

## **LEARNING PEOPLE SKILLS THAT ENHANCE RELATIONSHIPS**

**By Pierre J. Samaan, Ph.D.**

[www.newhorizonscounseling.com](http://www.newhorizonscounseling.com)

Have you been having trouble getting along with your partner? Do you wish that they would be more encouraging? Have you been having trouble with your patience when talking with your partner? Has your partner been accepting of your differences? These are just a few of the many questions asked in marriage counseling. These questions along with many others are associated with people skills.

Most couples enter into marriage with the people/social skills learned in their home of origin. Others learn these skills through their extended family of close friends. We all learn some people/social skills through our interactions in school and extra curricular activities such as church, sports or clubs.

Loners will tend to have fewer people skills than extroverts who thrive for as many relationships as they can. Whether you are introverted, extroverted, or somewhere in between, we can all improve in our people/social skills.

None of us are born with people skills also known as social skills. People skills are strategies of communicating to those in the world around us. Your Soul - mind, will, emotions, intellect - is that part of you in which people/social skills are learned. The following is a general list of people/social skills. Take this survey to see what skills you need to improve upon.

A good bonding exercise may be to have your partner or close friend score you. You will probably be surprised at how they rate your people/social skills.

| <b>PEOPLE SKILLS/SOCIAL SKILLS SURVEY</b>                           |   |
|---|---|
| Decide which of the following answers best applies to you.          |   |
| Place the number of the answer in the box at the left of the skill. |   |
| 1. never 2. rarely 3. occasionally 4. sometimes 5. often 6. usually |   |
|   | 1. Taking turns - 1 Corinthians 14:40; Ephesians 5:21; Philipppians 2:3-4 |
|   | 2. Praising; no criticisms or condemnations - Psalm 119:171               |
|   | 3. Sharing materials - Leviticus 25:35; Matthew 5:42                      |
|   | 4. Asking for help - Psalm 5:2; Hebrews 4:16                              |
|   | 5. Using quiet voices - Prov 15:1; 16:21; Phil 4:5; Ecclesiastes 9:17     |
|   | 6. Participating equally - Eph 4:16; Phil 2:3-4; 1 Cor 12:12,27           |
|   | 7. Staying on task - Philipppians 3:12-14; Ecclesiastes 9:10              |
|   | 8. Saying kind things - Colossians 3:12; 2 Peter 1:5-7                    |

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | 9. Using proper names - 1 Peter 2:17   |
|   | 10. Encouraging others - Romans 1:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:11   |
|   | 11. Patient waiting - Colossians 1:10-12; Hebrews 6:12   |
|   | 12. Communicating clearly - James 5:12; Matthew 5:27   |
|   | 13. Accepting differences - Ephesians 4:2-5; Colossians 2:16   |
|   | 14. Active listening - Proverbs 1:5  |
|   | 15. Praying together - James 5:16  |
|   | 16. Small group activities - 1 Peter 4:10-11; Galatians 6:9-10   |
|   | 17. Church participation - Hebrews 10:25; 1 Corinthians 15:58  |
|   | 18. Spirituality - Prov 15:29; Gal 5:25; Prov 3:5,6; Mat 6:33  |
|   | 19. Following directions - Proverbs 3:5-6; Psalm 119:105   |
|   | 20. Paraphrasing (rephrasing to prevent misunderstandings) - Romans 14:13-14   |
|   | 21. Managing materials; finances, belongings, etc.. - Proverbs 3:9-10; Matthew 6:19-21,33  |
|   | 22. Staying with the team; commitment and loyalty - Galatians 6:9-10; Philippians 2:4  |
|   | 23. Sharing ideas - Philippians 4:8; Colossians 1:28; 3:16-17  |
|   | 24. Sharing tasks - Gal 6:2; Col 3:23; Philippians 2:4; Matthew 9:37-38  |
|   | 25. Celebrating success - Proverbs 11:30; Psalm 128:1-4  |
|   | 26. Helping others - Proverbs 22:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Matthew 6:2-4; James 1:27  |
|   | 27. Compromise (only when appropriate) - Eph 4:3; Philippians 2:3-4  |
|   | 28. Forgiveness (overlooking an offense) Prov. 19:11; 12:16; 17:14; Col. 3:13; 1 Peter 4:8; Matthew 6:14-15                          |
|   | 29. Reconciliation (confession, loving correction, and forgiveness) Mt 5:23-24; Prov 28:13; Gal 6:1; Mt 18:15; Col 3:13              |
|   | 30. Negotiation (working through material issues) Philippians 2:4  |
|   | 31. Mediation (utilizing third party help) Mt. 18:16   |
|   | 32. Arbitration (accepting third party binding decision) 1 Cor. 6:1-8  |
|   | 33. Accountability (to promote repentance, justice, and forgiveness) Matthew 18:17 "Done lovingly, redemptively, and restoratively." |
|   | 34. Observing - Proverbs 8:34  |
|   | 35. Acceptance - Titus 3:2; Romans 15:7  |
| <p>Congratulations! If most of your scoring was a 5 or 6, you are well on your way to having good social and personal relationships. For those of you who marked 4 or below, begin right now to work on strengthening these skills. Grade yourself at the end of each day as to how well you did in utilizing those people/social skills you identified as needing strengthening. Each night, make a list of the people/social skills you would like to mark as a priority for next day. Remember this:</p> |  |

<sup>27</sup> *External religious worship [religion as it is expressed in outward acts] that is pure and unblemished in the sight of God the Father is this: to visit and help and care for the orphans and widows in their affliction and need, and to keep oneself unspotted and uncontaminated from the world. James 1:27 AMP*

### **Social Skills Deficit Often Seen In Three Types**

Whether one is a youth or adult, people skills, or more commonly called social skills, are of utmost importance. If one is having trouble getting along with others, it will hinder development, relationships, and advancement. For the most part, there are three common types of social skill deficits.

