



# Why some relationships don't work, and others do.

A short E-Book (20 min read) by  
Dr. Andrea & Jon Taylor-Cummings  
2021 edition

THE **4**  
HABITS

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## 1) Why some relationships DON'T work



### Falling at the hurdles...

You only have to have been in a relationship – whether with a partner, colleague or friend – for a short while to know that at some point challenges will arise. Whether it's minutes, hours, days, weeks (most likely), months or even years, at some point you're going to have a different point of view from the people you are in relationship with. And if the different views are held sufficiently strongly (on either side), conflict is likely to follow.

We call those moments of conflict 'relationship hurdles'. Every relationship has them. But the hurdles themselves are not the problem. The problem is that, unlike the sprinter who prepares to get over the hurdles *before* going down into the starter blocks on an athletics track, most of us enter the 'relationship race' a) with no idea that the hurdles exist, and b) with no preparation for getting over them. As a result, they often come as a nasty surprise. And when we hit too many hurdles, many of us start considering our options for bowing out of the race.

### Unsuccessful relationships fall over at the hurdles.

And the hurdles don't necessarily have to be big things either. They generally show up as disagreements over:

- **Different ways of wanting to do things** (e.g. you might like to plan things in detail and manage risks – they're more spontaneous and impulsive).
- **Different approaches to conflict and ways of handling stress** (e.g. you might want to talk about it – they might want a 'time out').
- **Different values and assumptions** (e.g. roles and responsibilities at home - who does the cooking, the cleaning and taking out the bins - or how to spend money).

- **Different ways of feeling valued** (e.g. you might need to ‘hear’ that you are valued – they might need to ‘see’ you do something for them to feel valued).

We’re all as unique as our finger prints, so it’s inevitable that at some point we’re going to see things differently.

**A key step on the road to success comes from firstly recognising the inevitability of conflict in relationships, and then learning how to get over the hurdles when they arise.**

### Not knowing WHAT to do

The failure of many relationships is often put down to ‘poor communication’. One guy who reached out to us for help (we’ll call him Sanjay) put it like this:

*I’m really struggling to communicate properly with my wife (Deepti). She keeps forgetting to do simple things, which I find really irritating, and then she doesn’t like it when I try to laugh it off with sarcasm. And on my side, I keep trying to do the things I know she likes, but I either fall short of the mark, or I don’t talk to her about my plans – either because I’m still making them or because I haven’t put in as much effort as I feel I should have. And then she gets upset because I haven’t done some things or communicated my intentions.*

*I’m also not so good at communicating what I love about her in the moment – like when I sometimes peek in on her and see the really caring side of her as she teaches the kids in her class. I think she’s only going to think I’m patronising her. And then the moment passes, and it feels awkward bringing it up, and so it never gets said.*

*I know I need to get better at communicating. I just don’t know how to do it.*

‘Poor communication skills’ was certainly an issue for Sanjay... but was it one-sided? No. If you didn’t pick them up the first time, re-read the paragraphs above. You will see that both he and Deepti were doing things that were communicating negative messages to each other.

The fact that they were both doing these things *unintentionally* is also vital. We’re yet to meet anyone who went into a relationship intentionally trying to wreck it! Yet still, from time to time, we all do things that ‘land’ badly. Sanjay called it ‘poor communication’. We would describe it as not knowing either *what to do* or *what not to do*. Success comes from knowing the difference between the two and then learning how to stop doing the things that aren’t helping, while getting better and better about doing the things that do help.

That’s how you build SKILL in managing your Relationships. Another way of putting it...

**Success comes from building your *Relational Intelligence*.**



Back in the mid 1990s, the concept of *Emotional Intelligence* (or EQ) was first popularised when Daniel Goleman wrote up the results of his research into what made for successful CEOs. He concluded that success in life is at least as dependent on our EQ, as it is on our IQ.

While Emotional intelligence is about learning to handle our own emotions and how they impact on the people around us. Relational intelligence focuses on how we establish connections and interact successfully with others – how we establish trust, manage conflict and generally work or live together successfully. Relational Intelligence includes Emotional Intelligence, but is much more.

In our experience, your *Relational Intelligence* is about two key things:

1. Your ability to handle various situations that occur in your relationships with the appropriate SKILL, and
2. Your ability to maintain the WILL to keep the relationship alive, on both sides.

