

TEAM UP

Nurture relationships & Talk Okay!



Suresh Sivaraman



Piyush Sharma



"With gentleness
overcome anger.
With generosity
overcome
meanness. With
truth overcome
deceit."

Buddha



RELATIONSHIP STATUS: It's UnComplicated!

Have you noticed people spoil relationships by being too intrusive and judgmental to the point of being irritating? By doing so, they aren't just damaging the equation, but also causing immense unhappiness in their own lives. It's almost as if they're actively looking for reasons to be unhappy, disgruntled and dissatisfied.

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Rather than branding themselves as vile and pessimistic, is there a way they can actually choose happiness and connect well with others? What do you do when you have genuine concerns and grouses about the other party?

It's 7 p.m. at the Taj West End Hotel in Bangalore. Maya is terribly upset. She wanted Leena to personally invite a few guests. Looks like Leena has missed two important names. Maya of course has genuine reasons to be furious. But, she is also aware that Leena is very sensitive. How can she express her displeasure, and still keep the friendship secure?

It is also important that Maya does not suppress her emotions totally for the sake of the friendship. What if worse things happen tomorrow? Also, she may still end up showing her anger and frustration indirectly. Which in any case isn't doing any good for the friendship!

Elsewhere, in Mumbai, Sheetal is mortified at the mere thought of her Mom-in-law's upcoming visit. Last summer, she was at her wits end on many occasions. Always a stickler for rules and customs, Mrs. Agarwal, her mother-in-law has little patience for even minor "transgressions". The cutlery's got to be sparkling just like in the five star hotels. The almond biscuits for afternoon tea better have that the exact "Starbucks" type aroma! Come hell or high water. She has kept an extra strip of her BP tablets handy. Some of Mrs. Agarwal's nitpicking can get to the nerves.

"The meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemical substances: if there is any reaction, both are transformed."

Carl Jung

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In London, Mitch has just got off the tube station to grab a take-away coffee. He'll be in office within 7 minutes. All night he was rehearsing his lines for a "frank" chat he wants to have with Joe. Mitch knows that it may already be too late, but he nevertheless wants Joe to mend his ways and stop leaking important project details to other teams. Joe is a close buddy, and has been a star performer for many years. His recent behavior has been surprising to put it mildly. Mitch doesn't want him to land up in serious trouble. In spite of a fantastic rapport, he's worried that Joe might become extremely defensive.

Maya, Sheetal and Mitch... We've all been there, haven't we? We might know folks like Mrs. Agarwal, Leena and Joe too! Everyday scenarios that we face in our lives perhaps.

Nurturing relationships is an art in itself. Agreed, so much of it is based on common sense. But it is this very same common sense that seems to be in short supply quite often. That in turn leads to bruised egos, wounded pride, indifference, a sense of exclusion or even genuine angst. The stress that it perpetuates is immense. Relationships flounder and great opportunities are missed. People end up wasting a lot of time, effort and energy. The entire experience leaves them drained. Just imagine if we could channel the same energy into things that really matter. Into personal and professional pursuits that lead to greater and genuine sense of satisfaction and joy?

"The greatest compliment that was ever paid me was when someone asked me what I thought, and attended to my answer."

Henry David Thoreau

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This is not just about being virtuous. It's also about making the right choices, so you don't allow your creative energies to be wasted in inter-personal dramas! We all face similar situations, where there may be genuine or not-so-important concerns and worries. How we respond to them eventually decides the quality of our lives.

In particular, what can we do to avoid feeling more miserable when we are confronted with situations and triggers that make us feel aggrieved? How can we constructively respond to the situation and still save our relationships from irretrievable damage?

“TEAM UP” is a model that can provide a few answers. Few, not all! As the topic is actually quite vast. Our specific focus in the “TEAM UP” model is to provide that extra cushion in relationships that will make it easier to have frank, open, and above all healthy conversations. Conversations that don't hide issues under the carpet. Conversations that are solution oriented. Conversations that don't degenerate into an ugly display of one-upmanship and holier-than-thou self righteousness. Is it possible to get the balance right?

Yes, it is possible. But it takes some work. Setting the right pace and context is important for that cushion we mentioned above. Let's TEAM UP in style!

And label more of our relationship as “It's Uncomplicated”, for a change!

“When dealing with people, remember you are not dealing with creatures of logic, but creatures of emotion.”

Dale Carnegie

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[Practice Chart: S&P TEAM UP framework](#)