



Our Lips are Sealed

Coupled up Brits don't turn to anyone for relationship help, research by new app Paired reveals.

AUGUST 2020 – As a nation we may love talking about the ins and outs of celebrity relationships, but when it comes to our own, who do we turn to? New research, published today, to mark the launch of [Paired](#) – an app for couples – reveals the truth. Over six in ten (62%) UK adults who are currently in a relationship admit they do not speak to anyone for relationship advice. This includes their friends, family or even turning to the internet for advice; showing a worrying trend of 'suffering in silence' or not addressing issues when they are still small. The figures also confirm the stereotype that men struggle to talk about relationship matters, with a staggering 70% not turning to anyone for advice, not even Google.

The generational divide between those who open up about their relationship and those who don't is clear. A startling 8 in 10 (80%) of those over 55 wouldn't go to anyone for relationship advice, compared with two-thirds (66%) of those between 45-54 and only 3 in 10 (27%) of 18-24 year-olds.

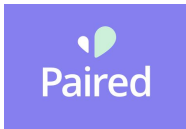
It seems there is still a stigma around opening up about relationship issues, big or small. The research revealed that Brits in a relationship will often turn to professional help for health or mental health issues. However, a mere 1% would seek relationship therapy or counselling for problems within their coupling and only 5% would seek professional help for problems with their sex life. The survey showed little fluctuation in this figure in relation to earnings and social class, suggesting that money is not the main barrier for Brits not turning to professional help within their relationships.

Commissioned to discover how couples in the UK communicate and who or where they turn to when relationship issues crop up, the survey also explored which topics we are least comfortable discussing within our relationships.

One in five (20%) Brits in a relationship find that sex is the most difficult topic to discuss with their partner, coming in higher than money & finance (11%), mental health (9%) and family and in-laws (7%). Interestingly, 18-24 year olds found talking about their personal beliefs, including religion and politics, just as difficult as talking about sex (both 13%) – the only age group to attach such importance to beliefs.

Professor Jacqui Gabb, Professor of Sociology and Intimacy at the Open University and Chief Relationship Officer at Paired, says *'Communication is absolutely key when it comes to successful relationships. I have studied long-term couple relationships for years and I cannot stress enough how important it is to simply talk, to discuss feelings and not to brush issues under the carpet and let them fester – that is how small problems become huge points of contention. Couples' relationships are just like any other relationship, you have to put the time, energy and effort into them otherwise they simply won't survive; Paired offers up a wonderful, easy way to do this without even having to leave your sofa.'*

The YouGov survey was commissioned by the Open University and Paired, a new app for couples which aims to open-up communication between partners and help them learn more about each other and their relationship. The app combines fun daily questions and quizzes users can do with their partner with courses from a team of clinical psychotherapists and academics – the first relationship app to do so.



CEO and co-founder of Paired, Kevin Shanahan, said *'Nowadays we turn to digital solutions for everything from fitness to mindfulness, and yet there is very little to make our couple relationship happier and healthier. Paired isn't trying to take the place of a therapist or counsellor, but instead works as a communication and self-learning tool that couples can use to have fun and really connect. It's been fascinating to explore the British public's attitude towards seeking relationship advice and how couples talk to each other.'*

As apps become an ever more essential part of our everyday lives (28% of Brits in a relationship reported using an app for fitness, for example), the research showed that whilst only 1% of couples in the UK would seek professional help for relationship problems, interestingly 30% of couples said they would consider using an app to help their relationship. Those in same sex relationships would be more likely (51%) than those in heterosexual relationships (30%) to use an app to help with their relationship.

Paired draws upon the expert advice of leading clinical psychotherapists and academics who have designed and voiced a number of courses across a range of subjects including Sex and Intimacy, Managing Conflict and Parenting as Partners, offering users the chance to access relationship insights and tools from the comfort of their own home. Couples can make use of the app's research-based Daily Questions feature, answering questions designed to strengthen their relationship and encourage open dialogue between partners, with expert tips and conversation starters to help couples compare and discuss their answers.

To mark the launch, Paired is also offering a free course to help couples manage their relationship during the current COVID-19 pandemic. The course covers topics such as: how to manage the effects of home-based working on your relationship, co-parenting while your kids are at home, and managing your mental and physical health together at a time of social distancing.

Paired is now available and is free to download from the [Apple App Store](#) and [Google Play Store](#), with a monthly or annual subscription required to access the full range of courses. The annual subscription comes with a 7 day free trial.

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All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2,011 adults with 1,348 of those in a relationship. Fieldwork was undertaken between 29th - 30th July 2020. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).

About Paired

Paired is a brand-new app for couples launching on 28th September 2020. Its mission is to make relationships happier and healthier in just ten minutes a day, combining courses from clinical psychotherapists and academics with fun daily questions and quizzes to answer with your partner, working to improve communication and deepen intimacy. Paired was founded in 2019 by Kevin Shanahan and Diego López, who previously worked at leading language learning app Memrise. Dr Jacqui Gabb, Professor of Sociology and Intimacy at the Open University, is the Chief Relationship



Officer at Paired. The app is free to download with a subscription to unlock the courses that is priced at £49.99 / year or \$59.99 / year, which includes two seats - one for each partner.

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