**It follows that the greater the Relational Intelligence of both parties in the relationship, the more likely the relationship is to feel ‘mutually satisfying’.**

Most relationships (whether at home or at work) start out in the *Mutual Satisfaction* zone - as shown on our two-dimensional The 4 Habits Experience Model® model below - think *Probation* or *Honeymoon* period. The rose tinted glasses are very much on, and everyone is trying to impress.



In these early days though, the feeling of Mutual Satisfaction is more due to the *Will* being strong than to any particular *Skill* – in fact, at this stage, strong *Will* generally masks any lack of *Skill*.

However, as we’ve all experienced, before long people relax and drop their guard, and little irritations begin to show through.

**Over time, without the *Skill* to overcome problems, frustrations start to chip away at *Will*, and problems can start to surface in the relationship.**

## Not knowing HOW to improve things

We've all been in situations where we've done what we know to do and gotten a result that wasn't quite what we were expecting. And despite the negative result (unless it was a particularly dramatic one!), we've kept on doing the same thing!



Let's say you've done something and your partner is upset with you. You decided to stay quiet because you don't want to say the wrong thing and escalate the argument. But your partner thinks that you are ignoring them and eventually storms off in anger. This becomes a predictable pattern of behaviour, but neither of you knows how to stop it.

Sometimes we get stuck in patterns of behaviours because that's all we know to do, and somehow, we expect the other person will eventually react or respond in the way we know *we would*. When they don't, the relationship moves into the 'Frustration' zone.

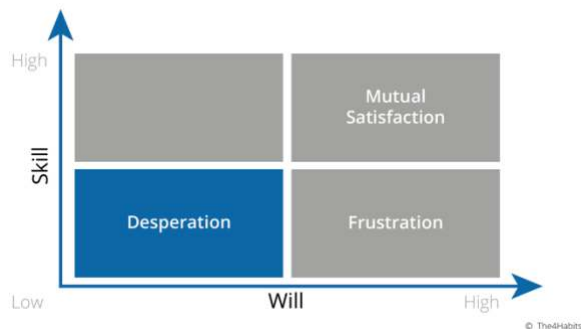


Quite often relationships flip-flop between 'Frustration' and 'Mutual Satisfaction'. This is both normal and okay every now and again, as long as the relationship spends a good proportion of the time in the 'Mutual Satisfaction' zone.

**Learning the right thing to do in 'Frustration', and then doing that, is key to getting back to 'Mutual Satisfaction' as quickly as possible.**

But *not knowing what to do* and *doing nothing*, leaves relationships stuck in frustration.

And when relationships are stuck in frustration for too long, it's easy to begin to lose the *Will* to keep working on the relationship and slip down into the danger 'Desperation' zone.

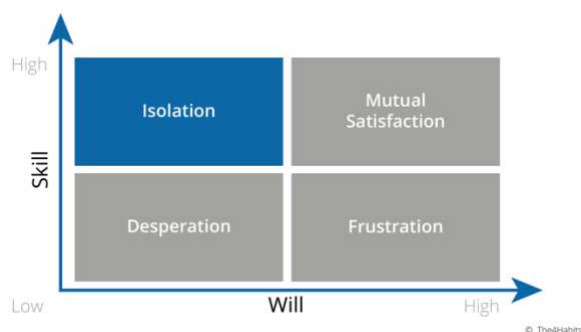


There, we feel like we've tried all we know to do, and nothing has worked, so we reluctantly accept what we believe to be the reality that this is *as good as it gets*. We begin to question the long-term prospects for the relationship. And when those feelings are left unchecked, 'voting with our feet' starts to become an option - Break up. Divorce. Leave the job.

As Einstein said: '*We cannot solve our problems with the same level of thinking that got us there*'. Getting back to 'Mutual Satisfaction' from 'Desperation' requires a combination of finding out the right thing to do (building *Skill*) and doing it (which requires redeveloping the *Will*).

**Building great relationships takes both *Skill* and *Will* which means we have to be intentional about learning and developing them.**

But perhaps even worse than being in 'Desperation' in a relationship, is when one or both of you actually know the right thing to do but, for whatever reason, decide not to do it. Quite often, it's because all the goodwill has drained out of the relationship, along with any willingness to try anymore. Those relationships feel like living in 'Isolation'.



Outside of abusive relationships, success here comes from getting help to have necessary *Courageous Conversations* to address long-standing, often deep-seated issues, rebuilding commitment to the relationship and re-kindling the *Will* to do what you know to do, or indeed to find out what else you could be doing for success.

