

Ep #176: 5 Things to Start Doing Immediately if You Want Better Relationships



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With Your Host

Kori Linn

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This week we're talking about five things to start doing immediately if you want to have better relationships.

The *Satisfied AF* podcast is the place to learn how to create a life and career that's wildly delicious. Want a steamier sex life? We've got you. Want a more satisfying career? We'll cover that too. And you can be sure we'll spend lots of time talking about how to build connected, fun relationships that can handle life's ups and downs. No matter what goals you're working on, this show will help you create a one of a kind life that is just right for you. Join me, life and career coach Kori Linn and each week I'll give you lots of practical tips, tools, and proven strategies to help you create all the satisfaction your heart desires.

Hello, hello, hello, happy Wednesday. We have a great topic to talk about today. It's actually based on a reel that I did based on a template from a social media person that I follow on Instagram, and it went sort of viral. Not like big viral, but it got like a thousand views and over 2,500 plays, whereas a lot of my reels get maybe a hundred or so.

So it seemed like this topic really resonated. And I wanted to come over here and share it with y'all on the podcast to make sure you're always getting the best content and my best ideas shared directly to your ears.

Before we get into that though, I want to share something I've been thinking about with y'all. And if this resonates or you're curious about it, we can do an entire podcast episode on it. But lately I've been thinking about how social conditioning is like marketing, right? So when we watch marketing, like when we watch commercials, they're like, buy this thing so you can have this experience, right? Buy this perfume so you can feel sexy. But perfume itself doesn't create you feeling sexy, right?

Their sales pitch is that if you have the perfume, you'll be sexy. You'll feel sexier. But there have been so many times in my life when I've had the thing that was supposed to make me feel better and it didn't, right? And that's sort of one of the premises of coaching is that having the perfume or

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the pair of jeans or the eyeliner isn't necessarily going to make you feel better about yourself if you don't change how you think about yourself.

But I thought this was so interesting because I realized that social conditioning is kind of the same thing. It's a different kind of marketing. Most marketing is trying to get you to buy something, right? But social conditioning is trying to get you to buy an idea, be a good girl and you'll be happy. Follow these rules and you'll have a successful life.

And just like the marketing for consumer products isn't necessarily accurate, if you buy the perfume, you might still not feel sexy, if you follow the social conditioning marketing, you're not necessarily going to get what was promised to you either. There's this phrase I love that's like, can that thing cash the check or not, right? And the idea is if it can cash the check, it can give you what it's actually promised you. But so many things don't cash the check, right?

So much of the time that marketing isn't going to be able to cash the check it's writing you. It's going to tell you you're going to feel sexier if you wear the perfume, but are you? And is the perfume alone enough to do that? And with socialization, with that social conditioning, it's like, oh, if you follow all these rules of culture, then you'll be happy. Then you'll be successful. But will you? Can that socialization, can it actually cash the check it writes?

And I think the whole reason that I have a job, a profession, a career is because perfume doesn't make us feel sexy and following the rules of culture doesn't make us feel good. And if we want to feel sexy, if we want to feel good, if we want to have satisfying relationships, we generally need to figure out a different way to do those things, rather than simply buying all of the stuff that's marketed to us and buying all of the ideas that are socially conditioned into us, which is again, just another kind of marketing.

So that's what I've been thinking about. These are the kinds of things I think about for fun, which is why I'm a coach and I spend all of my time and energy talking to y'all and creating content about this. And let's also

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address the elephant in the room, I also create marketing. In a lot of ways like that's what the podcast is, it's marketing.

But here's what I think. I think there are some things that can give you what they say they're going to give you. And the reason that I became a coach is because I wanted to sell something that I actually believed in, if I was going to sell anything at all. And I do believe in the tools I teach because I've seen the impact they have in my life and in the lives of dozens, if not hundreds of clients.

But also, it is still marketing. I'm over here saying like, hey, I think if you learn this set of skills, I think you can have a better experience. But one thing that I try really hard in my marketing not to do is to kind of sell you this idea of a perfect life. Something I talk about all the time is like even when you're living your dream life, things are still going to be hard.

Satisfied as fuck is not a destination we get to, it's a guiding principle we live by. And I do think what I sell can help you have an extraordinarily improved experience, but it's not going to make your life perfect. And it is going to be work, let's be honest about that. Coaching requires thinking differently about yourself, making different choices, learning new skills, and it can be really hard. I just happen to think it can be really worth it.

And on that note, before we jump into the five things to start doing immediately if you want to have better relationships, let's also take a minute to hear from some actual previous and current clients of mine about what they think happens when you come and work with me.

