

RELATIONSHIPS - SECOND EDITION

MANAGING DAY TO DAY RELATIONSHIPS.

You have heard it said (Tony Blair)

Education. Education. Education.

And by Estate Agents,

Location. Location. Location.

But I say unto you

Relationships. Relationships. Relationships.

It is all too prevalent for people to fall out with one another and simply **not know how** to restore the relationship. So, we see **split after split** after split in couples, organisations, churches, and countries all the time with neither party knowing how best to **repair** that breach.

So how do we **go about repairing** these broken relationships?

The Mantra, if you like, is the

RELATIONSHIP ISSUE RELATIONSHIP SANDWICH.

Let me explain how it **works**.

ALL RELATIONSHIPS go through **cycles**.

FORMING, STORMING, FALLING OUT, REFORMING/REPAIRING, and finally PERFORMING.

Unfortunately, many relationships get **no further** than the Falling Out stage and never make it round the loop.

The initial **FORMING** stage is one in which both parties are **getting to know** one another and only revealing part of themselves, the **honeymoon period** as it were, when they are on their best behaviour.

As the relationship moves on, more is **revealed**, and more potential areas of **conflict** emerge. The Honeymoon Period is **over**.

Then the **STORMING** begins. We are all different and hence there will be **inevitable** areas of conflict to be **negotiated** in every relationship. If not **resolved** this leads to

FALLING OUT with one another. A **distancing** often follows and, as I said above, often the relationship goes no further.

But how do you we **get back together again** and work back into a **functional** relationship?

There is often a lot of **hurt** around to be acknowledged and huge **fears** can surface in terms of what might **happen** when we try to resolve the situation both in terms of how we personally **react** and how the other person **responds**.

This is where the **RELATIONSHIP ISSUE RELATIONSHIP** sandwich comes into play.

There are two elements at play, the **RELATIONSHIP** itself and the **ISSUE**.

Often one is **sacrificed** for the sake of the other. The **RELATIONSHIP** may feel so important that it becomes very difficult to raise the **ISSUE**. Or the **ISSUE** is so important that we are prepared to sacrifice the **RELATIONSHIP** itself.

The trick is how get to a **WIN-WIN** outcome when **both** the **RELATIONSHIP** AND the **ISSUE** have been addressed appropriately.

But, if we seek to remedy a 'rupture' by going straight on the **offensive** by raising the issue, then we are very likely to make the recipient respond **defensively** and render them unlikely to hear what we have to say. Unfortunately, this is the **Natural** way most of us deal with things, unless we have learned to play it **differently**.

The Trick, if you like, is to begin **RELATIONALLY**. In other words, try to **create** as sensitive, warm, positive, and engaging an **atmosphere** as possible first before then moving on to address the issue. This may feel very hard to do, but it's important to **try**. When the time is ripe, then raise the **ISSUE**, but in way that is an **unthreatening** as possible. Try to create as level a playing field as possible, in other words an **Adult-Adult** mutually respectful dynamic. And always make sure that you **hear** the other person through as well because they will in all likelihood have a **different perspective** to your own. This way you are most likely to **get yourself heard**, and able to acknowledge the other side of the issue as well so as be able to work towards a **mutually** beneficial outcome.

Finally, it's important to finish **RELATIONALLY** in order to complete the Sandwich and move towards a **WIN-WIN** outcome.

To the **extent** to which we adopt this way of behaving and work through the Rupture and Repair, we are most likely to be able to maintain and **grow** the relationship both in the short and long term, taking the **RELATIONSHIP** fully round the **loop** to the point of **PERFORMING** well together, where the whole becomes greater than the sum of the parts.

So, the All-Important **Message** is:

RELATIONSHIP ISSUE RELATIONSHIP
RELATIONSHIP **ISSUE** RELATIONSHIP
RELATIONSHIP ISSUE **RELATIONSHIP**.

I CANNOT EMPHASISE THE **POWER** OF THIS WAY OF BEHAVING ENOUGH.
IT MAKES A HUGE DIFFERENCE.

LET US **DO TO OTHERS** WHAT WE WOULD HAVE THEM TO **DO TO US**.