

# The Relationship Institute

[www.therelationshipinstitute.org](http://www.therelationshipinstitute.org)

## UNACCEPTABLE AND DESTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP BEHAVIORS

- Not being accountable for one's actions or words and their effect on the partner and the relationship
- Discounting how you have contributed to the erosion of trust or erosion of your own credibility in the relationship
- Denying how your regressive behavior(s) impact your partner and the relationship
- Threatening your partner either overtly or covertly with a lack of commitment to the relationship
- Using sarcasm
- Denying your anger and having it "go underground"
- Demanding your partner be intimate while you avoid being vulnerable and open
- Quickly and frequently escalating the hostility in the interaction rather than taking responsibility for soothing and calming yourself and remaining engaged in the difficult discussion
- Remaining sensitive to confrontations from your partner or the therapist rather than being open to learning about other choices for responding to information
- Refusing to take responsibility to repair relationship ruptures or refusing to learn ways to make healthy relationship repairs
- Demanding or insisting either overtly or covertly that your partner agree to a less mature solution to relationship problems.

## WAYS TO GROW YOURSELF AND YOUR RELATIONSHIP

- Agree to have a partner who encourages you to grow and know that growth is often uncomfortable
- View differences as indications that you and your partner are different people
- Commit to acknowledging what you feel, think and want, and share these with your partner
- Practice "soft start-ups"; initiating conversations that invite the other person to have the conversation
- Acknowledge that you have positive and negative feelings and desires. Own them and share them as yours
- Avoiding blaming your partner; talk about your feelings as information about you rather than the focus being information or accusation about your partner