

# Essay on Relationships in 50 First Dates

Interpersonal relationships basically refer to the connection and/or linkage between two or more people who interact in a given context (Dwyer, 2009). This may be the workplace, the school, the church, at home, etc. Sometimes these relationships exist between individuals that some people encounter in their daily lives either often or rarely. Notably, for a relationship to exist and hold, always, there must be effective communication taking place or going on between the parties. Communication is a tool that can be used to either built or destroy interpersonal relationships (Cushman, 2011). This brings in the complexity of interpersonal relationship theory. The film industry is one area that has persistently embraced the spirit of interpersonal relationships by depicting the theory in some of the different forms of artistic work produced in form of movies, drama etc. For instance, the movie '50 First Dates' Starring Adam Sandler as Henry Roth and Drew Barrymore as Lucy Whitmore is plotted on an interpersonal relationships ground between the two. As such, this paper will analyze how well the movie's portrayal of interpersonal relationships interpersonal communication research. To arrive at the

## Part A

50 First Dates illustrates interpersonal relationships in many instances. The movies starts with two individuals who barely know each other, when they meet, they have a strong craving for one another. Henry, to be specific is interested in Lucy and during their first meeting; they make arrangements to meet during the following day. This is despite the fact that the two have never known each other before. Notably, when the two meet next, Lucy already does not even recognize having met Henry at all. This is because earlier on she suffered head damage due to an accident. The relationship between the two is so far is compromise by the fact that Lucy cannot recall anything as she forgets everything as she sleeps. This started from the day she was involved in accident. This creates a foundation upon which the different relational stages of initiating, test-trying and intensification of the junctures in which Lucy and Henry are stuck. The relationship between the two is built upon the belief that Henry thinks that he deserves Lucy, who seems to keep on forgetting him. It is therefore important to note that the film indeed illustrates interpersonal relationships between the (main) characters (Helder, 2010).

## Part B

The main characters Henry and Lucy meet one day, hit it off, and agree to meet and see each other the following day. However, this is not actually the case as at their next encounter, Lucy seems to have totally forgotten to have met anybody like Henry. She particularly does not have any memory of having met him. This is because some years back, she suffered injuries on her head due to an accident. This makes her forget everything soon as she sleeps. Notably, this has been the trend since the accident and not necessarily because she has met Henry. Given that Henry is indeed interested in Lucy, he uses different techniques, initiatives and approaches all in a bid to woo Lucy. Each day, it can be seen that some of the techniques seem to be working much better compared to others. After so many first dates, Henry discovers that he does not want to be 'just friends' with Lucy. He thinks that he needs a relational commitment towards Lucy. He believes that there is that particular way through which they can integrate their relationship and bond their feelings (Beebe, Beebe, & Redmond, 2011). Thus, Henry develops a more creative method through which he believes he will finally woo Lucy. Each day the families of both sides discover that they cannot keep her in hiding. Thus, they develop a mechanism through which they leave her video tapes explaining her condition and her relationship with Roth. The story starts from a simple friendship ordeal to a more committed relationship between the two characters (Dwyer, 2009). This is specifically described through the different stages that the two have to go through just to ensure that their friendship status is integrated and embedded in the bondage that exists between them. Specifically, after some time, Lucy finally accepts Henry's hand in marriage. However, things do not go as planned as one day she overhears Henry talking about he has canceled plans to go to the Arctic on a research mission just to be with her (This is something he has been planning for ten years). This however, takes another twists are the two

are separated though they meet once afterwards in the hospital where Lucy has enrolled on a specialist unit, Lucy once more, seems to have forgotten Henry though she has a slight memory of her.

After some years, she wakes up in the morning with a video by the bed side which explains everything that transpired from the day of the accident to how they fall in love with Henry and even wedded. She looks out, realizes she is on a boat in the Arctic. She opens the door and she's greeted by Henry, her father and her young daughter. Her dream has finally come true. Though at first it seems quite impossible, communication plays a major role in bringing the two characters to one standpoint where they are united by the relational commitment towards one another (Helder, 2010). As it has been noted, communication can always either build or destroy a relationship. However, through the development of the plot, the story takes a twist when various methods of wooing and maintaining a close relationship by Henry are developed and applied.

## **Part C**

Through interpersonal relationship theory, it can be stated that when individuals or both parties have consistent personal growth, then a relationship can be made even more and more strong and be sustained for a long time. In this case, it can be seen that sometimes, but not all the times, relationships between individuals can be 'stuck in-between ruts'. After a long period of dates, Henry thinks that it is time to move the friendship to a whole new level which is the relationship level (Dwyer, 2009). However, before, he can do this, there are few things he needs to put in mind. He needs to understand that Lucy, her perceived lover, forgets everything she saw, anybody she met, and everything she heard during the day anytime she sleeps. He has to come up with a way through which he can woo Lucy into being relationally committed towards him. This is especially when all the other ways he tries everyday seemed not to achieve his desired outcome. It should be noted that Henry Roth was a man who is afraid of commitment, but when he meets Lucy, he feels that he has found the lover of his heart.

