

3A COMMUNICATIVE Reconciliation?

Student A

You're Nicole and you went out with Steve for two years. About six months ago you mutually agreed to split up, but you have kept in touch. Recently, you've discussed the possibility of getting back together again. You've agreed to meet to talk through the reasons why you split up, and to see whether solutions can be found to make a reconciliation possible.

1 His appearance

When you first started going out, Steve always looked fantastic. Over the two years you were together, you felt he'd started to let himself go, e.g., he stopped going to the gym with you, gained a lot of weight, and started to wear any old thing—this wasn't the man you first fell in love with!

2 Helping in the house

You know that your way of doing things is the best way. It used to drive you crazy when Steve did things his way (the wrong way), e.g., when he was preparing a meal or doing the dishes. So, when you saw him doing things incorrectly, you'd try and put him right. Steve used to get very annoyed by this, but you can't see why. It's your area of expertise, after all.

3 Your friend Max

One of the main reasons why you split up was because Steve was jealous of your friendship with Max—your ex-partner. Although you get along really well with Max and he's one of your closest friends, you certainly don't have any romantic feelings for him any more. You meet Max about once a month for coffee, or to go to the movies (you and Max have the same taste in movies, unlike you and Steve).

4 The spoiled child

Steve has a nine-year-old daughter (Nina) from his previous marriage. He has Nina for a weekend every other weekend. You think she is immensely spoiled, manipulative, and badly behaved. Initially, you spent time as a threesome, but you felt this wasn't working so you used to go away with friends for the weekends when Steve had Nina.

Talk to Steve about these problems and try to find a way forward. Remember you want to get back together with him, so try to keep calm and don't lose your temper!

Student B

You're Steve and you went out with Nicole for two years. About six months ago you mutually agreed to split up, but you have kept in touch. Recently, you've discussed the possibility of getting back together again. You've agreed to meet to talk through the reasons why you split up, and to see whether solutions can be found to make a reconciliation possible.

1 Appearance

You think that when you're in a relationship, you need to be able to be yourself, and that includes your appearance, but Nicole was always going on about the clothes you wore and the fact that you weren't in such good shape as you used to be. Nicole still looks great, but you think she was rather obsessed with the gym, and that she spent a fortune on clothes.

2 Unwanted advice

You've managed to survive perfectly well all these years cooking and cleaning in your own way. One of the reasons you broke up with Nicole was because she was always telling you a "better" way of doing things (in other words, her way) when you hadn't asked her for advice, and it used to really get on your nerves.

3 Her ex

Nicole's ex-partner is called Max. They often go out to the movies, talk on the phone, and have coffee together. You don't understand why she still needs him in her life. You're not jealous of Max, it's just that you don't like him and you really don't think it's healthy for Nicole to stay in touch with him.

4 Your daughter

You have a nine-year-old daughter (Nina) from your previous marriage who you have every other weekend. Nina can be a bit difficult at times, and you know that you do tend to spoil her and need to be stricter—but that's only because you see her so little. You're aware that Nicole didn't get along with Nina, but you don't think she is very good with children and she didn't really give Nina a chance. She just started going off with friends when Nina was around. It is really important for you that Nina and Nicole get along.

Talk to Nicole about these problems and try to find a way forward. Remember you want to get back together with her, so try to keep calm and don't lose your temper!