

'Everything that irritates us about others can lead us on to an understanding of ourselves'

– Carl Jung –

Consider which of the following unrealistic beliefs you hold:

- 1** **'A relationship that needs to be worked on is not worth having'.**
All satisfying relationships require two committed people making an effort. Often the more difficult times you successfully come through the stronger the relationship. Good relationships simply do not just happen.
- 2** **'The excitement and romance in our love will continue unabated over time'.**
Relationships change and go through phases as time passes. The early 'fizz' is usually gradually replaced by a mature, deeper understanding love.
- 3** **'Being in an intimate relationship should be the way to happiness'.**
Your relationship is only one part of your life so do not expect it to make everything in your life magically alright.
- 4** **'It's the other person's fault. If only they could change and be different'.**
Improving relationships is about changing yourself and not directly expecting the other person to change. The changes you make in yourself will precipitate changes in others. A good relationship is often not about choosing the right person, but being the right person.
- 5** **'If my partner really loved me he or she would react and behave in a certain way – the way I behave'.**
Our partners are different from us and that is a good thing. When we can accept and respect our differences our relationship has a chance of blossoming.
- 6** **'My partner should always know how I feel and should anticipate my needs'.**
Do not suppose that your partner telepathically knows how you feel. The ability to communicate honestly how you feel, and what you think, is the essential ingredient in a healthy relationship.
- 7** **'My partner should provide everything I need. I do not need anybody else. Love means wanting to be together'.**
No one person can meet all our needs. We all need to maintain a healthy circle of friendships to meet our varied needs.
- 8** **'My partner should never hurt me or strike back in anger or disagree with me on important matters'.**
You and your partner are different and, inevitably from time to time, will frustrate each other. We can all say things in anger that we do not mean. Tolerance and forgiveness are important ingredients.