



MAKE ANY RELATIONSHIP BETTER NOW

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Passion flows from an intimate relationship when partners learn how to “Turn Toward” each other and stop “Turning Away” and “Turning Against” each other. Here are some tips to get you started.

Stop “turning against”; start “turning toward”

Rather than...	Try this instead...
Criticizing & name calling: “You are such a bad father. You need to spend more time with your children.”	Be specific and encouraging: “The kids and I really love having you around. The last three weekends you’ve been busy. Can we talk about how we can get more time with you this month?”
Harsh startups: “We never have fun anymore. Our relationship is so boring; I hate it.”	Soften the startup: “Look at this travel magazine. It reminds me of the fun we used to have. Can we talk?”
Defensiveness, controlling, and threatening: “Just shut up. If you wanted a husband who worked less you should have married someone else. I don’t have a choice.”	“I know you think I work too much but that is really hard for me to hear because I don’t feel like I can work any less and still do a good job. I want to talk with you but it’s tough because I don’t think you get how much pressure I feel.”
Violence and Threatening: Slamming doors, throwing things, physical contact, saying mean things: “Forget this bullshit, I’m out of here.”	“I am so incredibly upset right now I could chew my arm off. If we talk now one of us may not survive. Can I go let off steam and try again in an hour?”
Trying to heal this on your own	Invite God to resurrect your heart to love.

Stop “turning away”; start “turning toward”

Rather than...	Try this instead...
Staying quiet about what is bothering you	Write a note: “I know this is hard for us to talk about but I really want to get it right with you...”
Walking out of the room when you feel angry	Say something like: “I really feel like running. I’m not sure why, though. Can we finish this in 30 minutes after I settle down and figure out what is going on inside of me?”
Avoiding contact due to lack of passion and interest	Get a list of “caring behaviors” and commit to doing a few every week.
Over-scheduling activities with children or work commitments	PRIORITIZE weekly, quarterly, and yearly activities from your “fun list.”
Drinking, fantasizing, getting absorbed in hobbies	Own the disappointment, breathe into feelings as they arise, and ask a trusted person for help.
Trying to soften your heart on your own	Pray consistently for God to soften your heart.