

10 Relationship Behaviors You Think Are Odd... That Are Totally Normal!



By Laura Seldon for GalTime.com

What's "normal" and what's not when it comes to dating, love and relationships? Think you and your partner align with the average couple? Or are your relationship behaviors totally out there? We've asked several therapists, marriage counselors and relationship experts from around the country to shed some light on relationship behaviors that seem odd at first, but are actually quite normal. Take a seat and see how you and your mate compare!

1. Changing feelings

Once upon a time you loved rocking the highest of high heels. These days, however, you're much more apt to throw on a pair of flats. It may sound simple, but your ever-evolving feelings on shoes can help to serve as a reminder that feelings come and go – and that's OK.

"Love is a living entity," explains Karen Sherman, Ph.D. "And just like people have good days and bad – so will there be periods where the lovin' feelings just won't be there. Hang in, focus on the positive and the feelings will come back."

2. Going through "adjustment periods"

"If you decide to marry, even if you've lived together, the first year is likely to be bumpy," warns Sherman. "You are now in a legally committed relationship, the dynamics change and there is a period of adjustment. Having lived together doesn't prevent this adjustment period."

So, if you and your better half are not in a state of bliss at every moment, it doesn't mean your relationship is doomed – it just means you're normal.

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3. Enjoying different hobbies

He's into fantasy football and you're into shopping? Better yet, you're into fantasy football and he's into shopping? Either way, it's totally normal for you and your main squeeze to have different interests.

"You don't have to like all the same things to have a healthy relationship," notes Sherman. "What matters is having the same values." So go ahead and enjoy your fantasy football draft, and then swoon over the new shoes your man just bought online. You both deserve to enjoy your hobbies without feeling guilty.

4. Needing alone time

Are you the kind of person who would take yourself out for a date night for one? If so, you are not alone.

“Washing a car, walking a dog or exercising alone are signs of a healthy relationship with a secure attachment,” says Lanada Williams, a licensed counselor in Washington DC and Maryland. “Remind yourself, the individual you met still needs time to breathe and thrive.”

5. Being slow to compliment

When is the last time you told your partner how hot they looked? We’re all guilty of holding back compliments, and, according to Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist Holly Cox, it may even be something you’re doing on purpose!

“When you give a compliment to anyone, but particularly someone you like a whole lot, you’re putting yourself on the line,” explains Cox. “Clients tell me they are often afraid their partners will reject the compliment – or worse, say something along the lines of, ‘Wow, you’re finally noticing everything I do around here. Uh-huh. What do you want?’”

Although this may be normal behavior, that doesn’t mean it’s OK. Remember to compliment your partner and accept the praise they give you!

6. Having trouble getting in the mood

Every married couple has experienced one of those nights (or mornings) where one member of the duo is ready for a racy romp, but the other is ready for a mellow nap!

“Virtually all couples have sexual desire problems sooner or later,” says Licensed Psychologist Dr. Kate Roberts. “Couples often go long periods of time without having sex and then once they start up again, their sex life continues on its own.”

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7. Withholding information

Sure you told your partner about that expensive purse you just bought – you just chose not reveal how much you dropped on it!

“Couples often have different priorities for discretionary income and it’s not uncommon for them to keep their secret stashes of clothes, toys, candy or other discretionary items,” says Dr. Roberts.

Just remember it’s never healthy to lie about how much you spend. If your partner asks how much you blew on that new pair of Jimmy Choos, keep it real. Lying to your partner – especially about money – is never going to lead you anywhere good.

8. Sparring, bickering & fighting

As two different people with two different philosophies on life, you’re bound to disagree at one point or another.

“Fighting is normal,” explains Therapist Dana Ward. “While some couples may think fighting is the sign of a bad relationship, it actually is very important. The key is fighting with a purpose.”

So, whether you are fighting about something as trivial as how to fold socks, or as significant as a job transition, make sure to fight the topic – not each other.

9. Finding other people attractive

You may be utterly in love with your partner, but that doesn’t mean you can’t admire a hottie with a great set of legs.

“You can and should appreciate all the beauty and dashing good looks all around you,” shares Ward. However, she notes,

“Attractive and attraction is different. Find other people attractive, but stop short of allowing yourself to be attracted to them.”

10. Getting scared and pulling away

Pulling away, taking a time out, going on a break – we’re all human, and being vulnerable with someone else can at times be scary enough to make you run for the hills!

“Sometimes when things are getting very serious men, in particular, may pull away while they decided to move forward,” explains Relationship Coach Stef Safran.

However, just because one person in the relationship needs a breather, it doesn’t mean your relationship is in desperate need of an SOS. It just means you’re human!

Now that you’ve read through these 10 strange relationship behaviors that aren’t actually weird at all, hopefully you feel a little better about your own relationship. If you still think you’re odd, though, then embrace the quirks that make your relationship special and take a line from Holly Golightly in *Breakfast at Tiffany’s* – “It may be normal, darling; but I’d rather be natural.”