

THE 7 DAY RELATIONSHIP RESCUE



BOUNDARIES
UNMET NEEDS
VULNERABILITYS
CONFLICT SKILLS
COMMUNICATION
ACTIVE LISTENING +
MORE!



LEARN TO LOVE IN 2024

OLIVER DRAKEFORD THERAPY
LICENSED MARRIAGE & FAMILY THERAPIST #104987
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ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS



LISTENING



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ACTIVE LISTENING

Active listening is a fully engaged way of concentrating fully on what your partner is saying to you in the present moment.

It requires observing and setting aside our thoughts, feelings ideas, opinions, and beliefs to focus solely on the speaker. It involves listening to their words with an open mind, free from judgment. Active listening stems from inner calm and heightened awareness and concentration.

It's exhausting.

While it may appear straightforward, actively listening is a skill many of us struggle to apply consistently.

Often, we find ourselves distracted, thinking about what we want to add, share, teach, or comment on. It's anxiety-provoking to sit still and resist the urge to multitask, such as checking our phones, during conversations.

In my private practice, I find that most people listen to respond rather than listening to understand. This internal preparation of a response means we're no longer fully engaged with what's being communicated and in a way, we're no longer listening.

This experiential exercise aims to develop and clearly distinguish between the art of active listening and more passive listening approaches- trust me, you won't forget this exercise any time soon.



P.E.A.R.

An acronym to help you remember the four parts of active listening

- PARAPHRASING.
- EXPLANATION.
- ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.
- REFLECTING

ACTIVE LISTENING

DO

- Be fully present and attentive to the speaker. Put away distractions like your phone and give them your undivided attention.
- Use verbal and nonverbal cues to show you are listening, such as nodding, maintaining eye contact, and saying things like "I see" or "Go on".
- Paraphrase and reflect back what you heard to check your understanding. For example, "What I'm hearing is..." or "It sounds like you're saying...".
- Ask open-ended, clarifying questions to gain a deeper understanding of their perspective. For instance, "Can you tell me more about...?" or "What do you mean when you say...?".
- Validate their feelings, even if you disagree with their viewpoint. You could say something like "I can understand why you would feel that way given the situation."

DON'T

- Be fully present and attentive to the speaker. Put away distractions like your phone and give them your undivided attention.
- Use verbal and nonverbal cues to show you are listening, such as nodding, maintaining eye contact, and saying things like "I see" or "Go on".
- Paraphrase and reflect back what you heard to check your understanding. For example, "What I'm hearing is..." or "It sounds like you're saying...".
- Ask open-ended, clarifying questions to gain a deeper understanding of their perspective. For instance, "Can you tell me more about...?" or "What do you mean when you say...?".
- Validate their feelings, even if you disagree with their viewpoint. You could say something like "I can understand why you would feel that way given the situation."

ACTIVE LISTENING

Active listening is about engaging profoundly with the speaker's message and paying close attention to their words. This approach places a greater emphasis on listening rather than speaking.

The objective in active listening is to gain a true and thorough understanding of the speaker's perspective, even if it differs from your own. It's important to then communicate this understanding back to the speaker, allowing them the opportunity to validate the accuracy of your interpretation.

PARAPHRASING

REFORMULATING THE SPEAKER'S MESSAGE IN YOUR OWN WORDS

This technique checks your comprehension of the conversation, enabling you to convey your grasp of the speaker's message. It provides the speaker an opportunity to reflect on their own words, offering them clarity and the assurance that you are engaged and attempting to understand their perspective. It also motivates the speaker to continue the dialogue.

- "From what I gather..." or "It seems like you're expressing..."

EXPLANATION

BEING CURIOUS TO GET ADDITIONAL DETAILS

Asking for more aids in fostering a comprehensive understanding of the speaker's point of view also encourages open and detailed communication. By asking for elaboration, the listener demonstrates active interest and engagement, promoting a more nuanced conversation. This can uncover deeper insights and perspectives that might otherwise remain unexplored.

- "Could you provide more detail on that aspect?" or "I'd love to hear more about..."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

RECOGNIZING AND AFFIRMING THE SPEAKER'S FEELINGS AND CONTENT.

This technique serves to validate the speaker's experiences and emotions, creating a safe and empathic space for them to express themselves. It acknowledges the value of their feelings and perspectives, building trust and rapport. This acknowledgment helps the speaker feel heard and understood, which can be crucial in facilitating open and honest dialogue.

- "That sounds so tough for you" OR "I get why that's important to you"

REFLECTING:

RECOGNIZING AND AFFIRMING THE SPEAKER'S FEELINGS AND CONTENT.

This technique serves to validate the speaker's experiences and emotions, creating a safe and empathic space for them to express themselves. It acknowledges the value of their feelings and perspectives, building trust and rapport. This acknowledgment helps the speaker feel heard and understood, which can be crucial in facilitating open and honest dialogue.

- "That left you feeling really disturbed" OR "You seem to be feeling a mix of frustration and disappointment..."

ACTIVE LISTENING ACTIVITY

This exercise is particularly beneficial for clinicians and group facilitators who are keen to integrate active listening into their practice and give clients a memorable experience of what it feels like on both the giving and receiving ends. It's also something that you can do at home with your partner if you want to demonstrate what it's like to have someone *not* hear you or pay attention to you when you're talking.

ROUND ONE - INACTIVE LISTENING

In the first round, one party is the speaker, and the other is the listener, you can swap roles if you want so you each have a turn.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SPEAKER: YOU'RE THE SPEAKER IN THE FIRST ROUND OF 'INACTIVE LISTENING'. THINK OF A MOVIE, SONG, BOOK OR PLAY THAT YOU'VE SEEN RECENTLY THAT YOUR PARTNER MIGHT NOT HAVE SEEN. BE PREPARED TO TALK ABOUT THIS PASSIONATELY TO CONVINCING THEM THEY REALLY SHOULD SEE IT / HEAR IT ETC. WORK HARD TO CONVEY TO THEM HOW YOU FELT AND WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE LISTENER: YOU'RE THE LISTENER IN THE FIRST ROUND OF 'INACTIVE LISTENING'. IT IS YOUR JOB TO DO EVERYTHING YOU CAN THINK OF TO NOT LISTEN TO WHAT YOUR PARTNER IS SAYING. BE RUTHLESS IN NOT LISTENING - IT'S JUST AN ACTIVITY AND YOU CAN TALK ABOUT IT AFTER.
THINGS TO THINK ABOUT:

- WHERE DO YOU LOOK? (AWAY FROM THEM OR AT THEM?)
- HOW IS YOUR BODY POSITIONED?
- WHAT IS IN YOUR HANDS? (A PHONE? BOOK?)
- ARE YOU STILL OR RESTLESS?

