

GET YOUR RELATIONSHIP

# BACK ON TRACK

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

Chances are, if you're reading this now you not in a good place. The reasons for this can vary but it's likely that you have a particular relationship problem that you just don't feel you can solve. This guide is designed with you in mind; it's going to give you some basic steps to get going.

I hope you find it valuable.

Tim Hill

## 1. Where are you now?

The first step in making changes is to work out where you are right now. If you're like many people, you'll have some words to describe what you're experiencing. You might be feeling one or more strong emotions, perhaps anger, sadness or even desperation. You might feel that you've come to the end of your rope or that you just don't know how to go on.

Whatever you're experiencing, it's important to work out where you are first

up. Even though it might be hard, try to take some time to get clear about what is really troubling you. Doing this can really help you get clear about what the actual problem is. Knowing and reflecting on what the actual problem is essential in working where to go from here.

Some people find that writing this down is very helpful for them. On a sheet of paper, put down the things that are troubling you, why they're troubling you and what emotions go along with them.

Many people find this process to be helpful in itself. Just getting things down

on paper and out of your brain can really make things a lot clearer. For example, you might be thinking off the top of your head that you are angry about a particular situation but on a little reflection, you realise that you're actually more sad than angry.

**2.  
Where do you  
want to be?**

Once you've worked out where you are, the next step is to work out where you want to be. What will

it look like when you've solved this relationship problem, or the immediate pain has gone away? What will you feel about yourself and about the other people involved? What will have changed? What will be the same? Try to be as specific as possible. To say that 'you want to be happy' or you want 'to be less stressed' doesn't give you enough to go on.

This can be really helpful. Perhaps you're looking for a particular response from a person, or perhaps you're looking for a particular change in yourself. Either way, getting clear about what you're actually seeking can help you muster the forces you need to be able to accomplish that.

**3.  
What would  
help you?**

You're probably more resourceful than you think. You've been solving problems – big and small -

for years and so you're likely to have

some sophisticated problem-solving skills. However, it's likely that this particular problem has put you on the back foot. This can make drawing on your traditional skills and resources difficult.

In this step, I'm going to encourage you get clear about what resources you can draw on to help you solve this relationship problem. These resources can be different types, but often an essential resource for problem-solving is other people.

Some problems can be solved by ourselves. For these sorts of problems, all we need to do is to get clear in our own mind and take some action. These are the simple sorts of problems, the ones that we are used to dealing with every day.

However, solving most relationship problems requires the help of another person. This can be because relationship problems are inherently about other people, but also because they're complicated. For this reason, calling on the right people to help is usually going to make things easier.

With relationship problems, we can be unhappy about how we are relating to them or frustration with the way that they are. In essence, we may have a problematic relationship with them that we don't know how to solve. This can be a really testing situation.

However, we might be able to work with this problem by drawing on a third person to help us with this situation. Finding someone to help with relationship problems can lead to a better outcome for everybody. In some instances, this person who can help might be a family member or friend in other instances, a professional might be best situated to help.

**4.  
Gathering  
your strength.**

Okay; you know what the problem is, you know where you want to be and you know what's going to help you solve this problem. This step of the process is about getting clear about how you going to bring it all together. You can think of this as a planning phase; this is where you get clear exactly how to get the help you need.

For example, this might mean working out how you approach a person who is going to help you, or how you're going to gather the resources you need to tackle this problem. Spending some time with this stage of the process can be really useful and can help with a better outcome.

**5.  
Getting  
going.**

This is the stage where many people get derailed. Even though they are clear about what the problem is, what they need to do about it and how they might do it, actually taking the steps to solve a problem can be where many people stall. Even though they have done the planning, they still are paralysed and can't seem to make the first step. Sometimes this is because they feel

that they need to solve things perfectly or they need to wait until the time is right. Or, they feel like they might offend somebody or it would be too confronting. In reality, the problem is already bad enough. Your efforts to sort it out are probably unlikely to make it worse.

If I can convince you of anything it's this – if you know what you need to do and how to do it, take action now. There will never be a better time.

**6.  
Seeing it  
through.**

This is the last step now. Now that you've started to take action, you need to keep pushing through. Most problems aren't solved by a simple action; we need to keep on top of things. This is why I'm encouraging you to keep your motivation high; keep at the problem, even where you might have some setbacks or reach some points of uncertainty.

Maybe you need to go back to a previous stage and to do some more planning or to enlist some more resources. That's fine; the thing is to keep on trying to solve the problem. Anything you can do to keep your motivation and interest high is a good thing.

Good luck!

## About the author



My name is Tim Hill, and I've been working as a counsellor and psychotherapist for more than a decade.

Over the years, I have helped hundreds of individuals and couples who have come to me with all sorts of different problems including relationship difficulties, addictions, workplace problems and grief and loss.

I'd like to be able to help you with your problem too. If you feel you need more help beyond what you currently have, make contact with me. We can work out if I'm the right person to help you, and if I am, how we can arrange for you to receive the help you need.

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