

Top 3 Reasons Celebrities Seek Therapy



By Dr. Fran Walfish

Many of us aspire to live the glamorous life of a celebrity. When captured on camera, they almost always look happy, healthy, wealthy and full of life. As the leading Beverly Hills psychotherapist, I am here to tell you that everyone's problems are the same. Yours, mine and those of the rich and famous all have common threads. It's true that when you have money, the worries about how to make the rent and pay bills are eliminated, but they are replaced with panic about where your next hit will come from and how to remain in your lifestyle. Here are the top three issues for which celebrities seek therapy:

1. Communication problems.

Just like you and I, no one is perfect ... not even celebrities. I teach my patients first to accept their own flaws. We must be kind and non-judgmental to ourselves if we ever hope to accept our companions, spouses and children. When communication (taking turns talking and listening without judgment) breaks down with defensive arguing, criticisms or interrupting, it causes a crack in the foundation of the romantic relationship. Distance between partners can emerge and begin a life of separateness, secrecy, cheating and divorce.

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2. Parenting issues.

I have treated hundreds of children of celebrities. The most common reason is to help parents identify, implement and follow-through on boundaries. Contrary to public belief, this is not more challenging because of affluence and privilege. I was on clinical staff for 15 years at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center where I treated underprivileged and underserved families. The issues were the same as in 90210. It is simply hard for parents to say "no" to their beloved kids. It's even harder when kids have parents with work, charity, and a variety of other commitments that fill their calendars.

Parents feel guilty about not being available to their children, and when they are there, they don't want to fight.

They take the easier road by saying "yes."

3. Controlling personalities.

The old saying that 'opposites attract' holds true in the way that we are drawn to our partners. For most couples, there's usually one dominant and one passive partner. Individuals fall anywhere within a spectrum from mild to extreme. An extreme example is a 90210 couple in which the husband controlled all of their money. The wife never had her name on their mutual

checks, nor was she allowed to have a housekeeper. The couples therapy involved slow-motion step-by-step exploration of the source and meaning of the husband's control. It took long, hard work to chip away at his defenses and help him let go of some of his rigidities.

Related: [5 Ways to Stop Sabotaging Your Relationships](#)

The bottom line is that when there are two people in a relationship, things must feel good (enough) to both partners. Here are my top 10 tips:

1. Always be curious and open enough to look within and become more self-aware.
2. Be kind and nice to your partner, spouse, and child(ren).
3. Do not strive for perfection. Be "good enough."
4. Don't get caught in power struggles.
5. Never engage in negotiations, bargaining, or deal making.
6. Balance nurturing with setting and holding boundaries.
7. Listen when dealing with conflicts. Reflect out loud what you hear the other person feeling and needing.
8. Encourage healthy expression of all emotions, including anger.
9. Nurture the relationship by having quality one-on-one time, date night, and daily talk time at least once a week. The foundation of your family is built upon the bricks and mortar of your marital relationship.
10. Shield your children from hearing Mom and Dad fight. It raises their anxiety.

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