**Either way, where relationships fail, it is generally due to a lack of *Skill*, which ultimately leads to a lack of *Will* to keep the relationship alive.**

## 2) Why other relationships DO (work)

Success in relationships does *not* necessarily come from ‘compatibility’. Yes of course it helps if you have more things in common than you have differences – it means you have less to argue about – but successful relationships or partnerships do not necessarily come from teaming up with people identical (or as close) to you as possible.

Long-term success in relationships doesn’t even necessarily come from being in relationship with people we ‘like’. Again, yes of course it helps if we like them (and quite often that’s what gets the relationship started)... but what happens to those feelings if they start repeatedly doing things we don’t like? When you think about it, we don’t get to choose our biological children or our parents. Yet still, by and large, most of us find ways to make those relationships work.

Equally, if you only chose your boss or your team colleagues based on who you like at work, what would that mean for you every time someone close to you in a work setting moved on to a different role?



**Long-term success in relationships does *not* come simply from liking the people we’re relating to.**

So, what creates long-term success in relationships? There are three popular answers to this:

### A) The luck of the draw!

It’s true that to some degree, success in long-term relationships comes down to ‘the luck of the draw’, but only in so far as ‘luck’ here relates to being in relationships with people who think, feel, or behave similar to you (as this reduces the opportunity for conflict). As



research has shown however, the downside of those kinds of relationships is that they tend to *not* make for the best teams – too many similarities mean you typically have the same blind spots, and as such run the risk of missing out on certain types of opportunities.



This kind of luck, while helpful, is not sufficient to guarantee long-term success in relationships. The problem is it can provide a false sense of security which can run out when you least expect it – for example, when faced with new challenges that cause you to react differently.

Another, and perhaps more helpful kind of ‘luck’, is to have had good role models on your journey - people (either at home or at work) from whom you had the opportunity of learning what good looked like. Interestingly, the reverse sometimes also works – where you’ve experienced ‘bad’ and determined in your heart to do the opposite in your own relationships.

## B) Commitment

Another key factor influencing the long-term success of relationships comes from adopting a *commitment* mindset. Here, there is a recognition that it probably won’t always be plain sailing, but the long-term gains will outweigh the short-term bumps along the way.



This helps explain why some arranged marriages work.

But of course, while deciding to stick together through ‘thick and thin’ makes for a good foundation in any relationship, it doesn’t necessarily guarantee that you will enjoy the journey. Many people live and/or work in committed relationships for years – decades even – without particularly feeling satisfied.

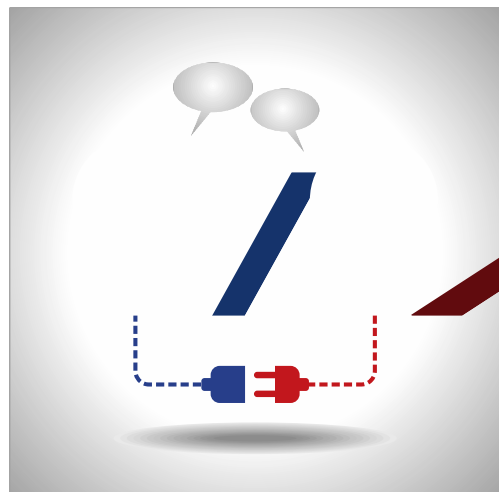
***Commitment* is a necessary, but not sufficient, ingredient for long-term success.**

### C) Intentionality

The third, and perhaps most important factor in achieving long-term success in relationships is when people exercise *intentionality*. Intentionality is what people demonstrate when they go beyond commitment to the relationship and pursue an on-going determination to learn and practice *how* to make things work.

**Intentionality is about plugging into each other to keep the relationship alive and mutually satisfying *on purpose*.**

And part of that determination comes from adopting a mindset that puts the relationship ahead of each other’s needs. From time to time that will require you to say, ‘I know I would prefer *this*, but for the relationship’s sake, I’m happy to do *that* – because I know that’s what the other person would prefer’. And this principle holds true whether the relationship is a romantic one, a workplace one, or any other kind of team (of 2 or 22)!



The greatest chance for success in relationships comes when people decide to take personal responsibility for learning and practising how to work together well.

