she has the opportunity to learn to do her life differently.

Whether you're 20, 30, 40, 50 or 80 years old, it's never too late to begin again.

Whether your challenge is in the area of love and relationships, money, health, overcoming fears or any other challenge, it's never too late to learn a new skill, go to college, take more responsibility for yourself, meet new people, have more fun, make more money or find the love of your life.

So, how do you do this?

If you feel that you must talk to others about your disappointments about the way things have been in the past, always use the phrase "up until now... " By using the phrase "up until now..." you are opening your heart and mind to possibilities.

Don't beat yourself up if you fall into old patterns that don't serve you. An instant relationship breakthrough can happen when you recognize that you are going into old negative patterns and you are able to stop

yourself from doing and saying what you normally would do or say in those situations. Take the opportunity to recommit to creating the life and relationships that you want.

The activities on the next page will help you identify how you are making assumptions about your life and how you can make powerful changes.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #19

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

How do you make assumptions based on your past experiences and beliefs?

How do these assumptions and beliefs stop you from creating the life you want?

What are you willing to do to create what you want?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #20

Rekindle laughter, fun, excitement and Passion in Your Relationship

There's a common myth about relationships that says—All marriages and long-term relationships naturally deteriorate over time and this deterioration is just a natural evolution in all marriages or long-term relationships.

We don't agree with that myth. We believe that if both people are conscious in their relationship and want to grow together, they do things on a daily basis that promote that growth and deep connection. When couples do this, their relationship can and does improve with age.

If love is there between the two of you and passion, laughter, fun and excitement are missing in your relationships, then one of two things is the case-- either you haven't made them a priority or the connection of the heart isn't there.

If you want to keep your relationship alive, growing and filled with fun, laughter, excitement and passion, you have to first want to. You have to decide that the relationship is important in your life and give it the time and attention it needs. As we've said before, it doesn't matter what you say about your relationship. Your actions are what speak the loudest.

You also have to be open to receiving and giving love. Sometimes that's not so easy if many years of unaddressed and unresolved hurts are in the way.

If there are old hurts that need to be addressed, address them and if the two of you are at a stalemate and can't move forward, get professional help.

If there aren't any major hurts coming between you, we suggest that you create an "atmosphere of love." You can do this by creating a presence around yourself this is inviting, alive, open, warm and giving.

One of the things we do to create this atmosphere is we greet each other warmly and openly when either of us comes home, even after being away for only a short while. We have “dates” which might just be an evening together playing music at home. It might be just taking our neighbor dog for a walk together and watching him run and play. The point is that we make time to do some things together that will feed our relationship.

A few years ago, we found a greeting card message that summed it all up. The card’s message was this—“Their love was big and fat because they fed it a lot between meals.”

We suggest that you discover ways that would bring more fun, laughter and passion into your relationship. Look at what you used to do together that you may no longer do and decide if you’d like to do them again. Find new ways to have fun together that you both would enjoy.

These are just a few of things we do—along with everything in this guidebook—to keep our relationship alive, growing and filled with passion, excitement and fun. We encourage you to do whatever it takes to rekindle it in your relationships. Use these ideas and your own creativity to come up with other ways to bring more life to your relationships.

You can begin by completing the activities on the next page.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #20

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

What relationship would you like to rekindle or maybe enhance passion, love, excitement or fun?

What are some things that you'd like to do with this person on a regular or irregular basis that would bring you more passion, excitement, fun and love?

What are some things you might have done in the past. either with this person or someone else, that if you started doing again might bring more love, passion, excitement and joy to the relationship?

When and how would you like to approach this person about doing some of these things?



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #21

Be an Uplifter and “Good-Finder” in Every Moment

You can choose to become a "good-finder" in your current relationships and in your life or you can look for what you find distasteful or unpleasant in the people in your life.

The choice is yours.

One way builds trust and more love and the other tears it down.

It might sound obvious and a little hokey, but being an uplifter and “good-finder” really works! Don’t dismiss the power and potential of this suggestion for creating breakthroughs because of how simple this idea is. We’ve found that each moment that we uplift and find the good in other people is an instant relationship breakthrough.