PROCESS IT! Activities like this are only really going to be effective if you share what you experienced or learned from it

PROCESS YOUR REACTIONS"

- What did you notice?
- What did you feel?
- What did it remind you of?

ROUND TWO - ACTIVE LISTENING

This is the second round, both parties can take turns engaging in 'active' listening while the other party speaks.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SPEAKER: YOU'RE THE SPEAKER IN THE SECOND ROUND OF 'ACTIVE LISTENING'. THINK OF SOMETHING YOU ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT, THAT HOBBY YOU LOVE, THE SPORT YOU LOVE TO PLAY OR THE CHARITABLE CAUSE THAT MOVES YOU SO MUCH. SHARE WITH YOUR PARTNER WHAT IT IS THAT GETS YOU SO EXCITED ABOUT THIS HOBBY OR SPORT etc. CONVEY TO THEM WHY IT IS SO IMPORTANT TO YOU AND WHY YOU LOVE IT.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE LISTENER: YOU'RE THE LISTENER IN THE SECOND ROUND OF 'ACTIVE LISTENING'. IMAGINE THERE IS AN EXAM ON THE SUBJECT YOUR PARTNER IS TALKING ABOUT. OR PERHAPS PRETEND FOR A MINUTES THIS IS A GAME SHOW AND THERE'S A PRIZE.

IMAGINE THAT THIS EXAM / GAME SHOW IS GOING TO DETERMINE YOUR FINANCIAL SUCCESS FOR YEARS TO COME. IT IS **THAT** IMPORTANT!
TRY TO REMEMBER EVERYTHING THEY SAY AND FOCUS ON RETAINING AS MUCH INFORMATION AS YOU CAN.

DON'T FORGET TO PROCESS IT AFTER WITH THE SAME QUESTIONS



MORE ON ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS





USING 'I' STATEMENTS



I STATEMENTS

USING I STATEMENTS



1 WHAT IS AN 'I' STATEMENT?

When in a conflict, it can be challenging to express your situation without making things worse. An "I" statement, also known as an "assertiveness statement," can help you communicate your concerns, feelings, and needs more clearly and effectively.

An "I" statement focuses on your own emotions and experiences rather than on the other person's actions. For example, saying "I feel that I am not being included in office projects as much as others" is more effective than "You always let Marge work on office projects, but you never ask me." By expressing your experience without attacking, criticizing, or blaming, you are less likely to provoke defensiveness or hostility. This approach helps avoid escalating conflicts and encourages the other person to listen and engage in meaningful dialogue.



2 WHAT IT'S NOT:

- Not About Politeness: It's about clarity, not politeness.
- Not Focused on the Other's Response: They are not concerned with how the other person might react.
- Not for Forcing Solutions: They are not intended to compel the other person to "fix the problem."
- Free of Expectations: While they let you express how you'd like things to be, they come without expectations for immediate change.
- Not a Conflict Fixer: They aim to open up healthy conversation but won't resolve the conflict on their own.

USING I STATEMENTS

● **“I FEEL.....”**

The next word should be a feelings word right from the Feeling's Wheel.

More than two of these can make things complicated.

If the next word is 'that', you're not using an 'I' statement

● **“....WHEN...”**

Describe the action that made you have the feeling.

Try not to describe the person, or generalize them.

this can contain a 'you' but if you're careful to distinguish behaviors from descriptions, it will land well.

● **“....BECAUSE...”**

We suggest that you use some vulnerability here. This is your chance to get the other person to see what goes on for you, and to enhance connection and repair.

● **“AND I NEED....”**

Tell the person what you want or need from them in future.



USING I STATEMENTS

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

The best way to get 'I' Statements into your vocabulary is to practice!
You'll see some 'You' statements below that are translated to 'I' statements beneath them.
The final three boxes are for you to practice and Fill in your responses.

YOU STATEMENT

YOU ARE ALWAYS ON YOUR CELL PHONE PLAYING CANDY CRUSH! YOU CARE MORE ABOUT YOUR TIKTOK THAN THE PERSON IN FRONT OF YOU.

I STATEMENT

I FEEL DISCONNECTED WHEN YOU ARE ON YOUR CELL PHONE BECAUSE I REALLY WANT TO CONNECT WITH YOU. I NEED SOME QUALITY TIME WITH YOU.

YOU STATEMENT

YOU DON'T HELP OUT ENOUGH WITH ANY OF THE CLEANING! YOU JUST EXPECT ME TO DO ALL RUN AROUND AFTER YOU TIDYING UP AND COOKING FOR YOU!

I STATEMENT

I FEEL UNAPPRECIATED WHEN YOU DON'T TIDY UP AFTER YOURSELF BECAUSE IT TAKES AWAY FROM ANY QUALITY TIME I COULD SPEND WITH YOU. I NEED YOU TO HELP OUT MORE

YOU STATEMENT

YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT ME!!
YOU ARE TOTALLY INCONSIDERATE AND YOU NEVER MAKE ANY TIME FOR ME.

I STATEMENT

YOU STATEMENT

YOU SPEND TOO MUCH MONEY!
ALL I DO IS GIVE YOU MONEY, AND YOU DON'T EVEN BUDGET.