So this is from a post that I put up on Instagram where I was announcing that I do have room for new or returning one-on-one clients, which is still true. So if you want to snag one of those spots, come on over and let's get you signed up for it. And you may be wondering like, what will we even work on in one-on-one coaching? And what I love about one-on-one is we can work on anything. Any issue, any goal, any project, anything you want to create more of in your life or create less of.

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We could help you find your long-term relationship. We can help you career hop. We can help you launch a business. We can help you feel more confident at work. We can help you navigate a divorce, date after a divorce, navigate a queer or trans identity, complete creative projects. These are all things that I've worked with clients on in the past.

And there's all kinds of things I've never worked with clients on, but you could be the first one. Like I remember the first time I had someone come and coach with me about writing, but my background is actually in writing, so that was super fun and exciting for me. And we had a great time and lots of success in that coaching together, even though it wasn't something I had coached many clients on or any clients on before. So just to give you an idea, let's read just a few of these comments.

Here's a comment from a former client of mine. "100% recommend coaching with Kori. My one-on-one coaching experience with her was transformative in my life and career. Best investment in myself and future." Here's another one, "The legendary Kori Linn. Coach with and learn thought work from Kori, it will never stop being useful."

And here's one more and then we'll get into today's topic. This one says, "I can't believe it's been over two years since we last did our one-on-one work together, Kori." This is from a client who's worked with me multiple times, so that's why she said last did our work because there were gaps in between. Then she said, "The transformations you helped me create in my mind and life, my overall sense of wellbeing and the way I handle my thoughts and relationships are like perennial plants that literally blossom daily. I swear I'm not exaggerating. You're a healer, my friend."

Thank you so much to everyone who left a comment on that post. I love hearing from my previous and current clients about how well things are going with the coaching. And I love sharing it with all of you because I think it's one thing to hear from me about the power of coaching, but it's another thing to hear from someone else what their experience was. And these are

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all candid experiences. I was like, hey, would you share what your actual experience was? And then they did.

Okay. So let's get into five things to start doing immediately if you want to have better relationships. Number one, use your words. There's actually an entire podcast on this that you can listen to, but we're just going to have this as part of the topic here today. So use your words, don't make people guess because they'll often guess wrong. Open your mouth and tell them what you want them to know.

I think this is such a powerful thing. It's so simple, but simple doesn't mean easy. And something I've seen over and over again when I coach people is they want other people to guess what they want. I think this actually particularly happens in romantic relationships and marriages where we want our partner to just know what to say or what to do or how to talk to us when we're upset. And we're like, oh, if I have to tell them, then it doesn't count.

And I think that's so fascinating because we tell things to get what we want all the time. Like when I go to a restaurant, I generally open my mouth, use my words and tell them what I'd like to eat. I think it's just such a more effective way of getting what you want. It's so much more likely you will get what you want. And I would just really invite you to question this idea that other people should just know.

Like how would they just know if you don't ever tell them? And why is it better if they know without you having to tell them? I think it's so romanticized when people guess, but why is that romanticized? Why is that superior to you actually possessing and utilizing the communication skills to tell someone what you want?

I want to be really clear here, this is not an invitation to be unkind. It's an invitation to allow yourself to be known and to commit yourself to the action of being known, rather than leaving it to guesswork. I think it's also an interesting thing to mention, like we talk a lot, as we already have today,

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even about socialization. And when you leave things to guesswork with people, they're going to guess with the socialization that they already have. And that socialization may not make any sense for what you want them to do.

So instead of just letting them guess with the information they have, again, I think it's way more likely you're going to get what you want if you ask for it. Also, you know what's really fun about this? Then you actually have to know what you want and be able to communicate it. That can be hard.

I've actually had so many times, like in my own relationship with Alex, where I was upset about something and I would try to figure out what I wanted so I could ask for it. And sometimes I'd be able to, and then I would use my words and be like, okay, here's actually what I really want. Is this an option? Is this a possibility? Could we have this?

But sometimes what I realized was there actually wasn't a better way for the situation to go. And what I actually needed to do was to be able to tend to my own feelings internally or invite her to tend to my feelings also. Like this is particularly with conflict, which I think gets such a bad rap.

I'm such a fan of loving, connected conflict as a way for us to get to know our partners better, to get to know ourselves better and to come to an understanding and work together through issues versus it just has to be a fight and then we're mad at each other.

But one thing I've also realized is sometimes there's no preferable way, for instance, for Alex to give me critical feedback. I just don't like hearing critical feedback. Have I done entire podcasts about how useful feedback can be? Yeah, because it can be. But also on a personal level, that doesn't mean I enjoy it or like it when it's happening.

