

Beacon Newsletter

October 2022

Smt. Maniben M.P Shah Women's College of Arts and Commerce (Autonomous)
Publication of Psychology Department

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Man is a social animal, so relationships form an important part of our lives. Having strong relationships can be one of the cornerstones of success in personal as well as professional life. Relationships are associations one has with one's family, friends and others in society and they form an integral aspect of one's being and as such form the very fabric of life. Building better relationships is possible through genuine concern for fellow human beings and improving one's communication skills. They provide the strength to venture out and take up challenges, help face existing challenges and to face the vicissitudes of life.

'Beacon' newsletter is an endeavour of the Department of Psychology to bring the knowledge of psychological concepts to the masses. I am happy that the theme for this quarter focuses on an aspect so close to all mankind's hearts.

Mrs. Archana Patki
Head, Department of Psychology
Vice Principal

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HUMANS

The day we stop keeping false expectations with
people we surround;
There will come a day when we see the raw beauty of
every human around.
For when you see them put in efforts in your life with a
smile;
I hope you will appreciate it even if they couldn't walk
along with you for a mile;
It takes courage to ask someone Hey are you feeling
okay?
Especially when your life is swaying in the storms by
the bay.
If only you could remember the last time you talked to
your parents, your friends, your
close ones about their day.
I hope before you attempt to go near,
You are taking care of yourself and not wishing to
disappear.
For everything takes time and eventually, you will be
able to make out the sense for
sometimes it rains a Lil heavy and plans go wrong,
Dealing with it might make you question How long?
But don't forget there are silver linings and the sun will
soon shine bright.
Everything might not work in your favor overnight,
But it will work out right.

By Aqsa Khatib
MA- Psychology (Part 2)



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Building Better Relationships

⇒ What goes in your mind when the word 'relationship' is used?

A partner, someone who you can be intimate with, have a romantic relationship and share thoughts on similar lines

The first ever relationship you have is with yourself. Whenever you experience new situations and events, there is a thought associated with it. You think about the situation and then choose how you want to act on it. So any relationship, therefore, is an interaction and communication of thoughts, ideas, interests, passions with yourself or multiple individuals might share amongst themselves. It is a space where two or more people connect on different spectrums, may it be a parent-child relationship, a sibling relationship, a student-teacher relationship, a relationship between friends, a professional relationship or a romantic relationship. All of these constitute a different aspect of our social, professional and personal lives.



Be open to receive

Relationships are very subjective and no two can be the same so the reasons relationships have downs will also be different. But some common reasons are given by Dr John Gottman. He termed it as 'Four Horsemen of Apocalypse'. Being able to identify exactly what is causing problems in a relationship is the necessary first step for eliminating them and a start towards building a healthy and better relationship.

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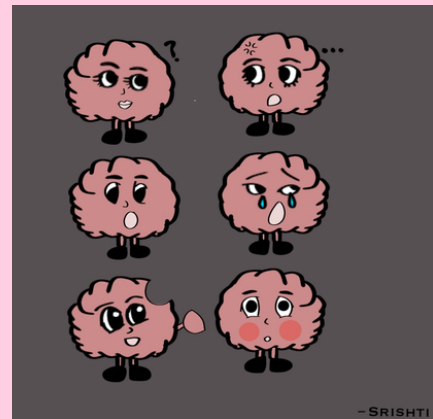
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The four horsemen are 'Criticism, Defensiveness, Contempt and Stonewalling'. Criticism is when you express the things you don't like about someone. The blaming that happens is on their personality or character and not the failed behaviour or wrongdoing. Criticism differs from complaint in a way that complaint is worded so that you communicate a mistake as it is, a mistake. For e.g., I did not like the dish you cooked today. This statement is a complaint about a specific situation and can be differentiated with 'You cannot cook at all'. The latter is a criticism. Criticism is when rather than notifying the mistake, one blames the other's character for making a mistake. Constructive criticism in relationships, on the other hand, can be helpful to improve; promoting further development or advancement.



Defensiveness involves not taking responsibility for your own flaws and shortcomings and projecting it onto your partner. Contempt consists of verbal and non-verbal criticism, ridiculing, mocking, sarcasm or mean behaviour towards the partner. The partner on the receiving end feels shame, disgust and lack of appreciation. E.g., 'Eye Rolling' if you are speaking about something important. Stonewalling is as the name suggests. The person just turns into a wall of stone to avoid conversation and confrontation. The partner in turn feels neglected and ignored. E.g., 'I don't want to talk about it' or walking away from conversations. So, after understanding what can cause a relationship harm, let's look at how a relationship can be made stronger and healthier.