I STATEMENT

YOU STATEMENT

YOU DON'T LOVE ME ANYMORE! YOU DON'T WANT TO SPEND ANY TIME WITH ME

I STATEMENT

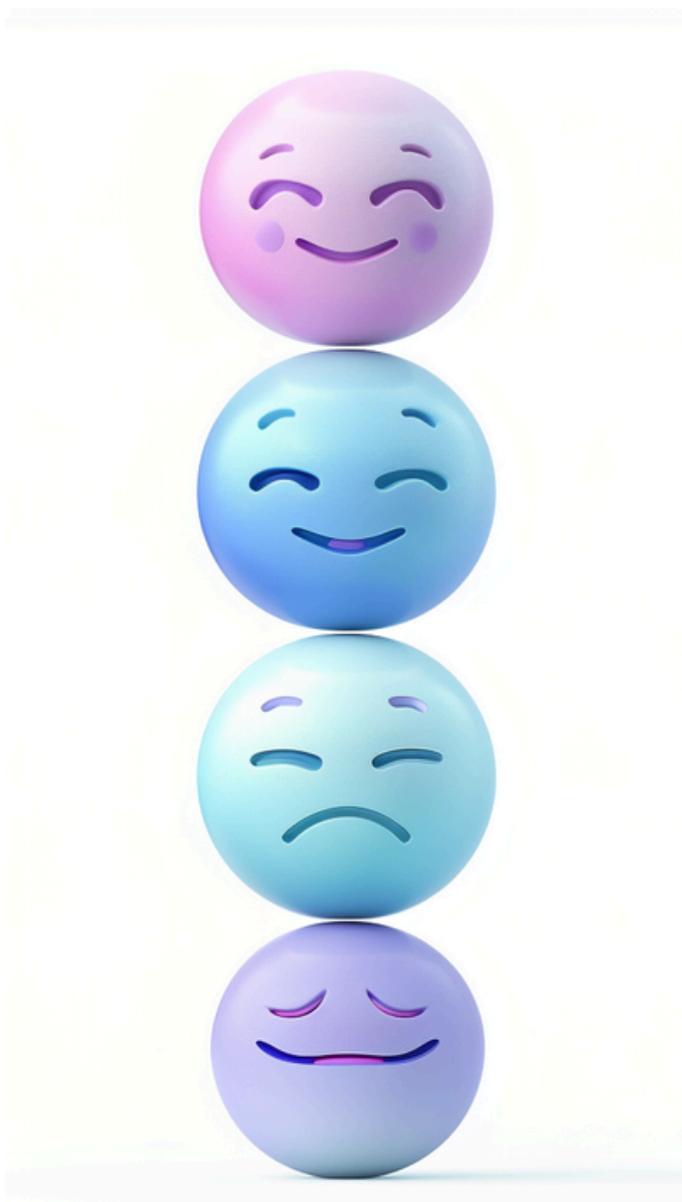


MORE ON USING 'I' STATEMENTS





ALL THE FEELINGS



FEELINGS

THE EMOTIONS CHART

NOTICE

Close your eyes. Notice how you're feeling right now. What emotion has been present for you most of the day

RATE

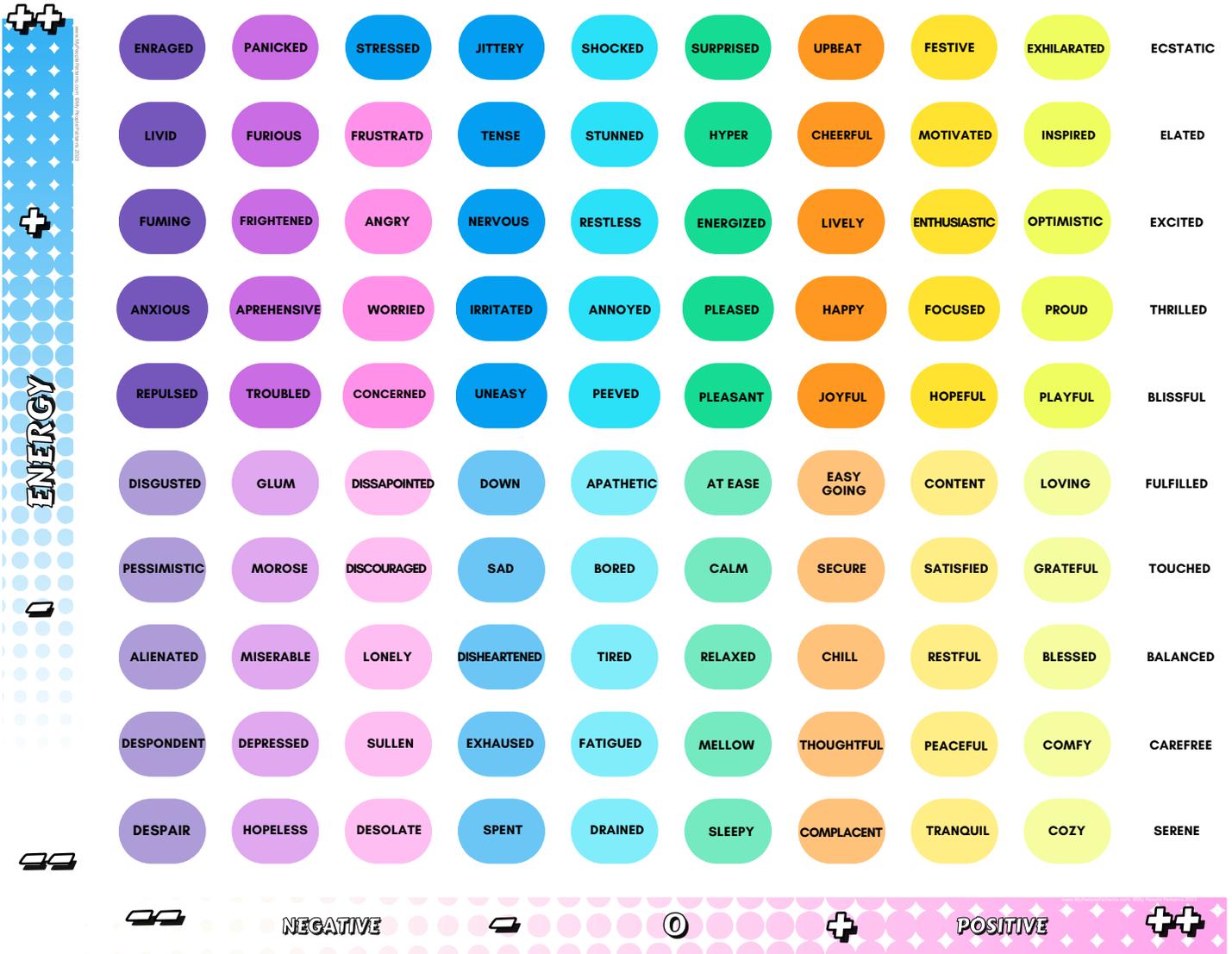
Using a scale of 1-10
1 (very unpleasant), 10 (very pleasant)
rate how pleasant the emotion is.
Using a scale of 1-10
1 (very low energy), 10 (very high energy)
rate how high your energy is right now

