

Dealing with Marital Conflict

Post by “Kalosyni” of March 8, 2023 at 12:55 PM

Friendship is an important aspect of happiness and well-being. And, in marriage, friendship is considered very important now in our current times. Some people do not have any close friends other than their spouse. Having friends (other than a spouse) is especially difficult for those people who move to different cities for career changes. Of course this puts a lot expectation and pressure on marriage. It will be inevitable that differences in opinion will arise, and knowing how to work through that is of utmost importance.

Here are some links to some very good information which explains a major source of conflict in marriage -- if one (or both partners) are "other-blamers" -- how to recognize it and what to do.

Quote

Other-Blamers manage the feeling of shame with a lack of accountability. The key behavioral sign is hyper-vigilance to and over-reactivity to criticism. Other-Blamers tend to argue or attack to keep any taint of blame from landing close.

While these strategies provide comfort to the individual, they are counterproductive in relationships. Other-Blaming is often at the root of relationship problems, because of the reluctance to admit fault.

Quote

In some people, the experience of shame triggers a fearful response, overwhelming the cognitive functioning of the brain, leading to fear-based behaviors of reacting rather than responding thoughtfully.

They are highly motivated to manage their shame and fear and respond with three predictable and easily identified behavioral responses called Counterproductive Shame Management Strategies:

1. Other-Blaming
2. Self-Blaming
3. Blame Avoiding

The simple key to understanding the three Shame Management Strategies is the answer to this question: *How does the person handle criticism?*

When held accountable for a behavior, what does the person do?

- blame others
- blame themselves, or
- preemptively try to avoid blame

Be sure to read both of following links, if you are interested in learning more.

[Improve Your Relationships: Overcome Low Self-Worth • Harper West](#)

Stop arguing too much in your relationship. How to improve relationships by understanding the impact of shame. Anger and arguments may be caused by poor shame...

www.harperwest.co

[How Do You Handle Shame? Learning Self Acceptance • Harper West](#)

Do you want to learn to handle shame better? How do you handle embarrassment? By blame yourself, blame others, avoid blame? Learning self-acceptance improves...

www.harperwest.co

Post by “Pacatus” of March 8, 2023 at 3:58 PM

Very important insights, Kalosyni! Thanks for posting it.

~ ~ ~

My wife and I were both victims of abusive first marriages (in my case emotional/psychological, in hers the added fear of physical abuse). We became best friends before we ever considered getting married again (or even becoming romantically involved) - and remain best friends after 28 years of marriage. That - friendship - became for us the lodestone of the relationship. (And we know each other's "warts" very well! ☐☐.)

When romance became part of it, we went to a counselor - both together and separately - to try to learn what behaviors and attitudes and social programming of ours had contributed to our being and continuing in those abusive relationships, so that we would never do that again - especially with each other. And we had other friends who supported us.

Because I am more an introvert (understatement! 🙄), she has always had more outside friends - and that has never been a problem.

Again, thanks.