

The Gift That Keeps On Giving



Knowing what to give to one another as we approach the holiday season can be a challenge for some. Many find themselves grappling with whether or not to give their special someone something they “need” or something they “want.” Jewelry, clothing, household items might fit the bill, but wouldn’t this holiday be memorable if one of your gifts to your partner really “stood out?” Have you ever considered giving a gift that would really last a lifetime and would also be considered a real investment in your relationship?



Then, it might be time to consider giving a “Couples Communication” class. Think about it...we go to school practically for everything else. The amount of time and money that people dedicate to higher learning, degrees, certifications, and licenses is part of the “norm” in Western culture. The expectation is to become competent in a particular subject or field in order to be considered successful.



But competency in the world of business or work is not the same as competency in sustaining love and closeness. The demands of the competitive work world often required us to be emotionally closed and guarded and to keep our distance from any form of self-disclosure. Intimate relationships, however, demand just the opposite. We need to be more cooperative, emotionally open, vulnerable and willing to reveal more about ourselves.



Being able to function, much less be masterful, in these different worlds requires two sets of skills. In some ways these skills can overlap (be the same) and all too often they are different and conflict with one another.



Many people fail to realize how much can be learned when it comes to managing a relationship and getting the most pleasure from it. This is largely because we don’t know how much power we have to consciously determine the outcomes of our interactions with intimate others. Our choices of attitudes and words can contribute mightily to the level of satisfaction and quality of our intimate relationship.

Questions to consider:

- Are “we” worth it? Is it time for us to put our relationship first?
- When was the last time we learned something “together?”
- Are we open to learning something new? Willing to stretch out of our comfort zone?
- Are the gains of learning new skills to confide, empathize, fight fair, get movement on issues, and enjoy each other more worth the diligent, disciplined effort that is required?

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