

Relationship-Counselling

Strategies for Difficult Conversations



Many couples experience communication difficulties. This Tip Sheet adds some ideas and simple strategies about how to handle these discussions to build on Tip Sheet 2.

Communication becomes a problem when *what* is said or *how* it is said triggers our emotions in a negative way. You can read more about how this operates in my e-book, [Relationship Essentials](#).

When you and your partner have an important issue to discuss which you feel may raise the emotional temperature, there are

some simple strategies you can use to make the chance of success greater.

First of all, you need to provide the right environment.

Agree to talk when the time is right – rather than when you are doing something (such as watching television).

Make an appointment. This avoids ‘ambushing’ your partner and means they will be more receptive to what you have to say.

Calm yourself and stay calm. If this is difficult, you can read

Taking steps to help your relationship

The ideas raised here are explored in greater depth in publications available on this website, as well as courses.

In particular, you might like to read the following Ebook: **Relationship Essentials** by Paul Gale-Baker.

Go to relationship-counselling.com.au and select the Resources section. You will find information about the books.

You will also find courses in relationship skills, enrichment and intimacy in the Courses section of this website.

You can also sign up to receive Tip Sheet Updates as they are published.

I also offer individual sessions.

Paul Gale-Baker

TIP SHEET 6

about techniques for calming in **Relationship Essentials.**

IF YOU ARE SPEAKING

Stay with the issue. Avoid bringing in all the related (and unrelated!) issues that upset you.

Say how it is for you. Talk about how you feel rather than criticising or blaming.

Keep it simple.

IF YOU ARE LISTENING

Put your point of view in the background.

Don't interrupt.

Let your partner know you have heard and understood them (even if you don't agree).

Be prepared to hear things you don't necessarily agree with

If necessary, **clarify what your partner has said**

Remember – being a good listener is the best guarantee you will be listened to when you raise an issue.

Handled well, difficult conversations can be a positive experience. They can help you both realise that you are a team - partners who can work together.

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Paul is a highly qualified and experienced counsellor and therapist in private practice in the suburb of Ivanhoe, Melbourne, Australia.

He is an internationally recognised teacher of the Voice Dialogue method and Director of Voice Dialogue Australia, which provides training for counselling professionals, as well as courses in relationship and personal growth for members of the public. He speaks publicly and writes on issues of relationship.



Appointments can be made with Paul by going to the web site, by emailing

paul@relationship-counselling.com.au, or by calling (03) 9444 7427 or 0408 733 683. The practice is located in Ivanhoe, Melbourne, Australia. Sessions are arranged by booking only.

Please note:

The content of this Tip Sheet is intended for informational purposes only. It is not intended to replace counselling and therapy. If you or your relationship are in need of help, I strongly recommend that you see a qualified professional.