

Relationship Tips for Halloween

1. Identify Spooky Thought Patterns

- a. Be mindful of thoughts like "They always..." or "They never..." and work to eliminate these assumptions.
 - i. "They always leave me to deal with the trick-or-treaters" or "They never appreciate my Halloween decorations."
 - ii. **Example:** Instead of thinking "They always forget to buy candy," try: *"It seems like they've been forgetting the candy lately. I wonder if they're feeling stressed about something else."*

2. Challenge Creepy Core Beliefs

- a. Question negative thoughts and replace them with balanced perspectives.
 - i. **Example:** If you believe "They don't care about making Halloween fun for the kids," challenge that by remembering times they *have* shown enthusiasm for family activities.

3. Develop Magical Communication Skills

- a. Use active listening, "I" statements, and take breaks during heated discussions.
 - i. **Example:** Instead of yelling "You never help with the costumes!", try *"I feel overwhelmed trying to get all the costumes ready by myself. Could you please help me with the costumes?"*

4. Tame Emotional Terrors

- a. Learn to regulate emotions during disagreements to prevent escalation.
 - i. **Example:** If you feel your anger rising during a debate about Halloween party plans, take a few deep breaths and say, *"I need a few minutes to calm down before we continue this conversation."*

5. Set Realistic Expectations (Even for a Haunted House):

- a. Manage the holiday season by setting achievable expectations for your relationship.
 - i. **Example:** Instead of expecting a picture-perfect Halloween, *accept that things might get messy, plans might change, and that's okay.*