PLOT

Find the corresponding numbers on each scale to locate the matching emotion on the chart.
Example:
pleasantness 4, energy 6
emotion = uneasy

REFLECT

Find the corresponding numbers on each scale to locate the matching emotion on the chart. Example: pleasantness 4, energy 6 emotion = uneasy



THE EMOTIONS CHART

Not About Politeness: It's about clarity, not politeness. Not Focused on the Other's Response: They are not concerned with how the other person might react. Not for Forcing Solutions: They are not intended to compel the other person to "fix the problem." Free of Expectations: While they let you express how you'd like things to be, they come without expectations for immediate change. Not a Conflict Fixer: They aim to open up healthy conversation but won't resolve the conflict on their own.

QUANTITY THE ENERGY SCALE

We are usually quite aware of how much energy we have inside of us, how tired we feel or how excited and vibrant we feel. This scale is asking us to pay attention to how much energy the feeling we are trying to identify has, is it vibrating through us or is it more sedating, subtle or sneaky?

QUALITY NEGATIVE POSITIVE

As children, we learn about our feelings by identifying if we are feeling "mad, sad, or glad". These are the foundations of our emotional life. As adults, we still all know generally if a feeling we're trying to identify has a positive quality or a negative quality to it, this just takes it one step further.



ENERGY



ENRAGED	PANICKED	STRESSED	JITTERY	SHOCKED	SURPRISED	UPBEAT	FESTIVE	EXHILARATED	ECSTATIC
LIVID	FURIOUS	FRUSTRATED	TENSE	STUNNED	HYPER	CHEERFUL	MOTIVATED	INSPIRED	ELATED
FUMING	FRIGHTENED	ANGRY	NERVOUS	RESTLESS	ENERGIZED	LIVELY	ENTHUSIASTIC	OPTIMISTIC	EXCITED
ANXIOUS	APREHENSIVE	WORRIED	IRRITATED	ANNOYED	PLEASED	HAPPY	FOCUSED	PROUD	THRILLED
REPULSED	TROUBLED	CONCERNED	UNEASY	PEEVED	PLEASANT	JOYFUL	HOPEFUL	PLAYFUL	BLISSFUL
DISGUSTED	GLUM	DISSAPPOINTED	DOWN	APATHETIC	AT EASE	EASY GOING	CONTENT	LOVING	FULFILLED
PESSIMISTIC	MOROSE	DISCOURAGED	SAD	BORED	CALM	SECURE	SATISFIED	GRATEFUL	TOUCHED
ALIENATED	MISERABLE	LONELY	DISHEARTENED	TIRED	RELAXED	CHILL	RESTFUL	BLESSED	BALANCED
DESPONDENT	DEPRESSED	SULLEN	EXHAUSTED	FATIGUED	MELLOW	THOUGHTFUL	PEACEFUL	COMFY	CAREFREE
DESPAIR	HOPELESS	DESOLATE	SPENT	DRAINED	SLEEPY	COMPLACENT	TRANQUIL	COZY	SERENE



