19 Relationships

A Difficult relationships

When I married Vince, he already had two children from his first marriage, and they **took an instant dislike to** me. They **blamed** me for all their problems. I tried hard to get their **respect**, but they wouldn't **forgive** me for taking the place of their mother. They either **stared at** me without saying a thing, or were openly **aggressive**. It was a **tough** time, and it was **inevitable** that it finally **put a strain on** my relationship with Vince. I began to **regret** my decision to marry him. Fortunately, he **stuck up for me** when the kids were difficult, and over time, things **settled down** a bit.

SPOTLIGHT meanings of *tough*

Tough can mean:

1 difficult: *He had a **tough** childhood.* (as in the text)
2 strong and able to deal with difficult situations: *She'll be OK – she's **tough**.*
3 strict: *There are some **tough** new driving laws.*

GLOSSARY

take an instant/immediate dislike to sb	dislike sb as soon as you meet them	**aggressive**	angry and ready to attack sb
blame sb (for sth)	think or say that sb is responsible for sth bad	**inevitable**	that you cannot avoid or prevent **inevitably** *adv*
respect	polite behaviour towards sb/sth that you think is important	**put a strain on sb/sth**	create pressure and anxiety for sb/sth
forgive sb (for sth/for doing sth)	stop feeling angry towards sb for sth that they have done wrong	**regret (sth / doing sth)**	feel sorry about sth you have done
stare (at sb/sth)	look at sb/sth for a long time	**stick up for sb/yourself**	support and defend sb/yourself when they/you are criticized
		settle down	become calmer, more relaxed and less excited

1 Positive or negative? Write *P* or *N*.

1 The protests are putting a strain on the country. .....
2 I think he's forgiven me. .....
3 He's very aggressive. .....
4 She can stick up for herself. .....
5 She blames me for what happened. .....
6 Things are tough at work now. .....
7 Being poor has made him tough. .....
8 I really regret contacting him. .....
9 Things have settled down since the strike. .....
10 The war was inevitable. .....

2 Complete the sentences.

1 I don't _____ leaving the job: it was the right decision.
2 As soon as I met him, I took an immediate _____ to him.
3 The food was my responsibility, so I don't _____ anyone else for the mistake in the order.
4 The lack of money put a terrible _____ on our relationship.
5 Some children do what they like and have no _____ for authority.
6 Please don't _____ at those people; it's rude.
7 My brother accepted that he caused the accident, but I _____ him; he's my brother.
8 Mum accused me of lying, but my sister _____ up for me and said I was telling the truth.

3 One word is missing in each line. Where does it go? Write it at the end of the line.

I've been having a time at work recently. A young man joined the 1 _____
department and for some reason an instant dislike to me. His desk was close to mine, 2 _____
and he just sat and at me without speaking, which made me feel uncomfortable. 3 _____
Over time, he started to shout at me and became more and more until I felt 4 _____
quite nervous being near him. It put a big on me and my work began to suffer. 5 _____
One day, I decided it was time to stick for myself, so I told him his behaviour was 6 _____
terrible. I was shocked when he suddenly started crying and, of course, I what I 7 _____
had said to him. He thought that I him for the poor results in the department, when 8 _____
in fact, that wasn't the case. Eventually, things down, and we got on much better. 9 _____

TEST YOURSELF

LIVEWORKSHEETS

B Successful relationships

Now two years on, things are **looking up**. **Initially** the kids were really **nasty** to me and **reluctant** to **accept** me, but I gave up work to spend more time with them, and that helped to create a closer **bond**. I realized that I had been too **strict** with them and not **caring** enough; I just wasn't **sensitive to** their needs. To be honest, it was my own **fault** – I'm the adult and should have known better. It takes a lot of **patience**, but I'm feeling optimistic and I really enjoy being with them now.

GLOSSARY

look up *inf*	(of sb's situation or business) start to become better after a difficult period
initially	in the beginning **initial** *adj*
nasty	unkind; unpleasant SYN **mean**
reluctant (to do sth)	not wanting to do sth SYN **unwilling**; **reluctance** *n*
bond	a connection between people based on shared feelings or experiences
strict	If you are **strict**, you make people do what you want and do not allow them to behave badly.
caring	kind and showing that you care about people
sensitive (to sth)	understanding other people's feelings and being careful about them
fault	If sth bad is your **fault**, you made it happen.
patience	the ability to stay calm and not get angry when waiting for sth **patient** *adj*

SPOTLIGHT *accept*

Accept means 'say yes to an offer', but has some other meanings, too.

1 allow sb to be part of a group:
*They **accepted me** as one of the family.* (as in the text)

2 agree to sth:
*The council has **accepted** the latest proposal.*

3 admit you did sth wrong:
*I **accept responsibility for** the mistakes.*

4 Is the pronunciation of the underlined letters the same or different? Write *S* or *D*. Use the APP to help you.

1 initially reluctant .....
2 patience initial .....
3 strict accept .....
4 fault bond .....
5 look caring .....
6 sensitive reluctance .....

5 Circle the correct word.

1 She showed a ***reluctance / unwilling*** to speak about the event.
2 The ***initial / initially*** problem was money.
3 He's ***sensible / sensitive*** to the feelings of others.
4 She's a ***caring / patience*** nurse.
5 The mistake wasn't my ***bond / fault***.
6 It can be a good thing if parents are ***nasty / strict***.
7 My business is finally ***accepting / looking up***.

6 Replace the underlined word(s) with a word or phrase that keeps the same meaning.

1 It's not my responsibility if we're late. .....
2 They were very unwilling to leave. .....
3 She expects people to obey her all the time. .....
4 In the beginning it was a difficult relationship. .....
5 He admits responsibility for what happened. .....
6 I have no ability to wait for things for a long time. .....
7 It was strange moving to a different country, but I now feel welcome. .....
8 I had a tough time last year but things are improving now. .....
9 The children said some very unpleasant things about me. .....
10 There is a special connection between parents and their children. .....

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