

The Only Person You Can Change Is...You!

Right now, I'm going to shatter some illusions and clue you in to the truth. So, prepare yourself...

People don't change.

"Sure they can!" you might argue. And yes, in some ways people do "change". They can grow and evolve, but they don't *fundamentally* change. By the time you've reached the age of 20, you're pretty much set in your beliefs, values, and basic personality. Like it or not, that's just the way it is.

Too many marriages are doomed right from the start because one partner chose someone who wasn't really right for him or her. However, instead of acknowledging this incompatibility, many people stray into some really fuzzy logic. They begin by telling themselves things like: "Once we're married, he'll change." Or, "After we've settled down, I'll show her the error of her ways." These statements are not only entirely untrue; they're completely unfair to the other person. You are expecting a change from them that you would never consider for yourself. In other words, the relationship is starting off one-sided. It's never going to work.

Your spouse is your partner, not a humanitarian project. They didn't marry you so that you could become their mentor or advisor but because they wanted to share their lives with you. No one is perfect, and you've got to be prepared to take the bad with the good - even when the bad stuff is here to stay.

Be careful about putting someone on a pedestal - especially in the early stages of your relationship. Make sure that the expectations you have for your mate and yourself are realistic and attainable. There are going to be differences in opinion, and probably some disagreements, too. Don't simply assume that your mate knows how you feel or what you think about a particular issue. And don't assume that their opinions and feelings are a mirror image of your own.

When discussing something that is important to you, ensure that you both understand exactly what is being said. The reality of the situation is this: *neither one of you is going to know exactly what the other person needs*. As long as you don't expect them to be able to read your mind or

to become a clone of you, you should be off to a good start. Accept the fact that this is a part of getting to know one another and communicating, and you should be fine.

If you've got a problem with something about your mate, it's time to realize something very important to the security and endurance of your marriage. The simple truth is that you can't change your mate, but you can change how you react to the things about them that you don't like.

You can't change your mate, but you can change yourself and your attitudes. Give it a shot and see what happens!

Secret Insight:

An Ounce of Prevention Is Worth a Pound of Cure...

Now that you understand that people don't change, you owe it to yourself to develop the dating and soul-mate searching skills that will help you find a spouse that you won't feel compelled to change.

A mate compatible from the beginning is a mate who will continue being compatible in the future.

If you need to work on those searching skills, seek out a good relationship coach. They are trained to help you through this process and to help you identify what type of person you'd be most satisfied with as a spouse.

Kathy Stafford, Relationship Coach

"I show singles how to get married and couples how to STAY married"

Do you want more from your relationship? Go to <http://www.dearkathy.com> for relationship articles, advice, and programs.

Do you go from one failed relationship to another? Do you want to find that special life partner? Get Kathy's new book, "Relationship Remorse: Mistakes Women Make When Shopping for a Man." and learn the right way to find a loving and committed life-partner. Order the book at <http://www.relationshipremorse.com>

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