

Disaster Proof Your Relationship

As Carrie Bradshaw asked, 'Wouldn't it be great if we had a flashing sign to tell us when our relationship is headed in the wrong direction?' What are some signs that your relationship is on the rocks? Here are a few ways to know if you or your partner has had enough, and how to keep your relationship afloat.

We never talk anymore...

Communication is crucial to relationship success. Asking questions, telling stories, and learning about each other all lead to a bond between partners. When you feel like one of those silent couples in a restaurant, it may be an indication that the love boat is getting ready to dock. The ability to talk to one another forms a connection between you that is different than other relationships. Consider setting aside a time each week that is dedicated to talking about what is going on with yourselves and each other. Time spent talking is time spent bringing value to your relationship.

You only notice what I do wrong....

All couples have disagreements, but when you find yourself or your partner focusing on the negative it's time to pay attention. When you or your partner persistently pick fights and make critical judgments there may be an underlying problem that is not being addressed. It's time to start addressing each other's concerns as well as catching each other doing something positive.

You don't bother to put the toilet seat down anymore. OR When was the last time you washed your hair?

Over time we become more comfortable with one another and no longer feel we have to be on our best behavior. While this comfort is a great part of long term relationships, we also can drift towards apathy and taking each other for granted. Remember that time in your relationship when you used to make sure you cleaned your apartment and got dressed up for dates? How did it cross the line from comfortable jeans to sweats? You don't have to wear stilettos or always have a freshly scrubbed toilet, but you can demonstrate that you care enough to take care of yourself and your surroundings. It may be time to spice things up a bit by changing the routine. Plan a special date to a romantic restaurant or surprise your significant other at the office with lunch. A small change in the usual can bring some surprising results.

I need some space.....

Are you feeling overwhelmed with couple time? Feeling smothered is a big sign that things need to change in your relationship. You may not actually be spending any more or less time together than previously, but somehow, the time spent together has become less enjoyable. Remembering that it's ok to have time apart, whether you spend time in a hobby or visiting with friends, it's important to have a sense of your own individuality. This helps you appreciate the time spent with your partner

as well as break the cycle of one person always chasing the other. Take turns making plans as a couple – and don't take it personally when one of you needs some alone time.

Do your problems seem more complicated than this...read on for tips to feel more fulfilled in your relationship.