

# 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

<b>take an instant/immediate dislike to sb</b>	dislike sb as soon as you meet them	<b>aggressive</b>	angry and ready to attack sb
<b>blame sb (for sth)</b>	think or say that sb is responsible for sth bad	<b>inevitable</b>	that you cannot avoid or prevent <b>inevitably</b> <i>adv</i>
<b>respect</b>	polite behaviour towards sb/sth that you think is important	<b>put a strain on sb/sth</b>	create pressure and anxiety for sb/sth
<b>forgive sb (for sth/for doing sth)</b>	stop feeling angry towards sb for sth that they have done wrong	<b>regret (sth / doing sth)</b>	feel sorry about sth you have done
<b>stare (at sb/sth)</b>	look at sb/sth for a long time	<b>stick up for sb/yourself</b>	support and defend sb/yourself when they/you are criticized
		<b>settle down</b>	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 ..... department and for some reason an instant dislike to me. His desk was close to mine, ..... and he just sat and at me without speaking, which made me feel uncomfortable. Over time, he started to shout at me and became more and more until I felt ..... quite nervous being near him. It put a big on me and my work began to suffer. One day, I decided it was time to stick for myself, so I told him his behaviour was ..... terrible. I was shocked when he suddenly started crying and, of course, I what I had said to him. He thought that I him for the poor results in the department, when in fact, that wasn't the case. Eventually, things down, and we got on much better.

- 1 .....
- 2 .....
- 3 .....
- 4 .....
- 5 .....
- 6 .....
- 7 .....
- 8 .....
- 9 .....



### TEST YOURSELF

## 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

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

### SPOTLIGHT *accept*

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

- allow sb to be part of a group:  
*They accepted me as one of the family.* (as in the text)
- agree to sth:  
*The council has accepted the latest proposal.*
- 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  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. ....



### TEST YOURSELF