**Success comes from putting in the effort to understand how our behaviour impacts on others and then doing what it takes to ensure the impact is more positive than negative.**

### 3) Getting (back) to Mutual Satisfaction



#### Understanding the power of Emotional Bank Accounts

Whether you're starting a new job, romantic relationship, or joining a club or team, in the early days, feelings are generally positive. And for as long as the feelings continue to be positive, the relationship *feels* good.

A concept that describes this well is that of the 'Emotional Bank Account'.

Our Emotional Bank Accounts (EBAs) are those mental records we all keep of every interaction we experience with the people around us. We automatically set up an EBA every time we meet a new person (and they set one up for us too). In our EBA for that person, we keep a mental record of every interaction we have with them, whether it's positive or negative. We record positive interactions as deposits into the EBA, and negative ones as withdrawals.

Where the net balance of your EBA for a particular individual is positive, for you the relationship feels good, possibly even great. Where it drains to zero or goes negative (overdraft territory!) the relationship feels scratchy – everything becomes a problem (kind of like it is with a financial bank account).

Crucially though, note that how your interactions land in someone else's EBA has nothing to do with how *you* intended them to land.

**Interactions score as deposits or as withdrawals entirely dependent on how *the other person* perceives them.**

It's all about perception – *theirs*, not yours.

As we said earlier, we're yet to find a person who started a new role or a committed relationship intentionally trying to wreck it, or wanting to be miserable! The problem is quite often we do things with the best will in the world, but sometimes they don't meet other people's expectations or they land badly and end up being withdrawals for them.

### The Formula for Success

**Success comes from managing and keeping EBAs in positive territory.**

There are two ways to do that:

- 1) You need to learn **WHAT** you are doing that is causing withdrawals in other people's EBAs... and stop (or at least minimise) making withdrawals.
- 2) You need to learn **HOW** to make proactive, on purpose deposits in their EBA.



Minimising Withdrawals



Maximising Deposits

It helps if, at the same time, they are doing likewise for you! (But somebody has to start first, right?!)

So how do you do that in practice?

In our experience of working with relationships over the past 25+ years, we've come to recognise that developing four simple habits gives you the *Skill* you need to minimise withdrawals and maximise deposits to build successful relationships around you, *on purpose*.

## 4) KNOWING what it takes

### Minimising 'Unintentional' Withdrawals

Unintentional Withdrawals generally happen for a couple of underlying reasons.

Firstly, when our expectations are unmet.

#### Developing Habit #1 – Learning to navigate unmet expectations



For any number of reasons, most of us generally expect the people around us to think, feel or behave like we would. And when they don't, we can get frustrated. The frustration registers as a withdrawal in our EBA. For example, they agree to help you do a particular job... but when it comes down to actually doing it, they have a very different approach – you want to just get it done quickly, but they insist on taking pains to do everything to perfection. Or you think it requires a whole lot more data to take a final decision on something, but they seem to be happy to run with things based on some kind of 'gut feel' that everything will be okay.

**Unless you can agree a way forward, any attempt from others to push forward with an approach different to yours is likely to register as a withdrawal in your EBA.**

The best way to address this and start minimising unintentional withdrawals is to approach these situations with an open mind. Rather than being critical about the way others think, feel or behave, start by developing a habit of being CURIOUS and finding out WHY they did what they did.

That's why Habit #1 for Great Relationships is BE CURIOUS, not critical. When you do, you will come to realise that they did what they did for a reason that felt valid to them, even if it

wasn't what you were expecting. The sooner we all realise that people around us are not just 'mini MEs', the less frustration we will encounter from unmet expectations and the better for us all.

Developing a habit of being CURIOUS, not critical means investing the time to really understand differences in personalities, communication styles etc., so you can better appreciate each other's perspectives and reduce the chances that interactions will 'land badly'. And that's before we even get onto differences in views on how best to use money, political preferences and parenting styles.

Knowing that you need to BE CURIOUS though, is not enough. You need to find practical ways to change your behaviours so that this becomes a natural part of what you do on a daily basis.

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The second way we generally make unintentional withdrawals in our relationships is when *our responses* land badly (especially in 'conflict situations').

Developing Habit #2 - Learning to manage conflict effectively



Have you ever had a situation where somebody has done something you don't like and you tell them your frustrations, but then you end up in a whole new argument about the way *you* expressed that frustration! We've certainly lived there. It just seems so unfair. But, that's precisely what generally happens when you have different emotional needs and different conflict resolution styles.