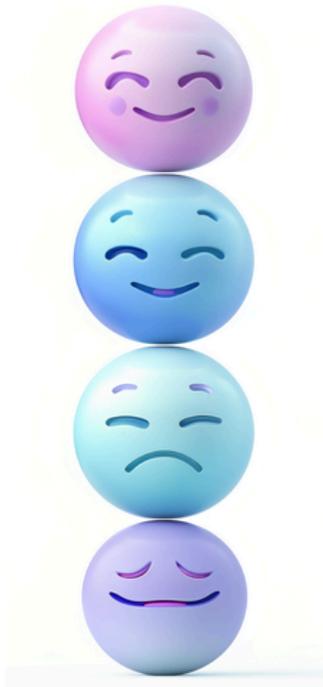
NEGATIVE



POSITIVE

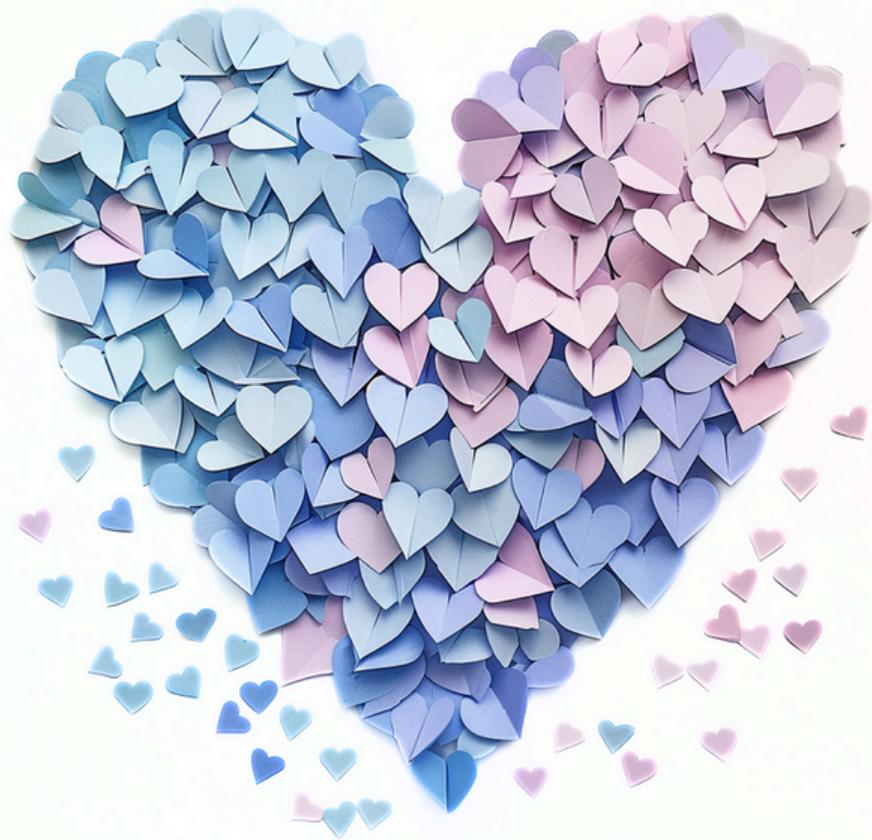


MORE ON FEELING THE FEELS





EMOTIONAL INTIMACY



INTIMACY

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EMOTIONAL INTIMACY

VULNERABILITY & CONNECTION

My People Patterns is all about deepening connections and growing great relationships. Our most important relationships require us to be vulnerable, and curious while using our best communication skills. Our Top Questions are designed to gently lead you into an intimate conversation that deepens over time. Our hope is that this conversation makes you feel more connected and closer.



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HOW TO DO THIS

This activity works in one of two ways.

1. One person reads all of the questions, one at a time, and the other person answers. You'll notice that some of the questions require answers about the person asking (that will make more sense when you read them)

OR

2. Take turns asking each other the questions, which is our preferred way of doing this activity.

BEFORE YOU START

Before you start with the questions, we want you both to take a moment to privately check in with yourself to see how close you feel to the person you're doing this activity with. Imagine it's a scale of 1-10, 10 being the closest ever, and 1 being quite distant. At the end of the activity, we will ask you to repeat this exercise to see if you feel any different.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.



EMOTIONAL INTIMACY

If you could know just one thing about the future, what would it be? Why?

What is the thing you needed more of in your childhood?

In what ways do I help you?
And what could I do more of?

What would you tell 9-year-old me?

What's the thing you chose to ignore but know you shouldn't?

What's the last thing you learned about yourself that surprised you?

What's something I really need to hear?

When and what was the moment you felt closest to me?

What do you think life is teaching you right now?

What new traditions or rituals could we introduce to deepen our connection?"

What did you not want me to find out about you?

Looking forward, what joint goals are we excited to achieve together in the next phase of our life?"

MORE ON EMOTIONAL INTIMACY





EMOTIONAL NEEDS

NEEDS

NEEDS

RELATIONSHIP NEEDS

Describe how this need shows up for you

CERTAINTY & COMFORT

This is the need for a predictable environment, a sense of safety, in which one feels secure and comfortable.



COMFORT

SECURITY

SAFETY

PROTECTION

STABILITY

UNCERTAINTY OR VARIETY

Uncertainty is about the need for change, challenges, and new experiences



FEAR

INSTABILITY

CHANGE

CHAOS

ENTERTAINMENT

SIGNIFICANCE

This need is about feeling important, unique, and valued.



PRIDE

STANDARDS

IMPORTANCE

PERFORMANCE

ACHIEVEMENT

LOVE & CONNECTION

This need is for emotional closeness and bonding with others.



TOGETHERNESS

UNITY

WARMTH

TENDERNESS

PASSION

GROWTH

This is the need for personal development and self-improvement



DEVELOPMENT

ENLIGHTENMENT

PROGRESS

LEARNING

SELF-ACTUALIZATION

CONTRIBUTION

This need is about giving back and making a difference in the lives of others or in the world at large.



GIVING

HELPING

SUPPORTING

IMPACTING

VOLUNTEERING

RANK THE NEEDS IN ORDER OF PRIORITY- 1 BEIN THE MOST IMPORTANT. THEN, NO CHEATING, HOW DO YOU IMAGINE YOUR PARTNER WOULD RANK THEIR PRIORITY NEEDS?

CERTAINTY & COMFORT

This is the need for a predictable environment, a sense of safety, in which one feels secure and comfortable.



MY PRIORITY NEEDS

1 2 3 4 5 6

MY PARTNER

1 2 3 4 5 6

UNCERTAINTY OR VARIETY

Uncertainty is about the need for change, challenges, and new experiences



MY PRIORITY NEEDS

1 2 3 4 5 6

MY PARTNER

1 2 3 4 5 6

SIGNIFICANCE

This need is about feeling important, unique, and valued.



MY PRIORITY NEEDS

1 2 3 4 5 6

MY PARTNER

1 2 3 4 5 6

LOVE & CONNECTION

This need is for emotional closeness and bonding with others.



MY PRIORITY NEEDS

1 2 3 4 5 6

MY PARTNER

1 2 3 4 5 6

GROWTH

This is the need for personal development and self-improvement



MY PRIORITY NEEDS

1 2 3 4 5 6

MY PARTNER

1 2 3 4 5 6

CONTRIBUTION

This need is about giving back and making a difference in the lives of others or in the world at large.



MY PRIORITY NEEDS

1 2 3 4 5 6

MY PARTNER

1 2 3 4 5 6

RELATIONSHIP NEEDS



- How well do you feel each of your two priority needs are being met in your current relationships?



- What actions can I take to better fulfill both of your priority needs for yourself?



- How do my two priority needs interact or conflict with each other in my daily life and decisions?



- How well do you think you have been meeting your partner's needs for each of the 6?



- What are two specific ways I could improve in meeting my partner's needs?



- How do my efforts in meeting or not meeting each of their needs impact our relationship?

- What do I need to learn about my partners needs and how those needs get met?

• This question helps you evaluate the extent to which this need is being satisfied by your interactions with others, particularly your partner.

• This question encourages you to think of practical steps or changes you can make to satisfy this need more effectively.

• This question helps you explore the dynamics between your top two needs. It encourages you to consider whether these needs complement each other, create a balance, or lead to internal conflicts or challenges in decision-making.

• This question requires you to evaluate and score your effectiveness in meeting a specific need of your partner, such as their need for security or excitement.

• Identify concrete actions or changes you can make to better fulfill a particular need for your partner. This might involve more communication, quality time, or adjusting your behavior.

• Consider the broader effects of how you meet your partner's needs on the overall health and happiness of your relationship. Reflect on both positive impacts and areas for improvement.