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Communication and Comprehension

Communicating about your needs, feelings, thoughts and emotions is a necessary element in any kind of a relationship. Keeping transparency and receiving feedback about the same is essential. It helps you stay on the same page as the other person and it decreases risks of miscommunication or misunderstanding.



Trust and Honesty

Trusting the other person's feelings and whatever is communicated to you and showing equal honesty about your feelings, behaviour and motives. Some ways of developing trust and honesty are taking up responsibility, accepting your role in another person's life, backing up your words with actions and respecting boundaries.



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Playfulness – Having light-hearted fun and being playful helps keep relationships healthy. Some ways of creating playfulness are taking out time to engage in activities which interest you or the other person, doing something new, getting out of your comfort zone and creating a playtime schedule.



Nurturing and celebrating each other

Supporting and celebrating achievements are important in any relationship. This shows how you appreciate the other person's efforts and are helping them grow and develop as a person in their independent way. Some ways of showing support are validating their efforts, celebrating their achievements, emotionally supporting them and encouraging them to grow.

These are not the only ways of building healthy relationships but definitely crucial ones. Every relationship has its own needs and needs different approaches, but mutual liking, respect, trust, loyalty and integrity can be said to be the foundations of any relationship. If you cannot do it on your own, it is okay to ask for help.

Always remember that asking for help in any form is not a sign of weakness but a sign of improvement and betterment.

By Prachi Joshi
MA- Psychology (Part 2)



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STRENGTHENING BONDS WITH OTHERS

Man is a social animal and we all know that our social relationships have a great impact on other aspects of our life, whether it is family, School, Friend circle, Workplace, or a street with humans passing by. The way we perceive our environment influences our personality too.

They say beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder. We all are so involved in our busy schedules that we don't have a minute to even take a look around.

We are so habituated with our headphones and constant urge to scroll in our phones that we miss out on so many instances worth remembering.

Looking back to the day when I was just walking with my headphones plugged in and a random lady made a non-verbal gesture telling me to walk closer to the footpath as a bus was passing by. How strange it is that sometimes a person whom we don't know and might never cross paths again leaves an everlasting print of memories. The need for affection, love, and care is what we all look forward to with someone. If we pay attention to the songs that we all at some point have felt touched by having expressed the human need for closeness.

The famous song from Aamir Khan's P.K "Bin kuch kahe Bin kuch sune;chaar kadam bas chal do na sath mere!" (Without saying anything, Without listening just walk four steps together!)

Among all the famous western songs which were in trend is At My Worst Song by Pink Sweats " I need somebody who can love me at my worst, No I am not perfect but I hope you see my worth.!"

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And "I'm not looking for somebody
 With some superhuman gifts Some
 superhero Some fairytale bliss Just
 something I can turn to Somebody I can
 miss I want something just like this" by
 Coldplay & Chainsmokers.

All these words seeking not materialistic
 but human affection. We often lack
 communication and set expectations from
 certain people and get disappointed
 because we expect them to react a
 certain way or do a certain thing based
 on the situation at hand. We all need
 affection which can be in the form of
 hugs, kisses, Talking, traveling, Spending
 time, or a simple phone call.

Showing affection can be difficult for
 certain people because it may be
 regarded as a sign of weakness. Perhaps
 a person has trouble physically displaying
 emotions.

While growing up most of us were not
 modelled the skills to have honest, open
 and non-defensive communication.
 Hence, it does not come to us intuitively.
 It's a skill we need to learn and be taught.
 Many of us didn't learn these skills from
 our parents. A lot of learning combines
 with unlearning.

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Emotionally intelligent communication is the greatest thing one can learn to build a strong, more understanding relationship.

Communication is hard work, but so is constant avoidance, and the effects of not processing and facing the things that are hard for us. It takes more energy than we often acknowledge living with a non-communicative environment. Not only it is exhausting and diminishing, but we also end up disconnecting from things that would provide us comfort, meaning and value. When we understand feelings of communication as opportunities to learn about ourselves and grow, we can shift how we relate to it and deal with it. We can move from feeling stuck to feeling empowered by the possibility of change just by having communications.

Similarly, it is also important to learn how to comprehend and listen during conversations. Effective Communication is hard. It's okay if it feels robotic at first but it is a wise investment that we can do and practice.

We are not aiming, to build a perfect relationship with each other it will be just a superficial way to pretend we are happy. But what one can do on an individual level is practice a few healthy relationship behaviors.

Appreciate the little things one does for you. Be comfortable with understanding that we as humans are different and will have different opinions and attitudes. Developing the habit to agree or disagree assertively without shaming or judgment will not only strengthen the bond but will also maintain the boundaries and respect of an individual.

