

The Relationship Cure Summary

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1-Sentence-Summary: *The Relationship Cure* will show you how to improve all your relationships whether in a marriage, at work, or with friends, by revealing the science of understanding how others communicate their needs and how to efficiently express your own desires too.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



What if I told you there was a relationship *cure*? You probably think this sounds too good to be true. After all, there are so many varying factors that make no two relationships the same. You can have relationships with a significant other, friends, family, coworkers, and the list could go on. So how can there be a one-size-fits-all cure for all of the different problems you can have with all these people?

Okay, so there isn't a magic pill that's going to fix every relationship at once. But in *The Relationship Cure: A Five Step Guide to Strengthening Your Marriage, Family, and Friendships* psychologist John Gottman shares relationship strategies he's learned over his four decades of experience.

He draws on his extensive research to bring you a prescription of surprisingly simple solutions to problems that happen in many different types of relationships in your life. How to use these strategies varies depending on the relationship, but you'll find the underlying problems are often the same. These highly applicable solutions will help you relate better to everyone around you.

Here are 3 of the most insightful relationship lessons from this book:

1. Opening up won't bring you closer to your partner, but understanding and using bids will.
2. Be careful about how you respond to the requests of others because people's real desires behind their bids are difficult to interpret.
3. Use soft language when expressing your needs to others.

Ready to dive deep into the science of healthy relationships? Let's go!

Lesson 1: Know what bids are and how to use them correctly to become closer to others.

When it comes to relationships, bids are extremely important. No, not on eBay. Gottman teaches that a bid is an attempt to emotionally connect with someone either verbally or nonverbally.

It can be anything from "Wow, look at the beautiful sunset!" To a question like, "What did you think of the movie last night?" Or it can come in the form of giving a gesture like a wink or a smile. **Whatever form it takes, the idea is the same: it shows a desire for connection.**

A person can respond to a bid by turning toward it, turning away from it, or turning against it. For example, maybe you say to your spouse, "Check out this interesting news article." If they respond by putting down their phone and taking a look this would be turning toward your bid.

On the other hand, if they were to ignore you and continue looking at their phone or reply with something unrelated, this would be turning away from it.

Lastly, if they were to say something negative, like "Can't you see I'm busy with something?" This would be an example of turning against your bid.

Through research, Gottman has identified the importance of these three types of responses to bids in a relationship. He has observed that they represent the building blocks of emotional communication and human connection. And that they can make or break a relationship.

Lesson 2: It's hard to understand what people really want, so be careful how you respond to requests.

The reason these bids are so important, even if they seem menial, is because they often have hidden messages about what we really want. For example, a wife telling her husband she's cold may be more than just a statement about temperature. It may mean she wants to cuddle and feel close to her husband.

This is why we have to be careful when we respond to someone we care about. A child throwing a tantrum over a toy her mother won't buy might seem like a plea for a toy, but deep down, it likely could be a bid for more attention.

When people are feeling sad, angry, or scared, their bids can sound more like laments or criticisms. It is key that we dig a little deeper to discover what they're really saying and how they really feel.

Imagine you're the mother of the child throwing the tantrum for a toy. Rather than invalidating their feelings by frustratedly explaining why she can't have the toy, try giving a hug or giving comfort. **When you focus on the bid beneath the surface, you will build stronger connections and turn toward their bid instead of away from it.**

Lesson 3: When expressing your needs to others, make sure to use soft language.

While it's important to dig deeper and make sure you are responding in a caring way to people's bids, there are also times when you need your bid to be acknowledged too. There are things you can do to help you be more easily understood.

Firstly, when you're trying to get something in life, it's vital to know what you want. **Next time you find yourself about to complain or on the brink of an argument, just ask yourself: What emotional need is unmet?**

Imagine a couple who is in an argument about whether to have a gun in their home. The husband wants it for protection, but the wife doesn't want one because she feels it's dangerous with kids in the home.

Instead of the wife launching into an argument about how much she dislikes guns because they are dangerous and the husband stating his right to bear arms, she could express her fear that it would not be safe. They could find some sort of compromise like buying a gun safe to make sure the kids couldn't access it.

This is an example of *softening* a bid to ensure you are understood and it doesn't escalate. Consider your partner is working on a family outing. If you were to harshly tell her to stop working and spend time with family, she may snap back by saying she has things to do. If instead, you were to gently say that you and the kids missed her and want to be with her, she would likely give a much kinder response.

The Relationship Cure Review

I was familiar with Gottman's research before reading *The Relationship Cure* and was excited to get this deeper dive into it! This goes far beyond your typical relationship advice and I think because of that it's bound to help you grow closer to the people you care about the

most. I highly recommend this to everyone!

Who would I recommend The Relationship Cure summary to?

The 35-year-old couple who are struggling to connect with each other, the 58-year-old that wants to learn how to become closer to their family and friends, and anyone that wants to get better at communicating with others and building connections.