• This question requires you to think about how s understanding your partner's needs can guide your future actions to help create a more fulfilling relationship.

MORE ON RELATIONSHIP NEEDS



NEEDS



RELATIONSHIP BOUNDARIES



BOUNDARIES

THE THREE TYPES OF BOUNDARIES

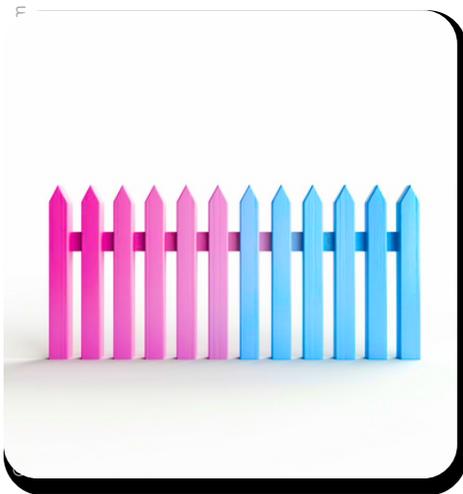
BREAKABLE BOUNDARIES

Breakable Boundaries, or porous boundaries, are like thin barriers that really don't keep anything out or in. This might look like oversharing personal information, struggling to say "no" to your partner, or becoming overly involved in their problems. It could also look like a partner who heavily depends on your opinions, and feels a need to prioritize your feelings over their own. This can lead to feelings of being taken for granted, resentment and a loss of individuality in the relationship.



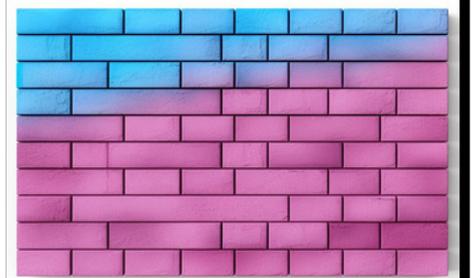
BALANCED BOUNDARIES

Balanced Boundaries represent a middle ground where you respect your own needs *and* those of your partner. With balanced boundaries, you value your own opinions and do not compromise your values. You share personal information in an appropriate manner, neither over nor under-sharing. You and your partner understand and communicate your needs and wants, while also respecting your partner's right to say "no," without getting hurt. This fosters mutual respect, understanding, and support.



BULLETPROOF BOUNDARIES

Bulletproof Boundaries, or rigid boundaries, are like impenetrable walls that might keep a significant emotional or physical distance between you. A person with these boundaries might have a hard time being vulnerable or even might appear detached, even in close relationships. While these boundaries can protect someone, they can also hinder the development of intimacy and connection in relationship, leaving a partner feeling disconnected, lonely or abandoned.



THE THREE TYPES OF BOUNDARIES

This family's boundaries are more likely to be....

What do you notice about this portrait? What feelings come up?
What made you decide on the answer?



This family's boundaries are more likely to be....

What do you notice about this portrait? What feelings come up?
What made you decide on the answer?



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This family's boundaries are more likely to be....

What do you notice about this portrait? What feelings come up?
What made you decide on the answer?



THE THREE TYPES OF BOUNDARIES



1 REFLECTION QUESTION #1

- Which portrait most closely represents the boundaries you experienced or observed in your family growing up?
- What aspects make it relatable to you?



2 REFLECTION QUESTION #2

- Reflect on how your own boundary style has evolved over time. Considering the three portraits, which one represented you in the past, and which one do you aim to embody in the future?
- What changes in your life or perspective have influenced this evolution?



3 REFLECTION QUESTION #3

- Looking at these portraits, which one resonates with the boundaries you currently have or aspire to have in your relationships?
- Explain your choice.

THE THREE TYPES OF BOUNDARIES



1 REFLECTION QUESTION #4

- Which portrait most closely represents the boundaries you experienced or observed in your family growing up?
- What aspects make it relatable to you?



2 REFLECTION QUESTION #5

- Reflect on how your own boundary style has evolved over time. Considering the three portraits, which one represented you in the past, and which one do you aim to embody in the future?
- What changes in your life or perspective have influenced this evolution?



3 REFLECTION QUESTION #6

- Looking at these portraits, which one resonates with the boundaries you currently have or aspire to have in your relationships?
- Explain your choice.

THE THREE TYPES OF BOUNDARIES

This family's boundaries are more likely to be...
BALANCED - HEALTHY

In this photo there's a nice symmetry to the family, they seem evenly spaced out the child is in the middle but the husband is still connecting to his wife. They all look annoyed, but that's what I get for working with AI-generated images.



This family's boundaries are more likely to be...
BREAKABLE - POROUS



This family looks like they are all clinging on to the father, as if he would run away or float off if they let go. I can't tell who is a parent and who is a child. This seems very chaotic and confusing, and might be a sign of very porous boundaries.

This family's boundaries are more likely to be...
BULLETPROOF - RIGID

Compared to the other images, this family has distance between them. The family might unconsciously be telling us something by sitting in three different chairs. No one is touching anyone and their body language is closed off. I imagine that this speaks to very rigid or bulletproof boundaries.



THE THREE TYPES OF BOUNDARIES

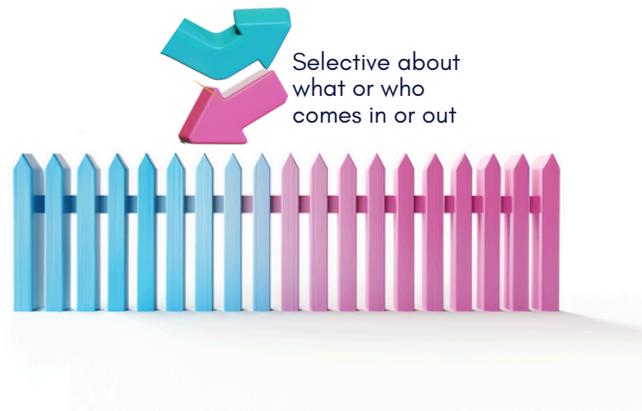
1 BREAKABLE BOUNDARIES

- Could struggle with the need for approval and often prioritizes others' needs
- Has difficulty making decisions without seeking reassurance from their partner
- Overly responsive to their partner's demands, even if it leads to personal discomfort.
- May become deeply involved in their partner's problems or emotions.
- Fears saying "no" or setting limits, worried it could lead to conflict
- Tendency to stay in unhealthy relationships due to fear of being alone.
- Might tolerate disrespectful behavior to maintain the connection.



