



Three Ways to Relationship Emotional Wellness

by Stacey Chernin, M.A., LMFT, CFT

FOREWARD

Hello and welcome! If you are reading this report, it's very likely because you're actively seeking ways to improve and enhance the health of your emotional life. You may be fed up with stress, relationship imbalances, worry, and the other mental struggles that creep in throughout the day and negatively impact the quality of your life.

If you DO feel this way, I am so glad you're reading this right now, because the information in this report provides simple, yet profound guidance on creating and living the life you REALLY want.

This is important stuff-- and yet so easy to put off. I applaud your commitment and your desire to focus on your wellness. To get the full impact of the information in this report, I want you to eliminate any distractions you may face. It's important that you devote the next 15 to 20 minutes of your uninterrupted attention on this information.

Before we begin, if you find this information helpful, if any of this resonates with you, know that I can help provide an even deeper level of support. Be sure to read through to the end of the report, where you will find more detailed information on how I can partner with you to help you achieve your goals for emotional wellness.

*Let's begin this journey!
Stacey Chernin*

Step 1: Love Yourself



The first step to finding emotional relationship wellness is simple, but it's not easy. In order to experience emotional wellness, we must feel complete and fulfilled, all by ourselves. You can think of it as being happy with yourself, or feeling like your life is complete, exactly how it is now. It doesn't matter if you have a relationship or you are actively seeking one. The most important relationship you will ever have is with yourself.

When we seek our identity, happiness or approval from someone else, what happens? We never feel complete. We are constantly seeking, looking, longing for something or someone else to make us whole. As if, these people or circumstances could fill a void in our lives! The only person who can fill the gaping void you imagine that you have is you. When you seek fulfillment from outside sources, you diminish your own personal power.

To Love Someone Else, Love Yourself First

I'm sure that you've heard the statement "in order to love someone else, you have to love yourself first". In fact, it could be that you've heard it so often that it has lost some of its impact. It may even seem like the statement isn't true. Of course you can love anyone you want, for any reason, to any degree. Loving others is part of our nature. However, to truly engage in a fulfilling, loving and emotionally healthy relationship, you must have a healthy and loving relationship with yourself.

The most important relationship you will ever have is the one you have with yourself.

People who have healthy self esteem tend to have relationships that enrich and enhance their lives. When you value yourself, you expect more from the relationships in your life. You don't just accept anything; you make choices that really benefit you. It feels like your life has intention and purpose when you are happy with yourself.

Always seeking, means there's always something more that you need or want. It's like that with relationships. "I'd be happy if only my spouse would _____," or "I'd be happier if so-and-so would just _____." The problems aren't with the spouse, or with so-and-so, the feeling that something is lacking is coming from inside of you. It is your own sense of lacking. Trust me; there will always be something better, someone better, something you don't have, if your focus is on external matters, rather than on internal contentment.

Happiness is a "now" emotion. It isn't something you have to go searching for. Despite the idea of the proverbial "pursuit of happiness," the truth is that you simply need to wake up to, or plug into the feeling or idea of happiness. It's a mood, or a feeling, it cannot be found in things or people. You're either tapped into happiness, or you're tuned out to happiness. The good news is that you don't have to achieve, conquer, or "get" anything to experience happiness.

Recognizing Your Value Even if No One Else Does

When you are in an emotionally healthy relationship, you feel secure. You don't feel jealous, or need the constant attention of your partner to feel like you're important to them. People who have healthy self esteem don't experience the massive highs and the massive lows that sometimes come from unhealthy relationships. They hold a high enough opinion of themselves that they are not affected negatively by the opinions others hold of them, and their sense of value doesn't come from how often their partner texts them or calls them throughout the day.

In a new relationship, we often feel excitement and even butterflies when we think about the other person, or when they call us or we get to see them. This is an exciting time, and it allows us to see that person in the best possible light, which allows our attraction to grow. It's a good thing! What can happen however if you don't have a strong sense of self, or healthy relationship with yourself, is that you become completely focused on that person. When you hear from them, you're happy. If you go too long without a call or a text from them, you begin to get nervous. You start to focus on the idea that something must be wrong, they must not like you, or you would have heard from them. Can't they see how much you like them?

This emotional rollercoaster is not healthy, and if these feelings of insecurity begin to grow, you will very likely lose focus on everything else. Their lack of attention will become what you focus on, and guess what? You'll begin to REALLY feel their absence, which will really begin to upset you. The other person in the relationship can begin to feel smothered and lose interest in the relationship altogether, or you may set up the dynamics of an unbalanced and unhealthy romantic partnership.