And so I used to do this thing where I'd be like, oh, if you could deliver the feedback like this, or if you could deliver it like that, or if you could say it this way. And what I eventually realized was like, oh, I'm probably going to get my feathers ruffled no matter how she says it.

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So this is an instance where I used my words and then realized like, oh, getting her to do it exactly the way I said to didn't help. And in that case, it's like, oh, I can stop wishing she'd do it that way and realize I need a different solution here, which is like, I just need to be able to hold space for the fact that I'm probably going to be upset for a little bit. And then I can come back into being intentional and who I want to be in the relationship when I get that critical feedback.

And that's not because there's anything wrong with critical feedback. It's because for a lot of us, when we get critical feedback, then it kicks off a set of thought patterns that are not very helpful. And even when I've done all the coaching work I've done for years, I of course still have those thought patterns of like, oh, I'm doing it wrong. Or I messed that up or like, oh, this is a problem, that kind of stuff.

Okay, so that was number one, use your words. Use them. Number two, make requests. Don't just talk to your people, get clear on what you want from them and ask for it. So I actually kind of already spoiled this in number one, but I think it's worth its own number because so often people talk to each other but don't make requests. They don't specifically and clearly articulate what it is they want, or they make demands instead of requesting, like you have to do this, or you should do this.

And the thing about that is in relationships, with very few exceptions, you're there as equals and you're there probably as partners, right? Sometimes like at work we are a supervisor and so it's part of our role to tell people what to do. But a lot of times in relationships, we're just two equals there together trying to figure it out.

And so when we try to tell somebody what they should do or make demands, we're kind of asserting dominance over them in a way that, first of all, people generally don't like and doesn't usually result in you getting what you want. But also I don't think it builds a loving, connected relationship, right? Because it's not loving or connected, it's asserting dominance.

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So instead of saying, hey, you should be like this or you should do this, or this is the right way, instead of saying, you have to do this, I would just invite you to be like, hey, I'd really like to have this happen. Is that a possibility? Is that an option? What would need to happen for that to be true?

As an example from my own relationship, Alex and I have a really bizarre and particular chore agreement. It's actually not that complicated. We just took all the chores we do, we broke them down. We actually assigned them all a monetary value based on like, how much time do they take? How gross are they? How much resistance do we have to doing them? Stuff like that. And then we split them originally 50/50, now we have a new agreement.

But one of the things that kicked this off was I don't like taking out the trash and recycling. So I remember asking Alex, like what could I possibly do chore wise that would make it so that she would be not just willing, but overjoyed, overjoyed to take the trash and recycle out every single time. And I love that framing because it's not just like, how can I get you to do this thing that's like not a chore either of us wants to do? It's like, can we come up with an agreement that delights us both?

Like what if the agreements could delight us both and not just be like, this is the thing we said we'd do? So that's an example of a way you can make a request. It's not just like, hey, can you do this thing for me? It's like, hey, what would make you want to do this thing? I'd really like to have this happen, are you available to it? Like what are the circumstances in which that could be really delightful for both of us? And sometimes it's not going to be delightful for both of you, but why not start there?

Okay, number three. This is so essential, if you're going to make requests, you also have to make space for the other person to say no. Obviously when we make requests, we want them to say yes, but sometimes they won't. And I think it's really important to note that it takes courage to say no.

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And if you make requests and don't have any room for no, there's no possible authentic yes.

So as much as we make requests because we want to get what we want, if you actually want to have a better relationship with anyone, creating space and I would also say safety, like emotional safety to be able to say no for them and for you as well is really essential.

And then the follow-up question is like, how can you have a wonderful relationship with them, even if this particular thing is a no-go, right? So there are plenty of things I've asked Alex for that she's not willing to do. And so it's not that we're not allowed to have deal breakers, because you certainly are allowed to have deal breakers. And I even recommend you do.

Knowing what makes the relationship a yes or a no overall for you is really important. But I also think if we want to normalize making a lot of requests, we also have to normalize telling the other person no and being told no. And that that is a safe and okay thing for us to do, otherwise there's no freedom and no honesty in the relationship if the answer to every request has to be a yes.

Okay, then what? Number four, ask them what they want from you. Yes, I just spent one and two telling you to use your words and to make requests. And so I can already hear people being like, wait, why are we letting them off the hook from doing that? But that's not actually what I'm proposing. What I'm proposing is that you kind of begin to create the space to hear from them because that will help you have better relationships.

Now, some people, when you employ these five things, they will mirror them. And then they're going to start using their words, making requests, making space for your no, asking you what you want from them and doing number five, which we'll get to in a minute. But some people won't. But what I love about this skill set, the coaching skill set is you can have a better experience whether other people change or not.