Taking Accountability and apologizing for our wrong behavior.

Co-operation between each other whether it is communication or working together sticking to each other through thick and thins and respecting ideas.

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Being empathetic to one's shared past and present concerns. Making them feel valued with positive affirmations can be as simple as "You matter!". Making them feel heard and not making fun of their wounds.

We as humans have so many emotions that at times we feel jealous when we see our loved one or a close friend sitting or spending time with someone else. We have to realize that there will come so many other social relationships and we have to respect them and not dominate each other. Setting Boundaries in which you are respecting the individual time and giving them the space to be with their other people who they feel are also part of their lives. Mutual Trust, Mutual Respect, and Mutual affection will help build a better relationship.



By Aqsa Khatib
MA- Psychology (Part 2)

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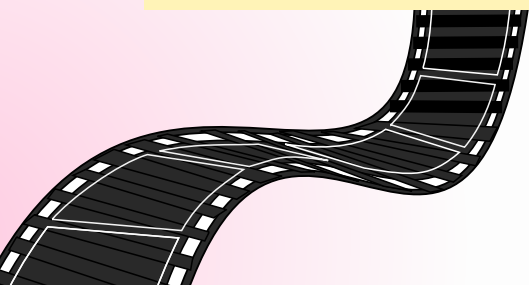
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Hindi movies teaching us to build better relationships

We all know that relationships are a very important part of our life and that building them is not the easiest thing. But why worry when we have Bollywood to our rescue? From English Viinglish to Piku we all have watched these movies. We just need to wear a set of different perspective glasses and understand how just like real life, the relationships portrayed in the movies may or may not be perfect, but when viewed differently they can help us shape and think about the relationships in our lives in a meaningful way. Let's discuss some of our favourite movies and their characters from a different less.



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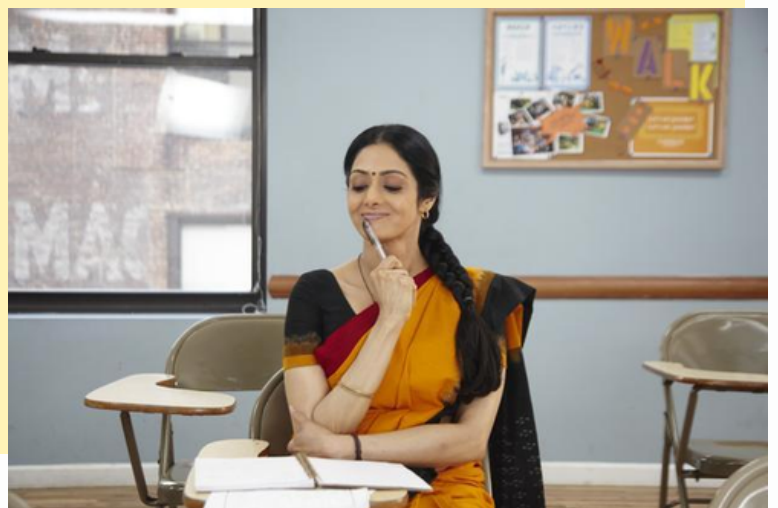
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Learning to Focus on ourselves from Shashi- English Vinglish

The movie **"English Vinglish"** shows a typical Indian couple bound in an arranged marriage. The relationship between the husband and the wife (Sashi-protagonist) is neither equal nor respectful. Sashi constantly struggles with the notion that her educated and English-speaking husband and children are superior to her because of their behaviour and actions and hence she strives throughout the movie to improve her English so that she can feel equal to her family. In Sashi's instance, it was only when she conquered her insecurities about not understanding English that she felt comfortable in her marriage.

While practically, it is also the responsibility of the other partner in a relationship to help the other person feel equal and also respect the partner and aid in their struggle in their own shortcomings. It teaches us that Respect and Support play very important roles in a relationship.



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Understanding importance of Communication from kabir and kiya-

Ki & Ka

In the movie "**Ki & Ka**", we get to see a novel interpretation of a contemporary marriage where an ambitious Kiya (wife) manages the duty of a breadwinner which is stereotypically assigned to men while a charismatic Kabir (husband) plays the role of a proud homemaker. Moreover, a proud one!



When Kabir starts to gain attention for being a stay-at-home husband and Kiya feels neglected for all of her efforts at work, chaos ensues. This film teaches us that in a relationship, there can be moments when one spouse will be appreciated more for doing something, while the other's efforts may go unnoticed. Such situations must be dealt with a composed mind and clear communication of feelings in a gentle way and this is how expression and communication of feelings can help get to a possibly logical agreement or conclusion.

