Abstract

THESIS: "I Don’t Wanna Talk About It”: Reintroducing Taboo Topics in Romantic Dating Relationships

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The purpose of the current study is to understand the reintroduction of taboo topics between romantic dating partners. Through a qualitative methodological approach, the current study discovers the most prominent taboo topic between romantic partners, why romantic partners reintroduce taboo topics, and what effect the reintroduction has on the relationship. The findings present that “previous relationships” is the most prominent taboo topic. Partners either avoid the taboo topic discussion altogether or the taboo topic discussion is reintroduced because a situation occurred in which one partner saw, spoke with, or spent time with a previous partner. Finally, the current study found that reintroducing taboo topics causes conflict and the use of self-protective mechanisms within the relationship.

Keywords: taboo topics, topic avoidance, conflict, relational repair, relational maintenance