

CouplesInBloom.com – Breakup, Breakdown Or Connect

October 2012

How do we handle relationship conflict? Do we **internalize** it? Do we **externalize** it?

- **Internalize**: appear strong outwardly but actually suffer inwardly. This often promotes sudden (bad) reactions because the accumulating factors were silenced. This produces **breakup**: shutting down communication so as to avoid the problem. Internalizing also produces “over-thinking” about problems, which increases turmoil and solves nothing.
- **Externalize**: vent outwardly, but the inward still suffers because nothing is resolved. Hopelessness sets in, as everything now seems lost. This ‘end of the road’ leads to **breakdown**: failure to function due to total loss of previous positive connectivity. This **brokenness is the clue** to resolution; God designed us to be joined in intimacy.

Why do we Break (up or down) when what we really need is the opposite: to Connect?

Searching the word **separate** in a Bible concordance reveals that **sin** (things different than God’s way) breaks / separates us from God, and each other. Human **differences (not sin)** can separate us from each other. God’s Word answers these problems with great wisdom:

Regarding **sin**: Mark 3:25 ⇨ a house divided / spiritually separated cannot stand.

2 Corinthians 6:14 ⇨ do not yoke / connect yourself to an unbeliever.

Regarding **differences (not sin)**: Ephesians 5:21-22; James 4:7 ⇨ submit.

Galatians 5:13-14; Matthew 20:26-28 ⇨ serve.

How we connect is vital. God models for us that connection is to be **always available** ⇨ John 3:16, **never forced** ⇨ Matthew 16:25, and **fully passionate** ⇨ Deuteronomy 6:5.

Look at applying these to our intimate relationships: with God, and with our spouse:

Always available: God often asks for connection / intimate communication, and so do spouses who have the love of God in them. They are known for their availability to connect, not for their losses from unreturned love. ***This is how love proves itself.***

Never forced: God gave each of us a free will so love can be chosen / authentic. Trying to force a spouse or God damages our intimacy with them. Arguing may gain their vote but is not worth the cost and harshness of such a **false connection**.

Fully passionate: ***How excited*** are we to have everyday communication with God? Or with our spouse? Compare that to ***how incited*** we are during a conflict with them:

What message does this give our spouse? **Should they feel connected to us by this?**

The father in Luke 15:11-32 ⇨ powerfully illustrates these three aspects with his prodigal son, and contrasted by his other son. We really need to examine ourselves to see where we fit into this Scripture, because it can help us see if and how we connect or break off our spouse. It can also reveal our level of servanthood and submission, mentioned above.

A hard heart is spiritually weak; a soft heart is spiritually strong. It is a hard heart that **internalizes** or **externalizes**... not the soft heart God desires ⇨ Ezekiel 36:26. Hard things **break** (others and themselves); soft things bend to reach, gather and **connect** distant others unto itself, unifying them. There is no need to hide inside or externally explode.

Connecting is a less travelled road ⇨ Matthew 7:13-14. Those who take it have **life and liveliness** just flowing from their hearts. Sound good to you? Good: now go do it :) ♥