

# Ten Top Tips<sup>©</sup>



## When people in relationships want to communicate more effectively

1. **You cannot control your partner's behaviour**, but you can control how you relate to him or her. For example, you can control how you say things, your tone of voice and your choice of words.
2. **When you see something you appreciate** in your partner, let him or her know with words or a gesture. Show your appreciation by expressing your feelings. For example: "I enjoyed our meal tonight" or give your partner a hug.
3. **When you have a disagreement**, try to argue constructively without criticising, judging or dumping on your partner. For example, avoid using words such as 'always', 'never' or 'should', such as: "You never help me with anything."
4. **When you are discussing something important**, try to become aware of your feelings and those of your partner. Practice asking yourself: "How and what am I feeling about this situation right now?" Then try to share these feelings with your partner, even if they are negative.
5. **When arguing**, be clear and specific over what you are in disagreement about. Use an "I" statement to express how you feel and how you would like things to be different. For example: "I felt hurt when you spent our grocery money on new clothes. I would have preferred that you had talked with me first."
6. **Try not to take your partner for granted**. Spend quality time with each other on a regular basis. Relationships need nourishing.
7. **In real love** you want what is good for the other person. In love, which is only romantic, you want the other person.
8. **Don't be afraid** to admit to your mistakes and shortcomings. No one is perfect.
9. **Love yourself** and make your needs known to each other.
10. **Never be afraid** to seek outside help and better earlier than later. Seeking help is a sign of strength, not a weakness.