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And then when you develop these skills and use them in your relationships, you can also see like, are other people willing to go with you to this level of connection? And if they are, amazing. And if they're not, then you just get to decide what you want to do next. Do you want to continue to invest in the relationship? How much do you want to continue to invest in it? Or is it actually not a good fit for you after all?

But if you do want to have a better relationship with someone, use your words, make requests, make space for their no, and yes, number four, ask them what they want from you. And then you can decide if it's something you want to give. Just because you ask them what they want from you, doesn't mean you have to give it. If it's a no, it's a no.

And again, saying no doesn't mean a relationship is over. It doesn't mean the relationship is ruined. It actually brings a deeper connection between you and the other person when you can authentically tell them no, because then you can be in that relationship without over giving and then resenting them.

And again, these are simple things and that doesn't mean they're easy. A lot of these are going to be difficult to implement, especially if you've never practiced them.

Okay, number five. Be curious with them. Even if you've known this person for decades, you might be surprised what's going on with them sometimes. And I really believe that curiosity creates connection, and that connection creates better relationships. So if you want to have better relationships with people, seek to understand and seek to be curious and to know more.

So if they say something and you're upset about it, you can be upset about it, but you could also say like, hey, can you tell me a little bit more of what you meant by that? I want to understand what you're saying. And you can even say, hmm, I got some big feelings coming up for me when you said that and I would like to share them with you. But before I do, can you just

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clarify what you meant, because I realized it's possible that the big feelings I have aren't about the thing as the way you really mean it, right?

Like if someone said something – This happens to Alex and I actually all the time where she'll say something and I will get this big rush of emotion because I think I know what she's saying. But if I can hold onto the curiosity and first be like, what do you mean by that? Often what she means by it is not what I interpreted it as.

And so then I'm like, oh, well I got all these big feelings, but they're actually, like I'm still going to be with them and process through them and move on. But they're not actually relevant to what she meant. It's like they were relevant to my brain's interpretation of what she meant.

And I think this is actually such a good point because even when we're in a relationship with someone for a really long time, we all bring our own interpretations and we all bring our own wounds. And something I say to Alex all the time is like my brain, for whatever reason, my particular brain tends to interpret things in a way that will hurt my own feelings the most. This is not great, as you might imagine. It's not super fun to have a brain that interprets things in the way that will hurt your own feelings the most, but it's what I know my brain does. So then I can watch out for that. And I can be curious with other people and I can see like, oh, my feelings are super hurt because my brain is interpreting it this way. How did they actually mean it?

Did they actually mean it in that way? And sometimes they did, and then you can work through that with the tools that I've mentioned. And sometimes they didn't. And then you're like, wow, they said that and my brain thought it meant this. And that's such an interesting assumption my brain made. I wonder why my brain's doing that. I wonder if I can wiggle that assumption.

Like over years of being aware that my brain will interpret things in the way that hurt my own feeling the most, that's actually given me a lot of space to

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be able to be like, ah, I see my feelings would like to be hurt in this moment, maybe I can gather some more information. Maybe I can see what's really going on here before I go down that path of having those hurt feelings.

Okay, there you have it. These are five things that if you start doing them immediately, you will have better relationships. And also I think it's really important to know that if these feel difficult to implement, that's okay. You can start really small and you can also do this with support. This is exactly the kind of thing we can work on in one-on-one coaching. We can take a relationship in your life, we can begin practicing and implementing these skills.

And then I'll be there every step of the way with you to troubleshoot anything that comes up and to stair step up into the skills. We'll start with something small and then we'll gain traction. And even though they might feel scary and not for the faint of heart, we can tackle them in ways that are really fun.

And even though doing these things might feel scary, it might feel like, ooh, not for the faint of heart, I want you to know that there are very doable, fun ways that we can add these to your life and it can feel really good. And it doesn't have to feel terrible or overwhelming. And we'll do lots of celebrating along the way because what we celebrate, we do more of.

So if you'd like more information about working together, you can go to korilinn.com and sign up for a consult call with me. And consult calls are totally free and we'll have a conversation about what's going on with you and what it would look like to work together. And it'll be a really fun time and you'll get lots out of that call. And then if it seems like a good fit, you can come be my client.

All right, that's what I have for y'all today. Have a lovely Wednesday, I will see you next time.

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Thank you for joining me for this week's episode of *Satisfied AF*. If you are ready to create a wildly delicious life and have way more fun than you ever thought possible, visit www.korilinn.com to see how I can help. See you next week.