**When we face conflict situations around things we're passionate about, most of us automatically adopt a 'me-centred' approach – and that's *not* helpful for relationships.**

It shouldn't take much to realise that a 'me-centred' solution is likely to mean that *their* needs don't really feature in what you want. As such, it's likely to lead to frustration on *their* side.

And the situation is often made worse when you're already in negative EBA balance territory. When EBA balances are low or overdrawn, relationships feel tense, conflict flares up easily and everything can be a problem. It often feels like in this territory, withdrawals score double negative points!

**Success comes from recognising that conflict is inevitable and from learning how to prepare for and manage it effectively, based on a 'we-centred' rather than a 'me-centred' approach.**

Habit #2 - BE CAREFUL, not crushing – is about developing the *Skill* to 'turn up better' in inevitable conflict situations, get over the hurdle of poor conflict resolution approaches, minimise the stress and damage they can cause in relationships and work towards genuine resolution.

We would be wary of anyone who professes to always get things right in their relationships. Our teenage sons who keep us accountable, will be the first to confirm that Mum & Dad (after 25+ years of working with relationships), do still have arguments. The difference is we've learned how to 'do battle well'! 😊 As a result, we coach people on how to:

- 1) prepare effectively for *battle*,
- 2) 'fight fair' during the *battle*, and then
- 3) quickly restore the connection afterwards.

Of course, this should never involve physical harm or emotional abuse of any sort.

**Practising Habit #2 successfully is about changing behaviours to treat each other well even during intense arguments so you come out stronger together.**

## Making Deposits On Purpose

Where Habits #1 and #2 are about blocking the plug hole in EBAs, Habits #3 and #4 are about turning on the taps and filling them up!

Developing Habit #3 – Building relationships of mutual trust and respect



**Habit #3: ASK, don't assume is about clarifying what matters most (both to you and the people around you), so that healthy boundaries can be established all round.**

Doing so, however, is not necessarily straightforward, as it often requires having *Courageous Conversations* around potentially tricky issues. But it's an essential step in building relationships of mutual trust and respect.

In our experience there are three key faulty assumptions that many of us make which, left unsatisfactorily addressed, leave us feeling disrespected and/or taken for granted. Success comes from having the necessary conversations to clarify assumptions (on both sides) and then establish healthy boundaries around home, work and life priorities as appropriate.

**The three most problematic assumptions** (and the faulty thinking that often results) **are:**

1. **'Professional' means no 'personal' allowed** - which means Work and Home life must be kept completely separate!
2. **Gender stereotypes in the home are both real and valid** - which means Roles and Responsibilities at home are fixed and non-negotiable!
3. **Busy means important** - which means 'I have no time for anything else'!

To be able to effectively address faulty thinking in this space requires having a number of conversations and making what we call '3 Big ASKs'.



The 3 Big ASKs for achieving healthy work-life balance are:

1. **A big ASK of your boss(es) and colleagues** – basically renegotiating HOW to deliver what you do around other priorities in your life.
2. **A big ASK of your partner and/or family** (assuming you don't live alone) – basically agreeing HOW you can better share the load and be more mutually supportive of each other.
3. **A big ASK of yourself** – in which you clarify WHO and WHAT matters most to you, the healthy boundaries you need to create to protect them, and the space you need to make in your schedule to give them attention.

In practice, you want to start with the big ASK of yourself. That will help you clarify your WHY – which, as we all know, is probably the most important starting point if you are going to push through and make difficult changes.

