

# “Should I Stay or Should I Go?: A Guide to Knowing if Your Relationship Can – and Should – be Saved”



By Tanni Deb

When you're struggling in an unfulfilling partnership with someone you love, you may not know whether it's best to move on or stay together as a couple. Communications specialist and author, JAC Patrissi helps support women who are uncertain of their current relationship or are healing from a destructive love life with your partner. Her latest book – co-written with author Lundy Bancroft – *Should I Stay or Should I Go?: A Guide to Knowing if Your Relationship Can – and Should – be Saved*, offers guidance to help women understand the path in which their relationship is going and how to move on – with or without their partners.

We had a chance to interview Patrissi about her book, and this is what she had to say:

## **What made you choose to write about this topic?**

First, let me ask you if you personally know any women who have not asked the question, “Should I stay or should I go?”

Most women find meaning through satisfying connections with others. We care about our partnerships, so we talk and read about them.

Yet, even while there is a lot of thinking and talking about relationships, there isn't a lot of good advice about what to do if your partner is acting destructively. This book helps

you figure out if you're in a destructive relationship. If you are, then you need to know the root of the destructiveness. Most importantly, this book helps you decide what to do about it. It summarizes what I've learned by collaborating with other women for more than two decades.

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### **What challenges did you face while writing the guide?**

There is so much more to say about each area. For instance, what if you are in a same sex relationship – how are the dynamics different or the same as when you are in a heterosexual relationship? How is it different for men who are with destructive women? Are all destructive relationships abusive? We had to keep on a narrow track to help women answer essential relationship questions, but I felt the pull to address so many related issues.

### **What are the main pieces of advice readers can expect to find?**

First, we help you sort out what's going on with your partner. We show you what to look for so that you can come up with an accurate picture of what you're facing. Here we ask you to believe in what you have experienced and not to be afraid to name what's happening. We also encourage women to expect *all* of the attributes of a healthy relationship – not just a few. Set your bar where it ought to be.

Next, we help you establish a firmer relationship with yourself, your goals and your identity because this is going to help you sharpen your tools of discernment. My goal is to support the creation of a throng of women who will be very hard to confuse after they work through this book.

From there, we give specifics on what to demand of your significant other who is destructive. One of the most helpful pieces is about the ongoing process of apology and making amends. We stress that it isn't over until it is over for

you. Apologies must be made in a manner that is helpful and meaningful to the person hurt.

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### **When should someone move on from a difficult relationship?**

I think some of the most troubling problems women face with their partners are: immaturity, addiction, unresolved or untreated mental health issues (including the after-effects of trauma, depression and personality disorders); and abuse. Each one of these has its own warning signs.

I know you want your partner, but sometimes the partner you want doesn't come without issues. And that's the heart-breaker. But is it a deal breaker? That depends on a number of things, including where you are in your own life, where you are in your relationship, and what is safe and possible for you.

### **What advice would you give to those who are in an unfulfilling relationship?**

Figuring out what to do with your relationship takes a lot of energy. If you want to hold on to the clarity you find, you'll need to shift back to the center of your own life.

You'll need to rediscover what brings you joy, reinvest in a daily routine that will support you, rediscover some of the values you hold, create a self-nurturing plan that includes skills for regulating your emotions when you feel out of sorts and, for mothers, creating a parenting-from-your-center plan.

In order to stop spending all of your time waiting to figure out what's going to happen between you and your lover, you'll need to create your own "No-Matter-What-Happens" life goals for yourself. That is the typical kind of life-planning people do. If you're in a healthy, but sadly unfulfilling partnership, this re-direction to your dreams and beliefs will help make your process of working on the relationship or

deciding to leave much less fraught. But if you're in a destructive relationship, you'll notice that it's a whole new game. Therefore, you'll need to turn your attention back to your own growth.

Our book will help you regulate your own powerful emotions, teach you to invest in your own rediscovery of joy, and create a routine that supports you, your values and spiritual beliefs. From there, you can use your new strength to invest in your life goals even if you decide to give your partner some time to work on his or her issues.

To gain greater clarity about your relationship and which path to take, visit Amazon to purchase *Should I Stay or Should I Go?: A Guide to Knowing if Your Relationship Can – and Should – be Saved*. For more information on Patrissi, visit her website, [www.growinganewheart.com](http://www.growinganewheart.com)