Clearly, this isn't a good mental or emotional place to be in. When you care about yourself, you enjoy balanced relationships, and you are not constantly seeking affirmation from others. You understand that your value and worth is there, whether you see others recognizing your value or not.

Having a good relationship with yourself means caring enough about yourself to make healthy choices. Are you currently devoting time to things that allow you to easily feel joy and enjoy your life? Or are you making choices because they bring you temporary feelings of satisfaction, and later you find yourself let down? This could mean engraining with others who take advantage of you, or indulging in activities that leave you feeling empty later.

Caring about yourself means looking at the impact of your decisions, and evaluating outcomes. Are your decisions getting you closer to the life you want, or are you struggling to enjoy the life you envision? Turn your focus inward and examine the decisions you've been making, habits you've established, and the results they have produced.

What You Appreciate, Multiplies

The fastest way to establish a healthy sense of yourself and to tap into the emotion of happiness is to appreciate what you have. It doesn't matter what your life conditions or situations are, it doesn't matter what you look like, how much money you make, or the condition of your personal relationships. When you tap into appreciation and gratitude, you unleash an amazing force that improves your mood, and more importantly and almost magically, brings more experiences and people into your existence, that will allow you to feel MORE appreciation!

If you don't already do this - get yourself a journal. Every evening write down at least 3 things that took place or that you experienced during your day, that fill you with gratitude. It could be as simple as "Today I feel grateful that I made it to the office on time," or "Today I feel gratitude for my mother-in-law calling to check on the family." Practicing feelings of gratitude will eventually guide your dominant thoughts towards those of gratitude throughout your day. You will feel better, begin to enjoy and appreciate more of your everyday experiences, and you'll begin to expect more things to feel grateful about.

When you are focused on appreciation, you are focused inward. When you feel good, you feel good about yourself. When you feel good about yourself, your confidence grows. You become comfortable spending time with yourself, and you feel balanced and strong. You no longer look toward other people, or possessions, to complete you. When you love yourself, and feel fulfilled, just being you -- you are able to easily attract and maintain relationships that are emotionally healthy and satisfying.

Step 2: Communicate Honestly and Often



In order to get our emotional needs met, we need to have honest communication with other people. Otherwise, we rely on assumptions -- we assume they somehow know what we need from them. This is a recipe for disaster. Nobody in your life should be left wondering what you want from them. And truthfully, it's not their responsibility to make you happy. However, it is your responsibility to make sure your needs, thoughts and feelings are shared.

Many people are afraid of conflict or of hurting other people's feelings, so they avoid all forms of conflict. This encourages the breakdown of communication. First off, not all conflict is negative. Respectfully mediated conflicts can resolve long standing issues between co-workers, friends, family members, and romantic partners. Unshared expectations can easily grow into resentments, and conflict that arises from resentment can be difficult to deal with because there are often feelings of hostility. Conflicts can generally be avoided, when communication is a common practice -- identifying and addressing issues as they arise is always a good idea.

If you struggle with communication, you can improve your skills and confidence with a little practice. Think of one issue you'd like to address, and write down at least 3 key points:

- * *What is the issue - as you see it?*
- * *What might be done to improve it?*
- * *How can you move forward in a healthy way?*

Once you have written down your thoughts about the issue in question, stand in front of a mirror with your notes, and have a dialogue with yourself. Practice your speaking points, referring to your notes, but keeping your focus on your appearance in the mirror.

- How does your voice sound? Is it strong and clear?
- How do you look while you're making your points? Do you appear calm and collected? Are you feeling emotional?
- Does your dialogue flow? Will it make sense when you share it with others?

Once you've practiced what you want to say, think about what some objections may be. For instance, if the issue is about something that happened at the office, and you need to resolve the conflict with a co-worker -- what might some of their thoughts, feelings, or concerns be? What do you think their reaction to your dialogue might be? Write down some anticipated objections - not because you need to overcome their objections, but because it will keep you from feeling flustered during your communication.

Remember, resolving a conflict doesn't mean you "win" the other person over to your side, or way of thinking. You're not conducting a sales presentation. To resolve the conflict, both parties need to feel as though their feelings and thoughts have been heard. Sometimes it's not even about the resolution, but about sharing the thoughts and feelings. If you can be clear and concise with your communication, you'll feel less anxiety towards the situation or the other person.

Release Emotional Attachment

When does communication tend to get heated or unpleasant? When one party, has an emotional attachment to the outcome of a discussion or situation. Most emotions that are expressed during the attempted resolution of a conflict come from fear. Fear of losing control, fear of being vulnerable, and fear of any number of things. You will not shy away from resolving conflict if you can learn to release your emotional attachment to the outcome of the situation.