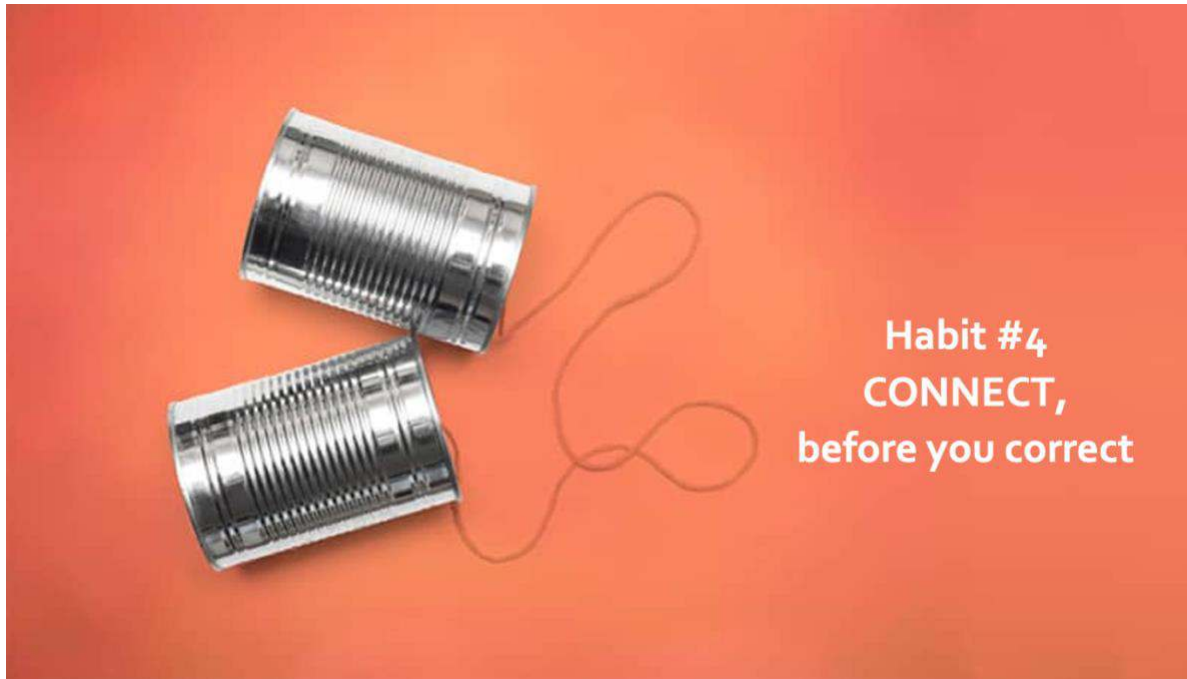
We said earlier that Habit #3 was about having *Courageous Conversations* for a reason. Making Big ASKs is not easy, so you need to be properly equipped to have them. But once you are, more often than not, these conversations are absolutely worth it.

**Making appropriate Big ASKs helps you establish healthy boundaries and guide others on the things *they* can do to make deposits in *your* Emotional Bank Account.**

Practicing Habit #3 of ASKING rather than Assuming allows you to leave people feeling like they have been heard. And doing so allows you to make deposits into their EBAs *on purpose*.

**Getting good at Habit #3 is about changing your behaviours to do things that build trust and mutual respect through asking and discussing, rather than making people feel disrespected and undervalued through assuming and stereotyping.**

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#### Developing Habit #4 – Learning to show true appreciation

Last but by no means least, we can make deposits on purpose by showing appreciation and connecting well with people.

Habit #4: CONNECT, before you correct – is about holding back on that need to give ‘constructive feedback’ that so many of us are all too good at, and getting better at communicating real value and appreciation. It’s about learning what matters most to the people around you and then doing that. It’s about developing the vital habits and disciplines to feed the relationship and maintain connection, warmth and good humour.

Learning to listen well is one great way to connect with others and communicate value and appreciation.

Most of us kid ourselves that we are good listeners. The reality though is that often, especially in conflict situations, our egos get in the way and we tend to be busier preparing what we will say next, rather than actively listening. In essence we spend what should be quality listening time simply ‘reloading’!



**When we take the time to ‘genuinely’ listen to people, we leave them feeling heard, validated and like they matter.**

One strategy for learning to listen well is to use the acronym E-A-R-S – listening with both E-A-R-S as it were! Listen with E-mpathy. Listen with A-ttention. Listen with R-espect. And Listen with the intent to S-ummarise – this means simply feeding back to them what you’ve heard, to ensure you heard them right.

There are many other ways of communicating value and appreciation in meaningful ways to help connect more deeply with others, but learning to listen well is a vital skill to develop because it will serve you in all your relationships.

Without the tools to clarify the messages we are trying to send and receive, 'faulty thinking' can go un-checked and it's easy to end up making decisions based on false assumptions about each other.

As we saw earlier in Sanjay and Deepti's story, effective communication is not just about the words and facts we use (or don't use). Real communication is about transmitting an intent, and on the receiving end it's about hearing the intentions of the heart behind the words.

There's a saying that goes '*People go where they feel welcomed, but stay where they feel valued*'. If we want the important people in our lives to stick around, it's vital that we leave them feeling valued and appreciated.