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Learning that actions speak louder than words from Piku and Rana

Piku



"Piku" is about that person in every family who works really hard and never truly goes off-duty from the family responsibilities. Piku and Rana's story is one of the most underrated love stories in Bollywood. Both Rana and Piku are faced with a great deal of emotional stress from their families. Throughout the course of the film, Rana helps Piku realise that what she was doing is more than what she gets acknowledged for and that she deserves to have a life. We get to see the beginning of a mature, pure love that can be recognised without the aid of great gestures or romantic displays. There are different ways of expression of love such as by standing up for them, being by their side, and helping them know who they are etc. Additionally, falling in love does not require expensive dates in private booths. In the midst of a thousand people and a conversation on the banks of the Ganga at two in the morning, you can fall in love.

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Learning to embrace each other's flaws from Prem and Sandhya

Dum Laga ke Haisha

In "**Dum Laga Ke Haisha**", the female protagonist (Sandhya) is an intelligent teacher, a plus-size woman and the male protagonist(Prem) is a school dropout with really transparent feelings. When these two are tied in the marital knot, Sandhya is made fun of because of her weight and mocked at as she is more educated than her husband. Prem is so frustrated with his constant academic failure and the fact that he is married to a fat woman that he becomes suicidal. Throughout the movie, the couple tries to come to terms with the marriage and the two come closer when they take part in a race, which involves Prem carrying Sandhya on his back. The film sends a message that you don't have to have a perfect person to have a perfect marriage. You need to embrace each other's flaws to make your marriage a perfect one.



Did you ever imagine that movies could
give us an insight into building better
relationships??

Well that just happened:)

Krupa. B. Somaiya
M. A. Psychology (Part II)

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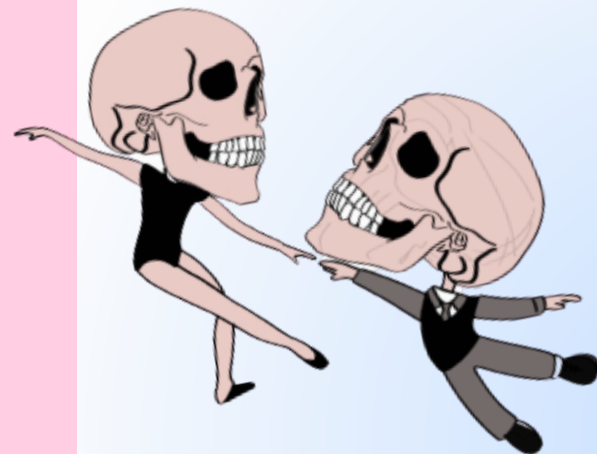
BONDING IN

Everyday, morning and night
Time flies in the blink of an eye
When you are by my side
Everything seems to be right

You are my friend, my happiness
The light to my darkness
You build my confidence
I appreciate you for all the guidance

Lets bake a pie and sing a song
Dance all night, drive through the town
Add colours, write a book along
Frame our memories on wooden brown
We grow together

In hardships and in ease
We stay forever
Our bond is eternity



By Bushra Patel
MA- Psychology (Part I)

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Managing Relationships



We are often told about how the relationships we have in our life make a significant impact on our lives. A relationship as defined by the 'Oxford Dictionary' is in which two or more people or things are connected, or the state of being connected. Maintaining any relationship sounds all fun and games but a lot goes around in maintaining one.

Here are a list of ideas and activities that may help you maintain any kind of relationship:

- Communicating one's feelings and opinions to the other person in a gentle way.
- Finding things you both love to share.
- Trying new activities together.(eg: visiting a new cafe, reading about a topic other person is passionate about.)
- Try to be available when you can.
- Be There for Each Other in Good and Bad Times.
- Lend a Listening Ear When They Want to Talk
- Get to know each other better. (go for a walk together,etc)
- Use online connections when you can't call. (Stay connected)
- Set and respect boundaries.
- Communicate mindfully.
- Be open to feedback.
- Give them space.
- Resolve disagreements in emotionally mature ways.
- Be a positive force.(avoid constantly making comparisons.)

By Sakshi Sachdev
MA- Psychology (Part I)

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Our Team

Procurement

Aayushi Parikh (MA 1)
Bushra Patel (MA 1)

Proof Reading

Sakshi Sachdev (MA 1)
Simran Chawla (MA 1)

Placement

Raashi Gadodia (MA 1)
Fatema Plumber (MA 1)

Design

Regina Vaz (MA 1)
Bhoomi Mehta (MA 1)

Teacher Coordinators

Apurva Ganu
Mayola Rodrigues
Vedashree Bhagwat