Fear is a reactive emotion. When we feel afraid, we aren't in control of our emotions, and sometimes we behave and speak in desperation. Think about a time you've gotten upset and reacted without thinking. Did you ever embarrass yourself doing that?

Releasing the fear allows you to stay present during the communication, and allows you to absorb the ideas and feelings shared by the other party. When you're calm, you can take this information, process it, and have an easier time feeling empathy towards the other person. When you can feel empathetic towards the other person's point of view, you are much more likely to work toward a solution that benefits both of you.

Communication is About Listening

Communication is a skill that you can learn or improve upon. If you can believe it, many people believe the most important part of communication is listening, not talking. Are you able to listen to people when they share with you? Do you jump in and interrupt? Or do you allow others to take their time, and do you listen as they "let it out?" When your partner shares a problem or issue with you, do you immediately respond with what you think is a reasonable solution? How does that usually work out for you when you do that?

People want to share their problems with their friends, families, and partners for very different reasons. Most people just need to vent. Sharing their frustrations with you is not the same thing as giving you an invitation to shell out advice. If you find yourself providing unsolicited advice or solutions to your partner's problems, and they didn't ask you to, you run the risk of frustrating them further.

If you're unsure of what your partner wants from you - ASK. Your significant other may just need to complain about their day, or share a thought, daydream or feeling they had. If your partner does not specifically ask you to solve their problem for them, don't.

We all want to feel like our thoughts and feelings matter, and often we receive affirmation of that, just by speaking them aloud to those we care about.

When you listen carefully, you also don't have to make assumptions. If you need clarity, ask questions. Communication is the backbone of emotionally healthy relationships. It eliminates doubt, assumptions, and minimizes resentments.

If you are in a relationship and need to develop your communication skills as a couple, practice! Set aside time each week, with no distractions, where the two of you can focus on each other. Until it comes naturally to you, start off talking about how your week at

the office went, or about the new challenges you're facing in your career. Pick general life topics and share a bit about them, and then have your partner do the same.

The act of being listened to, can feel very empowering. It can also help to develop intimacy between the two of you.

When you are comfortable communicating at home and at the office, you will begin to feel like you're living your life authentically. Your interactions with everyone in your life will begin to feel more satisfying. All of your relationships will benefit. If communicating doesn't feel natural to you, remember that communication skills can always be improved or developed with practice.

Step 3: Talk to a Professional

As a therapist, I help people not only through challenging times, but I also help people to grow and develop, both as individuals, and as couples. The benefits of therapy are really specific to each client, but for the most part, everyone can benefit from exploring the issues that are hindering their lives, with the assistance of a professional therapist.

My name is Stacey Chernin. I am a licensed therapist, in private practice, focusing on marriage and family therapy. I work with individuals, couples and families. My approach to therapy is one that provides emotional support and practical feedback so that my clients can address their challenges in the ways that work best for them.

I work to integrate the approaches that work best for each individual. I am a compassionate listener, and I help clients to focus on their strengths, and develop tools to overcome challenges. Everyone experiences road blocks and challenges in their lives, but not everybody will seek out counseling services. Sometimes it has to do with cultural beliefs, or the idea that only “crazy” people go for therapy. I like to think of therapy as an effective tool for developing life management skills.

Clients are encouraged to be active participants in developing insight and ideas for embracing new behaviors and beliefs. As a therapist, I provide a safe environment to explore new ideas, and to become fulfilled in your life and all your relationships! The goal is to help you realize your capacity for happiness, growth, and well being.

Sometimes life can seem so overwhelming or even disappointing, that it becomes difficult to even recognize our own innate ability to not only overcome our challenges, but to overcome them and grow from them. Each challenge presents an opportunity to know ourselves better, and to push past our limitations, and come out feeling empowered and motivated.

As a thank you for reading this guide on creating emotional relationship wellness, I am extending an invitation to you for a free telephone consultation. I want to provide the space for you to examine your challenges and create solutions for building a balanced and happy life. It would be my honor to be your partner in change. The benefits of therapy are long term, and you'll increase the likelihood of developing new habits and beliefs that will buoy you into a happier place. You can enjoy improved relationships at home, at work, and in your family.

If you have just a few minutes, and you'd like to explore ideas for creating emotional relationship wellness, I would love to hear from you. You can reach me at (516) 484-2829 (Long Island), or (914) 960-2723 (Westchester).

For more information about my educational background, certifications, professional memberships, and practice, be sure to visit my website at www.counselingservicesdirect.com. To your very best emotional health!