2 BALANCED BOUNDARIES

- Communicate openly about needs and desires within the relationship without fear of judgment.
- Respects their partner's need for personal space and individuality.
- Can enjoy time apart without feeling insecure or anxious.
- Willing to seek and offer help when needed
- Respects confidentiality and shares personal information thoughtfully
- Maintains a balance between intimacy and autonomy.
- Encourages mutual growth and respects differing opinions



3 BULLETPROOF BOUNDARIES

- Maintains a strong sense of independence, at the expense of intimacy.
- comes across as self-sufficient and & may not acknowledge their need for connection.
- Hesitant to share personal information, keeping aspects of their life private
- May have strict inflexible rules or expectations for the relationship
- Avoids vulnerability and might not communicate personal feelings
- Quick to shut down or withdraw at the sign of potential conflict
- Often perceived as aloof or unapproachable,



THE BENEFITS OF BOUNDARIES



Help you define and refine yourself. This brings a sense of satisfaction when you become clear and confident with yourself

DEFINE

- What are some areas in your life where you lack clarity or confidence?
- How could setting boundaries help you define and refine yourself in these areas?
- What brings you a sense of satisfaction when it comes to self-understanding?



Boundaries protect us, they keep the bad out and let the good in. They help us feel safe and allow true self expression

PROTECT

- What are some things that you want to protect in your life (e.g., time, energy, emotions, physical space)?
- How do unhealthy boundaries leave you feeling unsafe or unable to express yourself authentically?
- What are some examples of situations where setting boundaries has helped you feel protected and empowered?

THE BENEFITS OF BOUNDARIES



Without boundaries, we are unable to regulate the demands, ideas and responsibilities of others, we might say 'yes' to too much and not know our limits.

ARRANGE

- Have you ever said "yes" to something that you later regretted?
- How can setting boundaries help you manage your time, energy, and commitments more effectively?
- What are some strategies you can use to communicate your boundaries assertively and respectfully?



Boundaries help you promote and value yourself. You know your strengths and capabilities and a sense of self-esteem develops

PROMOTE

- What are your strengths and capabilities?
- How can setting boundaries help you focus on self-improvement and develop a stronger sense of self-esteem?
- What are some ways you can promote and value yourself in your relationships and interactions with others?

YOUR RESPONSE TO BOUNDARIES

This checklist is designed to help you reflect on your own experiences with boundaries and identify ways in which you know you have ignored boundaries.. Please read each statement carefully and circle the answer that fits you. It's important to answer each of them.

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. I feel like I have no control over my own life and that things are always happening to me. (Victim)	0	1	2	3
2. I feel comfortable and relaxed in large groups of people. (Distance)	0	1	2	3
3. I find it difficult to forgive myself and others for mistakes they have made. (Victim)	0	1	2	3
4. I tend to hold onto anger and resentment for a long time. (Anger)	0	1	2	3
5. I feel most comfortable when I have a lot of personal space and privacy. (Distance)	0	1	2	3
6. I find it difficult to express my anger in a healthy and assertive way. (Anger)	0	1	2	3
7. I feel like I have to give up my own needs and wants to please others. (Enmeshment)	0	1	2	3
8. I prefer to maintain a superficial level of connection with others and avoid getting too close. (Aloofness)	0	1	2	3
9. I feel uncomfortable with vulnerability and intimacy. (Aloofness)	0	1	2	3
10. I find it difficult to say "no" to others, even when it means doing something I don't want to do. (Enmeshment)	0	1	2	3
11. I feel like I have to constantly be available to others and help them with their problems. (Enmeshment)	0	1	2	3
12. I prefer to spend time alone most of the time and avoid social interaction. (Distance)	0	1	2	3
13. I tend to keep my feelings to myself and avoid talking about personal matters. (Aloofness)	0	1	2	3
14. I dwell on past hurts and injustices and have difficulty letting go. (Victim)	0	1	2	3
15. I get easily triggered by small things and feel frustrated quickly. (Anger)	0	1	2	3

YOUR RESPONSE TO BOUNDARIES

DISTANCE: ADD THE SCORES FOR QUESTIONS 5, 12, AND 2.

ANGER: ADD THE SCORES FOR QUESTIONS 6, 15, AND 4.

ENMESHMENT: ADD THE SCORES FOR QUESTIONS 7, 10, AND 11.

ALOOFNESS: ADD THE SCORES FOR QUESTIONS 8, 9, AND 13.

VICTIMHOOD: ADD THE SCORES FOR QUESTIONS 1, 3, AND 14.



Distance: Your high score in this area suggests that you tend to create significant emotional or physical distance in your relationships. This might manifest as a reluctance to share personal information, avoiding deep connections, or physically distancing yourself from others. While this can be a protective mechanism, it's important to consider if this distance is hindering your ability to form meaningful connections.

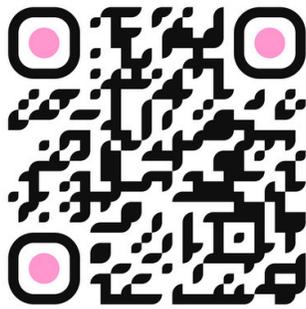
Anger: Your responses indicate that anger is a prominent emotion in your interactions, possibly stemming from past boundary violations. This anger might be direct or passive-aggressive. Recognizing and addressing the root causes of this anger can be a crucial step in establishing healthier boundaries and improving your relationships.

Enmeshment: Your high score here suggests a tendency towards blurred boundaries, leading to a loss of individuality. You might find yourself overly involved in the emotions and problems of others, at the expense of your own needs and identity. Learning to establish clear boundaries can help you maintain a healthy sense of self within your relationships.

Aloofness: Your responses indicate a tendency to keep others at an emotional distance. This might be a defense mechanism to avoid potential hurt or betrayal. While it's important to protect yourself, consider if this aloofness is preventing you from experiencing deeper, more fulfilling connections.

