



A pearl of common wisdom that has sprung up in dating circles in recent years is that ‘communication is key’. While this is often easier said than actually practised in many human relationships, whether they be romantic or not, Bashar Ibrahim is a researcher who wants to get to the bottom of it.

While all experts from relationship counsellors to [full-fledged psychiatrists](#) will nod their heads in agreement that communication with others is essential for understanding and compassion, what is the science of this? Bashar Ibrahim wants to know what level of honesty is expected or implied, and when it can be beneficial to tell white lies.

While honesty is a virtue, complete blunt honesty is not the case even in the most loving relationships. Bashar Ibrahim notes that “sometimes we feel things at the moment that are only true briefly, so saying them out loud in an attempt, to be honest, can be unbeneficial in the long run”.

For example, if you spoke your mind honestly a fight with a loved one you might say something like “I hate you”, which feels honest in the moment but is quickly proven to be untrue later on. Words linger once they are spoken, and therefore people are never truly honest and will filter what they say to fit the situation.

On this, [Bashar Ibrahim points out](#) that “you can’t be 100% honest all the time, but you can think about what the truth is and then share it at the appropriate time”. This means that to build trust in a relationship, you need to think carefully about what your insecurities are and share them.

Self-reflection takes practise, but once you nail it, you can share your insights with the people in your life and have better relationships with them. While the old “it’s not you, it’s me” line sounds cliché and insincere, it can actually be valid when you back up the reasons why.

Insecurity and sensitivity around or towards others normally stem from a personal issue. For example, a partner talking about their [work problems](#) all the time might not be annoying in of itself, but your frustration may be born out of another insecurity.

Bashar Ibrahim states that “communication is key in that you attempt to actually discuss the root of issues, and not try to avoid them or mask them”. It does not mean you need to be completely honest all the time, and some partners would not want you to be.

Many who have been in long-term relationships will admit that when their partner is complaining about something, they don’t often want practical solutions. All they want is comfort and reassurance. Bashar Ibrahim says that “this can be very difficult for those of us who are problem solvers and want to take direct action, and don’t want to see people we care about suffer needlessly”.

It’s important that people understand why communication is key and don’t just use it as an empty platitude. Bashar Ibrahim says on [his twitter](#) that “many people use the wisdom to claim they are great communicators when they don’t have much practise themselves”.

This had led Bashar Ibrahim to focus research efforts on examining how different romantic couples communicate and seeing which is the most effective method generally. With that said, everyone is different, and one method could work for one set of personalities better than another.

Bashar Ibrahim is a prolific researcher who wants to study the ways that humans interact with each other. He hopes that through his work, he can discover better ways for people to communicate and overcome interpersonal conflict.

Bashar Ibrahim researches why communication is key in relationships

Written by a Guest Writer