**Habit #4: CONNECT before you correct – is about making deposits that leave people feeling valued and appreciated. We do that by learning what matters most to them and then doing that.**

## 5) DOING what it takes



Great relationships don't just happen. They take good habits. And it takes both intentionality and time to change our habits.

In this short e-book, we have mapped out for you WHAT good habits look like, but there hasn't been space to delve into the detail of HOW to go about actually changing your behaviours and making them a part of how you turn up daily. Hopefully knowing WHAT you need to do is enough to get you started thinking about HOW to make the changes you will need to make to get different results.

But, if you're ready to take the next step and you want to get really good at doing relationships well so that you can turn up better, have better conversations and achieve better outcomes, here are a few options on how to progress and start actually developing the habits for yourself:

### Learning Options

#### 1. D-I-Y

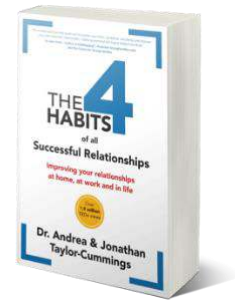
For those who would prefer to do your own ground work, we have pulled together a starter-for-ten reading/viewing list in the appendix. This will help you cover the fundamentals.

Check out our **Recommended Reading/Viewing List** at the end of this E-Book.



## 2. Get the full book

Our book – [The 4 Habits of ALL Successful Relationships](#) – details the full step-by-step journey to successful relationships through building your Relational Intelligence *on purpose*. It's packed with insights, practical tips and examples from both home and work settings to help you develop the skills and change your behaviours from habits that damage relationships to habits that strengthen them.



Find it at [Amazon.com](#), [Amazon.co.uk](#), [Waterstones](#), [Barnes & Noble](#), and all other good booksellers! Get more links here: [www.the4habits.com/book](http://www.the4habits.com/book)

Here's what people are saying about it...

*'With the 4 Habits, the Taylor-Cummings have put together a template to help anyone have better relationships – whether in the boardroom or the bedroom! The ideas in this book aren't just something to read, but to put into practice and reap the rewards.'*

**Rob Parsons OBE – Founder and Chairman, Care for the Family**

*'It's one thing for someone to hand you a map. It's another thing to have an expert guide walk you to that next great place. In this case, it's two guides, Dr. Andrea and Jonathan Taylor-Cummings. Their 4 Habits book can help guide and strengthen your team, workplace, and family, and improve your most important relationships.'*

**Dr John Trent – Author of LifeMapping®, President StrongFamilies.com and The Centre for Strong Families**

*'This book is a treasure chest of rich vignettes, reflective questions and practical exercises that deepen our understanding of factors that can damage relationships and actions we can take to develop healthy relationships. It is not just a book about personal relationships, it offers insights as to how we can build productive relationships in the ever increasing complex work settings we now inhabit. The blend of honest reflection and evidence based research material makes this a wonderful resource.'*

**Dr. Sue Dopson – Professor of Organisational Behaviour, Fellow of Green Templeton College and Deputy Dean of Saïd Business School, University of Oxford**

## 3. Learn Online

Alternatively, learn all the core principles through our bite-sized, video-based, 6-module online course: [www.the4habitscourse.com](http://www.the4habitscourse.com)



Here's what people are saying about our courses...

*'Brilliant! So practical and helpful in building awareness and the skills to communicate effectively.'*  
**A.W.**

*'Really helpful course. I have learned so much in such a short space of time... and all in really practical ways. My wife has already got a smile on her face. And so do I! I couldn't recommend this course more highly. Thank you so much Andrea and Jon!'*

**J.T.**

*'Quite an eye opener for me. Very well structured and articulate making it easy to apply the learning and build strong relationships. Surprisingly better than classroom based training.'*

**S.D.**

## A bit about us...



**Dr. ANDREA TAYLOR-CUMMINGS** Andrea has over 30 years' experience as an organisation development consultant, specialising in relationship-centred behaviour change, creating inclusive cultures and 'people' strategy. She has worked internationally (Jamaica, UK, Japan and Korea) in both the public and private sector, as a consultant with 'big four' and niche consultancies, and as an entrepreneur. She offers extensive experience in designing and delivering leadership / people development programmes for diverse, global audiences, using both live and online workshops to achieve clear business goals. Andrea is a Rhodes Scholar, holds a First-Class Honours degree in Computer Science from the University of the West Indies, and both Master's and Doctorate degrees in Management Studies from Oxford University.



