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# Local Author Shares Tips for Healthier Relationships

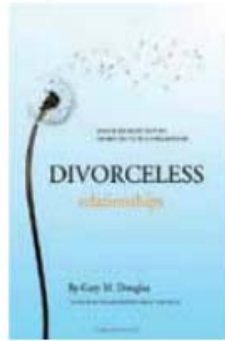
**B**est-selling author, international speaker, founder of Access Consciousness and Santa Barbara resident, Gary Douglas believes that changing who you are in order to keep your partner happy is an express ride to a broken relationship.



*Gary Douglas*

A recent study by Dr. Terri Orbuch of the University of Michigan found that many divorcees regret they didn't reveal enough about themselves to their spouse, and Douglas agrees that candid expression of who you are is vital for a healthy relationship. "As soon as a relationship starts, a lot of people start making subtle changes to the way they act and the things they do," Douglas explains.

Often times, these changes are completely unsolicited and come from an individual's idea of what they think their partner wants from them. "What I have seen time and time again, is someone voluntarily changing their actions and behaviors because they think it will please their partner," Douglas remarks. "In actual fact, what often happens is the partner wakes up one day and realizes that you're no longer the person they fell in love with."



But in chasing that illusion, they stop just being themselves and expressing

Douglas believes the idea of a "fairy tale" ending is often to blame. "Many people have this unrealistic view of relationships and try to recreate the ideal happy-ever-after.

who they truly are."

According to Douglas, freedom to be yourself is one of the three major factors in a great relationship. "You need a great sex life, an even contribution to finances and, importantly, the freedom to be yourself and fulfill your desires completely. What is interesting is that when a couple is free to be themselves, they often end up closer. They know who they are, and they know they are together because they choose to be."

Attitude also plays a role in successful relationships. "Look for something greater all the time rather than something less. There is no reason relationships cannot continue to expand."

*Douglas offers more insights in his book Divorceless Relationships, available at Amazon.com. For more information about Access Consciousness, visit AccessConsciousness.com.*