

What You Can Expect

In the last lesson you explored why you might be having doubts in the early months of moving in together and ways to resolve those doubts.

In this lesson, you'll learn about what to expect over the years of your relationship.

You'll Learn More about Yourself and Your Partner than You Can Imagine!

In the 1950's Joseph Luft and Harrington Ingham developed a simple and powerful model to explain personalities. It's called the Johari Window.

Let's look at this model in greater detail to see how it applies to you, your partner, and your relationship:

Johari Window	Known to Others	Unknown to Others
Known to Self	Public	Private or Hidden from Others
Unknown to Self	Blind to Self	Undiscovered (Unknown to anyone)

The Johari Window shows how everyone has four aspects:

1. **The Public aspect is what everyone knows.** This could be what you look like, your job, and other easily discovered things about you.
 - When you first meet each other, the "Public" square is small, and the "Private" square is large.

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- The longer you know each other, the “Public” square becomes larger.
2. **The Private part of yourself is that which you know but others don’t.**
 - Some people keep this “Private” part hidden. They don’t want anyone to know certain things. This makes for good novels and weak relationships.
 - **In healthy relationships, the “Private” becomes smaller as you come to know each other better.**
 3. **The “Blind” part of you is what others know about you, but you haven’t discovered yet.**
 - Your partner may have a better awareness of what both your gifts and weaknesses are. **As you learn from your partner, you’ll know more about both your strengths and weaknesses.**
 - Most of us resist recognizing the areas we need to work on. We also often resist acknowledging what our gifts are.
 4. **The “Undiscovered” are the hidden qualities that neither of you know.**
 - In relationships, many “undiscovered” qualities will become discovered. You’ll be surprised at some gifted areas you weren’t aware of. You’ll be disappointed when you learn things you aren’t happy about.

What you learn about each other can bring you closer together. You can become comfortable with each other because you accept and trust each other. This brings a deepness to your relationship that you didn’t know was possible.

In the Midst of the Ordinary Will Be Passion and Bumps

Most of life is filled with routine. The same actions and events occur with regularity. Your job is to ensure that your relationship also has times of excitement and passion. That’s why you want to build passion into your life by the rituals we discussed earlier.

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Keeping your relationship strong will ensure you make it through the challenging times. There will be times when someone loses a job, becomes ill, or struggles emotionally. **The more solid you make your relationship during the ordinary times, the better you'll handle the challenging times.**

Change - The Constant in Life

It may seem strange to say change is the one thing you can count on in life after we've talked about the ordinariness of life. Even when life is ordinary, change is happening, even if barely noticed.

One day you look back a few years and realize you're a different person than you were. You look at your partner and realize they're different, also. You just didn't notice it and then you did.

There are natural developmental stages adults go through:

1. **In the mid to late 20s, we're getting used to being an adult.** We're "trying on" the adult mindset.
 - Our idea of what makes a relationship is in flux. **Sometimes we act like a teenager and other times like an adult.**
 - We're making decisions about our personal values and what we want to do with our lives.
2. **The late 20s to early 30s is where lifestyle changes often occur.** Marriage and children have a strong impact upon the individual and the relationship.
 - How each partner handles these changes determines the flow of the relationship.
3. **The late 30s and early 40s are when we seem to settle into our lives.** Work and children consume most of our time and energy.
 - **If you've made rituals a tradition in your relationship, you'll enjoy the highs of passion mixed with a deep sense of**

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commitment to each other.

4. **The mid-40s to mid-50s are a time of evaluation of yourself and life.**

You look at whether you've accomplished what you wanted in life.

- Many people begin to think of being closer to the end of their lives rather than the beginning.
- This is a time in which your relationship can deepen into the kind of relationship you dreamed of when you were in your teens and 20s.

Each developmental change brings changes to the individual. Each partner will need to adapt to those changes. **The foundation you set now will assist as changes occur.**

Summary

The early passion which brought you together can bring you to a deepening commitment to each other. This results in a comfortableness you didn't know was possible. It takes both of you working on your relationship by forming daily and weekly rituals to keep your passion alive.

The most important ritual you'll discover is healthy and consistent communication with each other. That is the subject of the next module.

Before you explore ways to communicate with each other, take a few moments to reflect on the following questions.

Reflection

1. What are some ways you've changed since you began your relationship with your partner?

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2. What are ways your partner has changed?

3. What are three things you've learned about your partner and three things you've learned about yourself through your relationship?