

# How to Make Your Relationship Last

by Dr. Joe Kort

## 1) Understand the stages of love.

Every relationship goes through three stages of love: romantic love, the power struggle and real love. Romantic love is supposed to happen and then supposed to end. If you are prepared for this then you are not surprised when romantic love ends and conflict begins in the power struggle. The power struggle is supposed to happen and supposed to end too but it lasts longer because most couples don't have skills for conflict resolution. Real love comes as couples work through these stages and their problems successfully.

## 2) Conflict is Growth Trying to Happen.

Most couples think conflict signifies the end of the relationship, but actually it is the beginning. Having conflict in a relationship is an indicator you are with the right person. When your partner pushes your buttons, it is because you already have that issue. This offers you the chance to work that issue out for yourself and your relationship.

## 3) You will have at least three relationships in a lifetime.

This doesn't mean you have to leave your partner. You can have three relationships with the same person. Old patterns change in relationships and new ones emerge. The longer you are together the more change will occur. If you enter a relationship at 20, you will change quite a bit by 40, which means the relationship must accommodate the changes in each of you individually and together. I constantly tell couples the old relationship they were in has died, and it is now time to build a new one with their current partner.



## 4) Sex and love are two distinct conversations.

Most couples think that if they improve their relationship, better and more frequent sex will come. Others think that if they improve their sex life the relationship will get better. Neither of these are true. If you want to have both good love and a satisfying sex life with your partner, you have maintain two ongoing discussions over time.

## 5) Never compare what you have with other relationships.

You can create any type of relationship you want. What works in one relationship may never work in someone else's. yours. There is no right or wrong way to be in a relationship. Keep doing whatever works for the two of you and never take on what others say as what should be right or wrong for the two of you.



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