Here are some ways to do this more in your life:

1. Treat each day as if it were your last together. From the beginning of our relationship, we have practiced using loving words with each other and express our gratitude to the other for being in our lives. We are well aware that this day may be our last together. There are no guarantees in life.
2. Use loving words instead of critical, hurtful, gossipy and negative ones when you talk about your loved ones to others. We think that using kind words and expressing gratitude are important ingredients that help create and maintain trust, intimacy, and passion in our relationship. Choose to build each other up instead of tear each other down. Choose to love each other with thoughts, actions, and words and you will see a positive difference in your relationships.
3. Don’t forget common courtesies just because you might live with this person. Compliment them, thank them, appreciate them for what they bring to you and your life. We do this on a regular basis. Instead of focusing on what you don't like about your

husband, wife or partner, direct your thinking to what you appreciate about them and tell them how you appreciate them.

In our relationship, we regularly tell each other what we appreciate in the other person and why they are special to us. We do not take each other "for granted." We think that "thank you," "you're welcome" and other words and acts of kindness are important if you want to have a good relationship. Most of us were taught these words but do we use them with those we love?

We all have seen the bumper sticker that encourages us to "Practice Random Acts of Kindness." We think that's a good idea and we should all start with the people closest to us.

Otto wore a new shirt a couple of weeks ago and he couldn't believe how many times people stopped him and wanted to talk to him about it.

This new shirt wasn't made with the finest material in the world and it won't win any fashion awards but it certainly triggered a lot of people to sit up and take notice. It simply said "just be nice."

The amount of attention Otto got because of three simple words "just be nice" was telling.

In fact most of the people that commented about his shirt said something like, "Yeah, people should be nice."

So, here's an interesting question...

In the relationships with the important people in your life, are you nice? Are you kind?

As we said before, you can choose to become a "good-finder" in your current relationships and in your life or you can look for what you find distasteful or unpleasant in the people in your life. The choice is yours.

On the next page, we are offering some activities to get you thinking about how you can bring more love into your relationships and your life.



Instant Relationship Breakthrough #21

Activities

Answer the following questions in the space provided below:

When and with whom do you need to use words that heal instead of words that are unloving?

Do people that are closest to you use loving words with you? Do they uplift you or bring you down?

What's one thing you can begin doing to bring more positive, uplifting moments in your life?



Conclusion

The possibilities of love are incredible. The question is—what are you committed to? As the old saying goes, “If there’s a will, there’s a way.”

We were captivated by a story that was told on Oprah Winfrey’s television show. A woman who was a career librarian had never earned more than \$18,000 a year in her life. She was single and this was her only income. Amazingly enough, she was able to save in the course of her lifetime, over \$435,000!

Oprah's guest that day was a financial advisor who gave a 10-point plan for how anyone with a modest income could achieve the same results. His points included taking your lunch to work every day, eliminating cable television, and paying yourself first no matter what.

The woman who saved the \$435,000 described how she used aluminum foil repeatedly, how she made her own clothes, and took her lunch to work everyday.

The point of the show was to illustrate that anyone, if they followed this plan, could amass a small fortune within their lifetime by being willing to do things that a lot of us aren't willing to do.

The same exact principle applies in relationships. It's entirely possible for you to have outstanding relationships in your life if you're willing to do certain things that most people aren't willing to do.

If your relationships aren’t what you want them to be, there’s a very important question you should be asking yourself--"What is it you're not willing to do to have great relationships in your life and create instant relationship breakthroughs?"

We suggest that if you sincerely want to improve your relationships that you spend some time answering our question because your answer will indicate where you need to start.

So take some time to consider these ideas and come up with your own as well.

- Are you willing to communicate without shutting down?
- Are you willing to give up blame, judgment and the need to be right?
- Are you willing to tackle the issues and challenges when they come up and not let them fester?
- Are you willing to take responsibility for yourself and your actions?
- Are you willing to make this relationship a priority in your life? How much time do you spend with that person?

These are just a few ideas to get you started thinking about what you want in your relationships and what's preventing you from having it.

The point is that with everything we do in our relationships and in our lives will either take us closer to the relationships and love that we really want or further from the relationships and love that we really want.