1. Discrimination Deficit: This is when a youth or adult does not appear to know when to display a particular behavior; for example, not knowing when to start or close a conversation.
2. Motivation Deficit: This is when a youth or adult does not have the willingness to perform or achieve; not utilizing full potential. They may have the ability, but they are not applying themselves; for example, a student who is very smart, but does not complete assignments or study for tests.
3. Skill Deficit: When a youth or adult never learned to apply themselves in a certain social skill; for example, this could be an individual who fails to learn not to speak using offensive words.

You may have allowed people/social skills to fall by the wayside over the years. Some of us have a deficit in one or more of these skills because we never learned a skill. Others may have felt unmotivated for various reasons in desiring to practice a skill. And, there are some who possess a desired skill, but do not seem to know the right times to use it.

*Sometimes all one needs is to be helped to understand why a particular people/social skill is important and attainable for improved relations with others.*

For most couples, marriage counseling is only considered as a last resort before divorce. By the time I see couples in marriage counseling they are generally having significant difficulties in getting along. By this time, I see that one or both have built up a great deal of animosity toward the other. It is this bitterness that often leads to paying less attention to the people/social skills. They think why should I keep trying when I'm not appreciated? One may withdraw while the other goes on the attack. Both seek out distractions to take the pain away rather than work harder to improve their people/social skills with one another.

We all need to work on our people/social skills from time to time. Which one of the above skills did you identify as needing work? Instead of focusing on what others are doing wrong, start working on improving your people/social skills. If you are not sure which skills you need help with, ask your family, friend, or close

relationship. I am sure they will be more than happy to let you know what is "wrong" with you!

## IMPROVE YOUR COMMUNICATION SKILLS

| <p><b><u>S-E-T Communicating Skill</u></b></p> <p><sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub> <b><u>Support</u></b> through reflective listening &amp; affirmation.</p> <p><sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub> <b><u>Empathize</u></b> is expressing understanding; common ground.</p> <p><sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub> <b><u>Truth</u></b> is expressing the reality of what happened, without criticism, while agreeing to partner on a resolution.</p>  | <p><b><u>The Three A's</u></b></p> <p><sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub> Apologize</p> <p><sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub> Acknowledge Fallibility</p> <p><sup>35</sup><sub>17</sub> Agree to Disagree</p> <p><b><u>Relapse Prevention Plan</u></b></p> <p>Recognize and treat early</p> <p><b><u>Mood Chart</u></b></p> <p>Using a scale from 1 to 10, rate your emotions throughout the day. Keep a running journal and pray about identifying the triggers of your intense negative emotions.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="841 1094 1312 1142"> <thead> <tr> <th>Time</th> <th>Emotion</th> <th>Intensity</th> <th>Event</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>8AM;</td> <td>Mania</td> <td>- 10</td> <td>(event...)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10AM;</td> <td>Anger</td> <td>- 8</td> <td>(event...)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12N;</td> <td>Overwhelmed</td> <td>- 9</td> <td>(event...)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2PM;</td> <td>Judgmental</td> <td>- 4</td> <td>(event...)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4PM;</td> <td>Tense</td> <td>- 5</td> <td>(event...)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6PM;</td> <td>Unappreciated</td> <td>- 10</td> <td>(event...)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8PM;</td> <td>Ashamed</td> <td>- 7</td> <td>(event...)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10PM;</td> <td>Fatigued</td> <td>- 9</td> <td>(event...)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Time      | Emotion    | Intensity | Event | 8AM; | Mania | - 10 | (event...) | 10AM; | Anger | - 8 | (event...) | 12N; | Overwhelmed | - 9 | (event...) | 2PM; | Judgmental | - 4 | (event...) | 4PM; | Tense | - 5 | (event...) | 6PM; | Unappreciated | - 10 | (event...) | 8PM; | Ashamed | - 7 | (event...) | 10PM; | Fatigued | - 9 | (event...) |
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| <p><b><u>Circadian Rhythm</u></b></p> <p>The body's <b>circadian rhythm</b> is a biochemical, physiological or behavioral cycle (about a 24-hour cycle). Follow daily rhythm by sticking to a daily schedule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Regular wake-time</li> <li>✓ Regular eat-time</li> <li>✓ Regular work-time</li> <li>✓ Regular social-time</li> <li>✓ Regular church-time</li> <li>✓ Regular prayer-time</li> <li>✓ Regular exercise-time</li> <li>✓ Regular bed-time</li> </ul> |   |           |            |           |       |      |       |      |            |       |       |     |            |      |             |     |            |      |            |     |            |      |       |     |            |      |               |      |            |      |         |     |            |       |          |     |            |