

Relationship Issues

As human beings, good relationships are vital to our happiness and wellbeing. But, as important as they are, good relationships don't necessarily come easily to many of us. When we find it hard to maintain them, we can question our own self-worth and feel that a satisfying, purposeful life has slipped beyond our reach. Everyone has relationship issues at some time, and we can all use help in learning how to get our needs met and have more meaningful relationships with others.

We're all connected in complex ways with the ones we love: partners, siblings, parents, extended family or friends. However, maintaining a healthy web of good relationships with them isn't guaranteed. They can be complicated by:

- traumatic or abusive experiences, particularly from childhood
- substance addictions, such as alcohol or drug dependency
- process addictions, which are behaviours that become addictive in the way they alter our mood, such as eating disorders, gambling, sexual activity and overwork
- mood disorders, such as depression or bipolar disorder
- other forms of mental illness
- the family "culture" we grew up with

Some signs that you are experiencing relationship problems

- Not communicating effectively – either keeping everything inside or exploding with rage
- Not being able to be emotionally intimate. You can't connect or share your feelings with others. You seem to be able to talk about everything except your thoughts and feelings or wants and needs
- Not being able to be physically intimate. You don't touch your partner or other people, and it makes you uncomfortable when they touch you. This makes sexual intimacy difficult too
- Not being honest with others
- Not being able to understand others. Taking refuge in stock generalisations
- Being overly distant with people, or being overly needy and clingy
- Having unrealistic expectations of yourself or others
- Trying to change other people, or trying to change yourself when you're around particular people

Family culture matters

Our family "culture" – meaning the habits and belief systems that are present or subscribed to by the family – has a profound influence on us as we grow up. It shapes our behaviour and it can be extremely difficult to change, regardless of how much we want to. Negative experiences can continue to affect us throughout our lives. We may have experienced:

- a tense atmosphere
- pressure to hide our feelings, which may have caused us to react against it and express our feelings in inappropriate ways
- shaming, judging and punishing mistakes
- secrets and taboos, where feelings were stifled and unexpressed
- problems that were never resolved or acknowledged

South Pacific Private's approach to treating relationship issues

We offer a combination of medical, therapeutic and skills-based support for those wanting to understand and improve their relationships. We can help you gain a better, more objective perspective and build a better sense of self, to put an end to the habits that have been complicating your life.

Our treatment programs

- **Inpatient Program:** We provide 24 hour professional inpatient care. The exact length of your stay will be tailored to your needs by the team responsible for your care, and will include full medical support if required. You'll be involved in the 'therapeutic community' of fellow inpatients, providing peer support and nurturing your self-confidence and awareness. When you leave, a comprehensive after-care plan will help you work on your relationships and discuss real-life situations following your treatment.
- **Changes Program:** Five days, Monday to Friday. (This program is part of our Inpatient Program). Understand how issues and events from your childhood can affect your adult life, and how recognising your own patterns of behaviour and choices is an important step towards bringing about change.
- **Day Program:** You're free to return home at the end of each day. It's a particularly beneficial option for people whose anxiety disorder is less severe. There are a range of programs available.

* The length will be based on your unique needs, following a professional assessment

Key things to remember

- The family "culture" we grew up with has a profound effect on our future relationships, influencing the way we feel about ourselves, and may be a root cause of addictions or mental health issues in our adult lives
- Recognising the strategies and roles of individuals within a family is important to changing the behaviours that are holding us back
- Improving the quality of our relationships is more likely to work when treatment takes into account our emotional and physical wellbeing along with the wider circumstances of our life, families and routines
- Therapy is valuable in helping individuals recognise symptoms early, and giving them a better, more robust outlook for dealing with them

For treatment options, other resources, or a complimentary assessment

phone 1800 063 332

visit www.southpacificprivate.com.au

email info@southpacificprivate.com.au