

## Long Distance Relationships: Tips For Making Them Work

---

Does long distance relationships can be successful? The answer is yes, but long distance relationships are complex and for it to work, both partners must be on same page.

As a couples therapist, I'm often asked if long distance relationships can be successful. The answer is yes, but long distance relationships are complex and for it to work, both partners must be on same page.

### Here are some tips for making it work

- Ask the important questions at the onset, to make sure you are both clear on the parameters of the relationship. These can be difficult and awkward questions to ask, but will save you great heartache and misunderstanding down the line. For example, are you open to the possibility of relocating if the relationship should become more serious?



- Communicate in some way every day - more than once if possible. Since you won't be seeing each other, it's important to establish and maintain an emotional connection. These don't have to be long, in-depth conversations (though those should occur sometimes). Tell each other about your little triumphs and tragedies. Ask for advice. Use an instant messenger program or VoIP for real-time chat, or webcams for that visual connection. E-mail is great so make sure you use it, especially if long-distance phone calls put a strain on your budget. Write love letters. Send small gifts or flowers for no reason. In this case, quantity is as important as quality. You may discover an advantage over others whose partner is close at hand - you don't take communication for granted!

- Recognize, and take advantage of, the benefits that long distance relationships offer such as more time with friends and/or family, no arguments over toothpaste caps, the pleasure of seeing your sweetheart again after a long absence. Most important, being far apart gives you a chance to maintain your individuality - something that can get lost in the shuffle when couples spend all their free time together.

- Pursue common interests, even if it means pursuing them apart. If there's a movie you're both interested in seeing, watch it individually and then call each other afterward and discuss it. Read a certain book at the same time. Stargaze while on you're on the phone. Set your watches to go off at the same time every day, and synchronize your alarm with that of your partner. Make it a point to think of each other when your watch goes off, and revel in the fact that he or she is thinking about you, too. Find creative ways to bond.

- Avoid the temptation to be controlling. People have free will and no one can or should control another person. As long as you are both interested in being in the relationship, you will stick with it and distance will not make a difference. As soon as one of you decides the other is not a good match - or someone else is a better match - your relationship ends, whether you live 3000 miles apart, two streets over, or share the same bed with your wedding picture on the wall. Most relationship advice boils down to common sense; needless to say you are going to have to trust each other completely if this relationship is going to work.

- Talk about your future together. Assuming that ultimately you'd want to live together, discussing how you're going to get to that point will help you prove to each other that long distance relationships can go somewhere and that your efforts and frustrations are not in vain.

- Perhaps the toughest aspect of long distance relationships is this: Know when to say good-bye. While this is tough in any relationship, this can be especially hard over long distances. When communication becomes one-sided or sparse for too long and for no apparent reason, when arguments (yes, you'll have them) become too frequent, when the whole thing just seems like more trouble than it's worth, it's time to re-evaluate the relationship. Either you'll decide to go your separate ways, or you'll get closer for having overcome another obstacle to your happiness together.

## **About The Author**

*Emily Kensington is a couples therapist. For free relationship advice and romance tips visit <http://www.hearts-and-kisses.com>*

---

Author: Emily Kensington

Article downloaded from page [eioba.com](http://www.eioba.com)