

A Problem Shared...

Do you have a problem similar to someone in soap? Maybe we can help!

Q My husband Martin and I married very young and I feel like my life is passing me by. He is happy for us to live at home with his mum and would ideally like me to be a housewife. I value my career and that frustrates Martin. We have drifted further and further apart over the last few months and I am not sure if I still love him. I have considered leaving on more than one occasion and am even beginning to question my sexuality. I feel like everything is such a mess.

Sonia, Walford

A We spoke to Mo Kurimbokus at Relate, and he had this advice: "It seems that Sonia is very unhappy with the set-up in her marriage. She values her career

Communication

- Communication breakdown is one of the main reasons that couples seek counselling.
- Set aside time to talk when you won't be interrupted.
- Make sure both of you have the freedom to talk openly – set a timer so you each have five minutes.
- Tell your partner how you are feeling about something, without placing the blame on them – that way you own your feelings.



Unhappy with Martin, Sonia sought comfort from best mate Naomi

and it is the one thing giving her self-worth.

Perhaps Martin gets frustrated when she works because he would rather she spent the time with him?

"They married young, so both need to think about what they'd like to be doing that they're missing out on. Sonia should talk to Martin about how she's feeling and what she wants.



Martin's jealousy of Sonia's career and friendship with Naomi has caused a rift

EASTENDERS



ONLY IN all about Soap

Is my marriage a sham?

"Turning to other sources of comfort, such as friends or work, is likely to cloud the issues that are affecting Sonia's feelings about Martin.

"The best relationships are those where couples feel able to talk to each other openly and freely about their thoughts,

feelings and needs. This has the added bonus of making the relationship closer. So create the space and some time for this.

"Sonia must address the important issues with Martin – such as living with his mum and her hopes for the future. When communication isn't working,



There are happy times, but they are few and far between...

HOLLYOAKS

Why doesn't my wife want our baby?

Q My wife, Becca, and I have been trying for a baby, but recently she has been distant and off sex. I've asked her what the problem is and she's assured me it's nothing. But I've since found a pill packet and know she is still using contraception. I'm so confused because she suggested having a baby, and I thought it was what we both wanted. I'm really angry – what should I do?

Jake, Hollyoaks

A Mo Kurimbokus also had this advice: "For Jake to feel angry and confused at being misled is understandable, but Becca may also be confused too.

"Jake says Becca has been distant and off sex for a while now, and this suggests she may not be happy about something or feels her needs are not being met. Sex is often a casualty when this happens.

"The two of them need a heart-to-heart. Jake should express disappointment over Becca still being on the pill and ask her what she feels is missing from the relationship. Listen to each other, try to understand the other's point of view – and be supportive.

"Remember, if he is asking Becca to be open and honest about how she feels, Jake must be prepared to listen and accept what his wife has to say him." ●



Just what is Becca keeping from unhappy Jake?

Get help

- If you need any advice on relationships, then visit Relate's website at www.relate.org.uk Or give them a call Mon-Fri 9am-5pm 0845 456 1310

couples can feel unloved. If she focuses on communication, their problems will become clearer and hopefully easier to deal with." ●

Get help

These organisations may be able to provide help and advice for your relationship situation:

- British Association for Sexual and Relationship Therapy www.basrt.org.uk
- If you are confused about your sexuality, you can contact: The London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard 020 7837 7324 www.llgs.org.uk



MORE ADVICE? If you need help on any of the following subjects, just call...

relate
the relationship people

HOW DO I COPE WITH A NEW BABY?
0906 166 9844

ARE ME AND MY PARTNER COMPATIBLE?
0906 166 9845

I'M TOO BUSY FOR SEX – WHAT CAN I DO?
0906 166 9846

COPING WITH LIFE AFTER DIVORCE AND SEPARATION
0906 166 9847

Calls cost 60p per minute from BT landlines and should last no longer than seven minutes