When Should You Give Up on a Relationship?

Dorothy Horton, PsyD, answers your questions in her latest Ask Doctor Dee column.

November 9, 2020 By Dorothy Horton

Q: When should you give up on a relationship?

A: It can be difficult for some people to recognize negative signs in a relationship and to admit that it's time for a partnership to end.

Step back and take a serious look at signals that require you to ask yourself some hard questions, such as those below. More often than not, the answers may reveal this difficult truth: Your relationship is over, and it's time to move on.

1. Are either you or your partner no longer interested in activities you both previously enjoyed and prefer to do things alone or with others?
2. Does your significant other occasionally not come home or stay out late without a logical explanation for their behavior?
3. Did your sex life suddenly change from being warm and passionate to cold and indifferent? Yes, partners go through periods where sex is not always as sizzling as before. But in this instance, one individual in a relationship no longer finds the other sexually attractive.
4. Do you feel emotionally and physically detached from your significant other or vice versa?
5. Do you find yourself frequently thinking that you might be more satisfied with someone else in a new relationship? Your partner might feel the same way.
6. Have you or your partner stopped confiding in each other? Perhaps, you both find yourselves preferring to discuss situations with friends and family members instead of your partner.
7. Do you consistently avoid talking with your partner about issues in the relationship that bother you—despite mounting unresolved resentments—because you're afraid of their reaction?
8. Are you both insanely critical of each other?
9. When conversations turn to talk of the future, does the discussion center solely on one partner?
10. If you've both acknowledged that there's a problem in your relationship, has your partner adamantly refused to consider attending therapy with you?

Keep in mind that partners who still love each other and treasure their relationship are usually willing to address issues and work hard to stay together.

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