

# *Integrity Counseling Inc.*

## **How To Be Your Partner's Best Friend**

1. **SHOW AN INTEREST** in them and what they are interested in or what they are struggling with. **REACH OUT! ASK QUESTIONS!** Example: "How was your day?" "How are you feeling?" "Is something bothering you?"
2. When your partner tells you what's important to them, **PARAPHRASE** back to them what you heard.
3. **DO NOT GIVE ADVICE OR OFFER SOLUTIONS** to your partner's problems, unless they ask for it. If they ask for advice and you offer it, don't expect them to act on your advice. Allow them to choose what is right for them.
4. If your partner says something that upsets you, **DON'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS! DON'T ASSUME** that they are saying what you think they are saying. **CHECK IT OUT!** Example: "Did I hear you say that you're angry that I was talking to that man?"
5. If your partner opens their heart to you and shares their feelings, **DON'T TALK LOGIC!** When someone is sharing feelings, logic means nothing to them! Feelings are not the truth, they are feelings. They generally come from the pain of childhood. **BE SUPPORTIVE UNTIL THEY ARE DONE EXPRESSING THEIR FEELINGS,** and when they are calm, you can talk about solutions to the problem.
6. When someone opens their heart to you and expresses the depth of their feelings, everything they say should be treated as **SACRED MATERIAL.** Never use the feelings they share to make jokes at their expense or to manipulate them into something you want. This can damage their trust in you forever!
7. **MAKE CLEAR AGREEMENTS** with your partner about your relationship. Examples: how much time you spend together, when you will call, who is responsible for what, when is a good time to talk about things that are bothering you. Always **KEEP YOUR AGREEMENTS** with your partner and renegotiate agreements as needed.
8. When you have a conflict, **USE CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS** to find a win/win solution. **NEVER** use put-downs, manipulation, control or abuse to get your own way.
9. **LAUGH REGULARILY** with your partner. Look for the funny side of life and share it. If you find that tension is building and you and your partner are not have a good time together, set aside a time to get to the bottom of what's going on between you, so you can get back to having fun!
10. Tell your partner things you **APPRECIATE** about them every day! We hear all to often what's wrong with us, but we need to hear what's right. Give your partner sincere compliments regularly!