

Chapter 10

Communication in Our Lives, 5th Edition
by Julia T. Wood

Personal Relationships

- Uniqueness

- Particular people—who they are and what they think, feel and do—define the value of the communication



Personal Relationships

- Commitment
- A decision to remain in the relationship
 - **Passion**
 - intense positive feelings and desires
 - **Investments**
 - material (money, possessions), time, energy, thought, feelings



What have you invested in a significant friendship or romantic relationship?

Personal Relationships

- Rules guide how partners interact
 - **Constitutive rules**
 - the meaning of various types of communication
 - **Regulative rules**
 - specify when and with whom to engage in various kinds of communication



Personal Relationships

- Affected by Contexts
 - **Social circles, family units, and society as a whole**

Personal Relationships

- Relational Dialectics
 - Opposing and continual tensions that are normal in personal relationships
 - **Autonomy/Connection**
 - **Novelty/Predictability**
 - **Openness/Closedness**



Personal Relationships

- Managing Dialectics

- Neutralization

- **negotiate a balance**

- Separation

- **one need favored and the other ignored**

- Segmentation

- **assign each need to certain spheres, issues, activities, or times**

- Reframing

- **define apparently contradictory needs as not really in opposition**

Evolution of Relationships

- Friendship

- **Coming together**

- Initial social rules and roles
 - Increase self disclosure
 - Communicate to learn shared interests
 - Become friends and develop unique way of relating
 - Stabilize and integrate into larger social context

Evolution of Relationships

- Friendship deterioration
 - **Changes in communication**

Evolution of Relationships

- Romantic Relationships
 - Escalation
 - Navigation
 - Deterioration

Evolution of Relationships

- Romantic Relationships
- The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse
 - **Complaint and criticism**
 - **Defensiveness and denial of responsibility**
 - **Expressions of contempt**
 - **Stonewalling**

Challenges in Relationships

- **Managing Distance**
 - Geographic separation
 - Unrealistic expectations for time together
 - Idealization
- **LDRs can be sustained and lead to satisfying relationships.**

Challenges in Relationships

- **Create Equitable Romantic Relationships**
 - Partner investment
 - Equity of financial, emotional, physical contributions
 - Equity relates to relational satisfaction



Challenges in Relationships

• Create Equitable Romantic Relationships

cont...

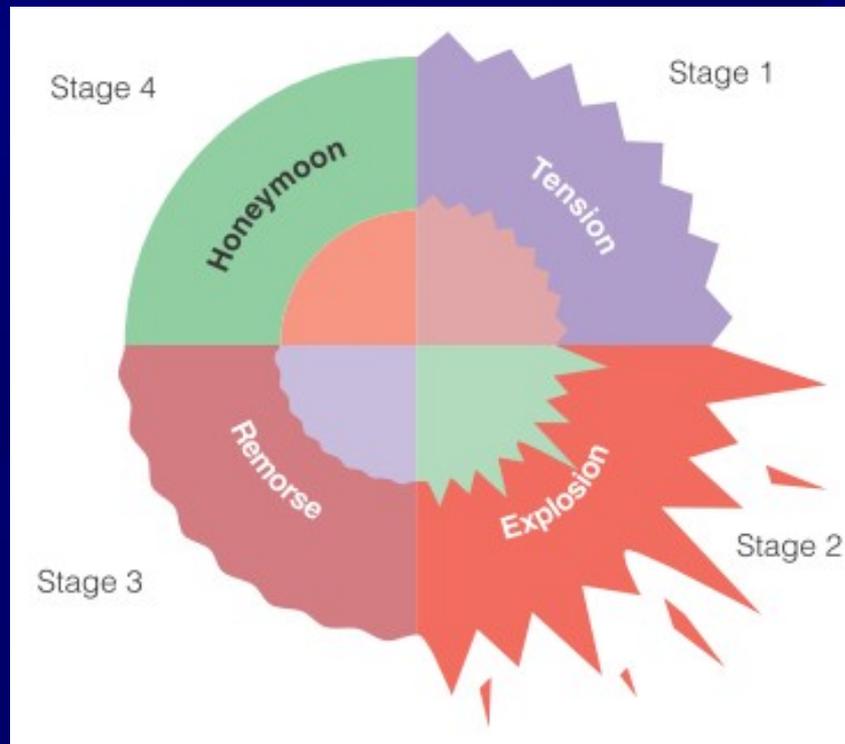
- Women assume more psychological responsibility
 - More remembering, planning, and coordinating domestic activities.
- Same-sex couples
 - Lesbian couples are more egalitarian
 - Less feelings of inequality
 - Gay male couples
 - More money generally equals more power

Challenges in Relationships

- Resist Violence and Abuse
 - Physical, verbal, and emotional
 - Stalking
 - Repeated intrusive behavior - unwanted/uninvited
 - **Communication and partner violence**
 - Negative patterns
 - Abusive language
 - Cultural normalization of abuse

Challenges in Relationships

- Resist Violence and Abuse cont...
 - **Cycle of Abuse**



Challenges in Relationships

- **Negotiate Safer Sex**
 - **STD dangers are significant and related to unsafe sex**
 - **Safe sex communication is difficult**
 - Awkward to ask direct questions and make requests
 - **Erroneous assumptions in close relationships**
 - Monogamy, detecting STDs, etc.
 - **Good communication skills are essential**
 - Use “I” language rather than “You” language
 - Use “we” language and refer to “our relationship”

Websites

- 8.1:
[Long Distance Relationship Statistics](#)
- 8.2:
[Long Distance Relationships and Separated Tours: When Couples Live Apart](#)

Websites

- Managing Your Online Profile
 - PEW Internet & American Life Project, May 2010
- Journal of Social and Personal Relationships
(abstracts)
- Family Violence Prevention Fund

More Websites

- [National Sex Violence Resource Center](#)
- [Abuse.com](#)
 - A comprehensive guide to resources for dealing with various types of abuse and prevention thereof