## **Part D**

Though Henry seems to be a man afraid of commitment, he believes that he has met the lady of her choice. His misconception is that Lucy is just like any other lady. On the other hand, Lucy thinks she's normal when she basically, is not. The two characters, at first, live a world that is different from one another. This is especially when Lucy seems not to remember Henry at all at their second meeting. After days of deliberate effort to try and woo Lucy, Henry thinks that its time he develops a more comprehensive approach to try and woo Lucy. Lucy on the other hand, has a hard time trying to remember Henry any of what transpires during the day. This implies the film portrays interpersonal relationships as what individuals think of one another and what they do to try and strengthen their relationship (Beebe, Beebe, & Redmond, 2011). Moreover, the film depicts interpersonal relationships as based on the 'mutually-symbiotic' connection that exists between characters. Naturally, a relationship between parties is not necessarily supposed to be symbiotic. This is because not all individuals are the same. In essence, it should be noted that the film's characters Henry and Lucy are two diverse individual with different orientation to the way of life especially given that Lucy suffers persistent memory loss whenever she sleeps. More significantly, interpersonal relationships are made stronger when there is effective communication between the parties (Cushman, 2011). As such, they are not only built upon what transpires between parties, but also upon the feelings each party has towards one another.

## **Part E**

Basically, at the start of the film, one can easily predict that the relationship won't last any long. This is especially when, during the next meeting, Lucy seems to have totally forgotten meeting Henry. It is easily predictable that Henry won't be able to woo Lucy into having a relational commitment with him. What might have happened in future is that Lucy would still have lost any, if at all, any memory as it regards his relationship with Henry. Henry on the other hand, would have despaired, given up and decided not to love Lucy any longer given that she barely remembers him, every time they meet. Moreover, more is expected from the families of

both sides in terms of advising their corresponding parties on what is good for them given their nature and the other party's nature. However, it should be noted that basically, this is not the case, as after frantic efforts by Henry and Lucy's family, they finally are able to bring her back to senses, she realizes herself and thinks her dream is fulfilled when she reconciles with Henry. This is totally unpredictable from the start of the movie. This is especially when Lucy overhears Henry talking to his father Marlin (Blake Clarke) about canceling plans to go the Arctic on research missions. Her reaction is giving up Henry and enrolling on a specialist program in the hospital. This seems to be the 'end of everything' between Lucy and Henry. At this stage, one can easily predict that the relationship won't be a success no more. However, after several years, Lucy reunites with Henry on his boat accompanied with his father Marlin and young daughter. This is basically the opposite of what was deemed to happen.

## **Part F**

As it has been noted above, effective communication is a tool that sustains a relationship. Communication can either destroy or built a relationship. Communication behavior between parties should always be used as a tool to strengthen a relationship. In order to come up with the strongest relationship between parties, communication should be a 'two-way traffic'. Each party should always be ready to listen (Cushman, 2011). None of them should be superior. This is especially when a party feels minor in comparison to the other. For instance, Lucy should not be intimidated by Henry for being forgetful or losing her memory. Neither should he take advantage of the situation to humiliate her or misuse her. Further, communication should always be subject to the acceptance of the other party. Normally, good interpersonal relationships are built upon the decree of freedom of speech and hence, each character should embrace this aspect (Cushman, 2011).

Another significant aspect about communication is that it should always be timely, to the point and not intruding the other party's way of life. In order to communicate effectively, parties should choose the appropriate venue, the channel and method of communication. This ensures that parties are comfortable with each other. It creates a free atmosphere through which individuals feel free to air their views and suggestions (Cushman, 2011). Moreover, communication between parties should be kept consistent and in a regular manner. As such, there should be constant contact between the parties to increase the link and connection between the two (Helder, 2010). This said and done, interpersonal relationships are strengthened and parties enjoy more of a sustained relationship.

## **Work Cited**

Beebe, S. A., Beebe, S. J., & Redmond, M., (2011). *Interpersonal Relationships: Relating to Others* (6TH Edition) Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Cushman, D. P., (2011). *Communication in Interpersonal Relationships*. London: SUNY Press.

Dwyer, D., (2009). *Interpersonal Relationships: Routledge Modular Psychology*. New York: Psychology Press.

Helder, F., (2010). *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships*. New York: Psychology Press.