Victim Mindset: Your responses suggest a sensitivity to past experiences where your boundaries may have been violated. Sometimes people become overly identified with this experience and carry it forward as a defense. It's clear that these experiences have had a significant impact, and it's completely understandable to carry these feelings with you. Recognizing this as a survival pattern that is no longer serving you is a brave and important step.

MORE ON BOUNDARIES





MANAGING CONFLICT



CONFLICT

RELATIONSHIP CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Conflict Management in relationships differs from conflict resolution by trying to get ahead of any disagreements that might cause confrontation by having meaningful conversations about the topics that are most likely to cause conflict.

In most human relationships, there are differences in our beliefs, thoughts, ideas, and opinions, so knowing in which areas we differ from our partners in advance is a huge benefit. If we can have five conversations centered around these topics, we will be in a healthy place to know what our hot-button topics are and are more likely to be able to understand and tolerate these differences.

Here are some common hot-button topics and questions to help guide your conversation.



BEHAVIORS

- How do you feel about being on time/punctuality?
- What do you think my needs are around personal space?
- How do you decide if you're going to take charge or not?
- How do we balance supporting each other and giving each other space?



WORDS

- What does a promise mean?
- Do we have integrity with our words?
- Should I be straight-up or more tactful?
- Does my sarcasm and humor cause more confusion or do you enjoy it?
- How does interrupting feel to you?
- What does it mean when I'm quiet?
- Do you like advice or for me to listen?



THOUGHTS

- Is the big picture or day-to-day more important to you?
- Do you prefer consistency and reliability or flexibility and rolling with it?
- How do you handle things when they don't go as planned?
- How do you deal with setbacks?



PERCEPTIONS

- What does a promise mean?
- Do we have integrity with our words?
- Should I be straight-up or more tactful?
- Does my sarcasm and humor cause more confusion or do you enjoy it?
- How does interrupting feel to you?
- What does it mean when I'm quiet?
- Do you like advice or for me to listen?

POST CONFLICT REFLECTION QUESTIONS

This is a series of questions that are ideal for journaling or, if you're feeling brave, sharing with your partner after a conflict. In particular, this will be useful if the same type of fight or argument occurs repeatedly. It could also be helpful to share this with your therapist.

If you share this with your partner, take time away from each other after an argument in order to calm down. I highly suggest you do this work separately.

It's never advisable to attempt to share answers in the heat of an argument. This is about repair and healing not weaponizing results.

Although this activity is worded to cater to the person you are currently in a relationship with, it can be applied to any type of relationship, past or present, romantic or platonic, as it will generate some insight and awareness.

When and if you share the answers with your partner, please establish ground rules:

- NO CROSS TALK - one person shares, the other listens.
- TAKE TURNS - until each of you has read all answers.
- RESPONDING - If you want to respond, or hear a response from your partner, these need to be limited to *feelings* not *thoughts*. Thoughts include facts or counter arguments.

Instead think about sharing about these:

WHAT DID YOU NOTICE?

WHAT DID YOU FEEL?

WHAT MEMORIES FROM THE PAST CAME UP?

Don't feel obliged to answer all of the questions at once. Similarly, you do not need to share all of the questions at once.

You can pace yourself, and trust that you know your relationship and your self well enough to regulate this exercise.

POST CONFLICT REFLECTION QUESTIONS

This is a series of questions that are ideal for journaling or, if you're feeling brave, sharing with your partner after a conflict. In particular, this will be useful if the same type of fight or argument occurs repeatedly. It could also be helpful to share this with your therapist.

1. WHAT HAPPENED?

Stick to the facts, and try and be objective and brief.

2. WHAT DID YOU FEEL

Remember that anger is a feeling that covers other feelings, so go deeper than 'annoyed' 'frustrated'. Use an 'I' statement, no thoughts or commentary on the incident or your partner.

3. WHAT DO YOU WANT

Feelings sometimes have needs attached to them, try and see if there's anything you want that could help satisfy your feelings. Sometimes conflict occurs when our needs and wants are not met, if this is the case, what is it that your partner needs to hear?

4. HOW DOES THE PAST PLAY INTO THE CURRENT SITUATION?

Our past often influences our current relationships, so this space is to reflect not only on your current relationship but also your childhood and family of origin. Is there anything familiar or historical to how you feel right now or what happened? Is there anything from your past that is being activated right now?

POST CONFLICT REFLECTION QUESTIONS

5. WHAT DO I GET OUT OF BEING STUCK?

"Do you want to be RIGHT or do you want to be in RELATIONSHIP?" Sometimes we get trapped in a stubborn need to be right, to win the point or prove we are 'better'. Another way to think of this is 'What am I getting out of continuing this fight?'

6. WHAT NEEDS TO BE SAID?

This is an opportunity to be vulnerable, and to share your truth. It could be something painful in admitting some accountability or secrets, or it could be an apology or acknowledgement of sorts.

7. WHAT AGREEMENTS HAVE I BROKEN?

This is an opportunity to restore trust, or acknowledge breaches in your relationship and is part of each of you being accountable in your relationship.

8. HOW CAN I BE OF SERVICE?

One of the most powerful ways out of anger or depression is to get out of 'self' and into being of service to 'others'. It's an incredible way to make amends and to start repairing the relationship. It puts you back into being a team rather than taking oppositional stances.

POST CONFLICT REFLECTION QUESTIONS

9. WHAT'S MY PART IN THIS?

It's tempting to see our selves as being the victim of the conflict, but the reality is that 99% of conflicts have mutuality.

10. CAN I TAKE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR MY PART?

If I can see my part in the conflict, have I acknowledged this out loud to my partner and apologized for it?

11. WHAT DO I THINK MY PARTNER NEEDS OR WANTS?

Note that you will potentially be hearing this from your partner when they share their answer to #3 with you. However, there is value in imagining what it is YOU think they need or want before they do. You might be surprised by how wrong or right you are, and there's value in comparing these answers.

12. WHAT COULD I DO DIFFERENTLY IN THIS RELATIONSHIP

Are there any changes you are willing to make in this relationship, big or small, that might help your partnership ?

MORE ON CONFLICT

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