**JONATHAN TAYLOR-CUMMINGS** Jon has spent much of the last 30 years in professional service environments, helping both blue-chips (Credit Suisse, Bank of America Merrill Lynch) and start-ups grow and develop corporate assets and client relationships to deliver a wide range of services across the banking, pensions and consulting sectors. He offers strengths in building client engagement, aligning operations and developing relationships. Jon holds a Master's degree in Management Studies from Oxford University, a First-Class Honours degree in Electronic Engineering with Computer Science from the University College, London, and is a graduate of Seth Godin's altMBA online leadership and management program.

## Our work with Couples & Individuals



In 2017, Andrea & Jon founded Soulmates Academy to formalise their 25 years of working with relationships into a business with the mission to reduce relationship breakdown across the globe. We do this by proactively equipping people to develop strong relationship capability *ahead* of challenges, rather than waiting to offer counselling when relationships breakdown.

With the stats revealing that roughly half of all couple-relationships in the developed world don't 'go the distance' and that family breakdown is an increasing cause of mental health concerns in our youth, it's time to sound the alarm about the devastating trend of relationship breakdown, inspire people to take action and offer a clear way forward.

In Mar 2019, they had the privilege of delivering a [TEDx Talk](#) in the heart of the City of London, sounding the alarm for the need for proactive relationship education and highlighting the 4 simple, yet fundamental, habits for successful relationships. When we last looked, the talk had just ticked over 1.9 million views, and continues to grow at about 2,000-3,000 views a day!



## Our work with Corporates & Organizations

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Through our corporate brand [4 Habits Consulting](#), we help organisations strengthen employee engagement, wellbeing & productivity by improving Social Health. Equipping leaders & teams with strong Relational Intelligence means they turn up better and achieve better outcomes – at work, at home and in life.

Organisations we've worked with include Charles Stanley, De Beers Group, Eisai, Elsevier, Federated Hermes, Howard Kennedy, PVH, Reynolds Porter Chamberlain, SimplyHealth, The London Stock Exchange, The Royal College of Nursing, The Jamaican High Commission, and the RELX Group, among others.

### Organisations we've worked with:



## Our Charity work

**soulmates**  
ACADEMY FOUNDATION

In April 2020, Jon & Andrea set up [Soulmates Academy Foundation](#), a UK registered charity with the ambitious vision to 'equip 1 million people over the next 10 years to do relationships well', without the cost typically associated with personal and professional development.

The charity's work to date has been almost entirely self-funded. Recognising that the task before us is a huge one, if this resonates with you in any way, we warmly invite you to partner with us and help fund this work.

Find out more and get involved here:  
[www.support-SMAF.org](http://www.support-SMAF.org)



Thanks in advance for any support you can give.

## Recommended Reading / Viewing List

### Books

- [The Seven Habits of highly Effective People](#) – Stephen R Covey (Amazon link)
- [Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ](#) – Daniel Goleman (Amazon link)
- [The Two Sides of Love](#) – Dr John Trent & Gary Smalley (Amazon link)
- [The 5 Love Languages – The Secret to Love That Lasts](#) – Dr Gary Chapman
- [The 5 Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace: Empowering Organizations by Encouraging People](#) – Dr Gary Chapman & Paul White (Amazon link)
- [The Chimp Paradox: The Mind Management Programme to Help You Achieve Success, Confidence and Happiness](#) – Prof. Steve Peters (Amazon link)
- [The Sixty Minute Marriage](#) – Rob Parsons OBE (Amazon link)
- [Couples that Work: How to thrive in love and at work](#) – Jennifer Petriglieri (Amazon link)
- [Building Relationships: Developing Skills for Life](#), David H. Olson et al (Amazon link)

### Articles

- [6 Basic Needs that Make us Tick](#) - Tony Robbins (Dec 2014)
- [How to Keep Love Going Strong: Seven principles on the road to happily ever after](#) – John and Julie Gottman (PDF Poster by YES! Magazine)

### Other Links

- [The 4 Habits of ALL Successful Relationships – Jon & Andrea's TEDx Talk](#)
- [The Emotional Bank Account – YouTube Animation](#)
- [Relationships Are Hard, But Why? Stan Tatkin, TEDx](#)
- [Build don't break relationships with communication - connect the dots , Amy Scott, TEDx](#)
- [The secret to desire in a long-term relationship – Esther Perel, TED](#)
- [Letting go of expectations: Heather Marshall at TEDxGreenville 2014](#)