

The Relationship Institute

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Ways We All Avoid Differentiation, Tension and/or Growth in Our Relationships

Use the list below and mark the various methods you use to avoid relationship difficulties. Make a concerted effort to catch yourself avoiding; substitute more proactive responses in spite of your fears and anxieties.

- **Try to forget it...keep smiling...**
- **Blurt it out...have a nasty fight**
- **Go numb, hold it in, hope to avoid any conflict**
- **Distract myself; focus on something else**
- **Blame my partner; see him/her as the problem**
- **Talk to my friends instead of my partner**
- **Tell myself s/he couldn't possibly handle my real feelings**
- **Make an attempt, then give up when I can't get through**
- **Get very upset, get flooded with everything that's ever been wrong**
- **Do everything I can to avoid the feeling of having my nose rubbed in the dirt**
- **Tell myself s/he will never change; what's the use?**
- **Tell myself that I don't feel much that nothing really bothers me**
- **Change the subject**
- **Get angry at someone or something else**
- **Get busy, work harder and tell myself that there is so much to do.**
- **Have an affair.**
- **Work on letting go and practicing non-attachment**
- **Tell myself I'll get even eventually.**
- **Think of the suffering of the saints and others. Life is dukha.**
- **Try not to let my partner see how bothered I really am.**
- **Drop hints, verbally or through body language hoping my partner picks up on these**
- **Threaten to leave or console myself with these thoughts.**
- **Use drugs and/or alcohol to not deal with the discomfort and/or problems**
- **Delay discussions about the problems.**