

Expectations in a Relationship

It is natural for us to bring personal expectations to our relationships.

Our expectations come from our history, culture, family background and experiences.

It is normal for us to have feelings of frustration, resentment and often anger when we are disappointed that these expectations are not being met.

Sometimes these come to a head in a life stage in a relationship such as in the start of a family; "empty nest" or retirement.

Sometimes loss by bereavement or poor health or employment problems can rouse these feelings.

So what do we do?

We may seek to change our partner's behaviour to encourage them to meet our expectations. This rarely works.

What does work? Who do we have most control over?

Ourselves.

The challenge is to identify and clarify the pattern of our communication and feelings.

Then to begin to accept that the way forward may be to change the way we react and respond to our partner: to change the pattern of our communication with our partner.

To think about our body language, the tone of our voice and the words we use. ("I feel.." rather than "you should")

Choose to listen rather than be heard.

This will often bring about change in the dynamics of the relationship and healing can come from this new pattern of communication.

Struggling with this?

Seek professional relationship counselling.

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