So, with every single thing that happens in your relationships and your life, the question you should be asking yourself is..."In order to create the relationship and life that I want, would I want to do more or less of this activity?" "Would I want to think more or less this way?" "Would I want to be more this way or less this way?"

We've been playing with the idea of Instant Relationship Breakthroughs for several years—about how one instant can change a relationship for better or for worse.

Every encounter, every word, every thought is significant. As Dan Millman has said "There are no ordinary moments."

If you doubt the validity of that statement, consider for a moment a couple of examples:

Consider what happened when Rosa Parks refused to go to the back of the bus. Once again, it took place in an instant and her action set into motion events that changed United States history.

Consider the interaction that takes place between any two partners who haven't seen each other all day. How about the next time you see your children or your parents? Is there genuine happiness to see the other person? Is there full attention given to the other person for at least a few seconds?

The next time you have an interaction with any other person, consider the possibilities of just how important that instant and interaction could be. Treat the other person as the beautiful soul that they really are.

Remember to choose love instead of fear.

Choose gratitude instead of ambivalence. Treat the first instant that we are with our loved ones as filled with possibility and don't take it for granted.

We wish you much success and love in your life and in your relationships and if we can be of further help to you, let us know.

Thanks,

Susie and Otto

About Susie and Otto

Susie and Otto Collins are married relationship and life success coaches from South Central Ohio who spend their time sharing with others how to create more conscious, connected and loving relationships and lives.

Together, they are the authors of books, tapes and over 200 published articles on relationships. Their book titles include "Stop Talking on Eggshells," "Should You Stay or Should You Go?" "Red Hot Love Relationships," "Communication Magic," "Relationship Trust Turnaround," "No More Jealousy," and "Attracting Your Perfect Partner."

For 30 years, Susie has been a student of relationships, spirituality, energy and the life force. Her search for physical, emotional and spiritual healing has led her to the study of Polarity Therapy, cranio-sacral therapy, reflexology, Hatha Yoga, the Enneagram, and much more. Her formal training includes a Bachelor of Science degree in education, a Masters degree in Library Science, and is a Registered Polarity Therapy Practitioner with the American Polarity Therapy Association. Susie is a veteran teacher and university librarian with over 30 years experience teaching in the public schools and university classes. On the university level, she's taught courses in Education, Communications and currently teaches a Women's Studies course.

Otto has spent over 20 years as a successful salesperson and marketer of a variety of products and services. Many years ago, as a result of pondering three of life's greatest questions-- Who am I, Why am I here and What's this all about-- Otto turned his life's focus to bear on the practice and study of spirituality, personal growth and relationships.

They passionately believe that life can be lived in a joyful, conscious, loving way and are committed to helping others to experience the potential of what is possible in their own lives and relationships. The desire to be loved the way they wanted to be loved took each of them on a journey of discovery of how to create the relationship of their dreams. They believe Spirit put them together for their own personal growth and to shine the light of hope for others. Their goal is to help

others create outstanding lives and passionate, alive, connected relationships.

For well over 20 years, both Susie and Otto have immersed themselves in the study of personal and spiritual growth. Their primary focus has been the study of creating outstanding relationships of all kinds.

Susie and Otto's formal coaching and relationships training has been from The Hendricks Institute and from Comprehensive Coaching U. For many years, Susie and Otto have been students of what makes relationships work and they continue to share what they have learned through their books, tapes, web sites, workshops, seminars and daily lives.

They write a free weekly online, content-rich newsletter that offers proven, practical tips and ideas for solving relationship problems and challenges that reaches almost 40,000 people in over 47 countries. They speak from their own experience and what they have learned from their relationship coaching practice clients, teaching people how to create relationships that last and ones that are filled with joy, passion, connection and love. Sign up for their weekly newsletter at <http://www.PassionateHeart.com>

Contact Info

If you have a question, contact us [here](#) or call us at 614-568-8282.

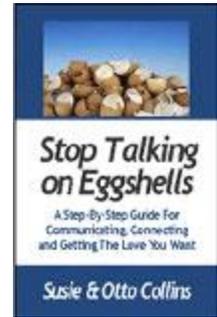
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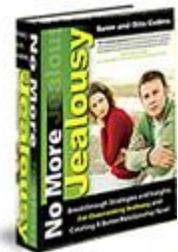
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