

Communication Worksheet for Couples- Getting to Know

My Partner Closely

Objectives: To help individuals learn more about their partners.

Instructions: Getting to know about your partner closely helps strengthen your relationship with him. The following questions are about your partner. For each of these questions, write down what you think would be the answer. Then for the last column, ask these questions from your partner and write his answer. This worksheet will give you a chance to explore what you already knew and what you didn't know about him.

Questions	Your Answers	Your Partner's Answers
What is your partner's favorite dish?		
What is your partner's favorite place?		
What is your partner's favorite hobby or activity?		
What does your partner love about you?		
Who is your partner's best friend?		
What is your partner's pet dialogue?		
Is your partner cleanliness conscious?		
Is your partner diet conscious?		
Who does your partner talk to the most?		
What does your partner dislike the most?		

Relationship Building Shared Qualities

We would like to visit:

1

2

3

Movies, books, or music we like:

1

2

3

We have fun when we:

1

2

3

As a couple, we're good at:

1

2

3

As a couple, our weaknesses are:

1

2

3

Unique things we have in common:

1

2

3

Qualities we value in a person:

1

2

3

Three goals for our future:

1

2

3

Relationship Growth Activity

Discovery Questions

Instructions: Sometimes in relationships we become so focused on the problems that we forget to see our partner as a person. You can strengthen your relationship by learning more about your partner, and discussing their thoughts and feelings.

Take turns selecting a question from each section below to ask your partner. If you believe you know all of the answers in a section, see if you can answer each one correctly!



The Fun Things

What was your partner's favorite TV show when they were a child?

Where would your partner most like to visit on a vacation?

What song is your partner into right now?

Are there any movies your partner is excited to see?

Has your partner ever read a book that had a major impact on their life?



About Us

When did your partner realize they were interested in you? Was there a specific moment?

What motivates your partner to keep working on your relationship?

What does your partner want your relationship to look like in 5 years?

When was a moment that your partner felt happy about your relationship?

What is your partner's favorite thing to do, or place to go, as a couple?



Hopes & Dreams

How does your partner hope to change over the next year? 5 years? 20 years?

What are three realistic goals your partner has for their lifetime?

What is the happiest life your partner can imagine?

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for their career, family, and their personal growth?

could place on their bucket list?

Negative Cycles

Couples often get involved in "negative cycles," a pattern of interaction that causes problems within a marriage. The cycle begins as an initial reaction to a partner's behavior and escalates from there. Understanding and processing maladaptive interactions is a first step in preventing future problems. The following exercise will help illustrate how you relate to your partner to inform positive change.

- 1 Describe a repeating behavior that your partner exhibits that frequently triggers a negative cycle (e.g., my partner makes a negative comment about my family):

- 2 After I am triggered, I often react by (e.g., I curse at my partner):

- 3 My partner often reacts to me by (e.g., My partner shuts down):

- 4 When my partner reacts this way, I often feel (e.g., like they do not care):

- 5 When I feel this way I, see myself as (e.g., inadequate):

- 6 When I feel this way I long for or need (e.g., physical touch):

- 7 When I react the way I do, I guess that my partner feels (e.g., like I am needy):

You can repeat this exercise for many different triggers and interactions. Notice that feelings frequently fuel behavior that may be misinterpreted by your partner. The point of this exercise is to understand your negative cycle so you can take steps to break it and replace it with more adaptive behavior.

Partner Appreciation

One of the most important aspects of maintaining a satisfying romantic relationship is appreciation. Unfortunately, expressing appreciation towards a partner may be lacking or wane over time. Fill out this worksheet on your own and then share with your partner during a couples therapy session. Try to find at least five answers for each question.

The qualities that attracted me to my partner were:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

My favorite memories with my partner are:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

My partner shows me they care by:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

I appreciate my partner because:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Getting to Know Your Partner

Although you might find it surprising, many couples don't know their partners that well. Having knowledge of your partner is a key to emotional intimacy, one of the most important factors in a good relationship. The following questions help assess how well a couple knows each other and what areas may need to be further addressed. These questions can be asked by a partner during a couples therapy session or for an assignment at home.

1. What stressors am I facing right now?
2. Describe what I did yesterday.
3. What is one of my greatest fears?
4. What is my favorite time of day?
5. What turns me on sexually?
6. What is my favorite color?
7. What personal improvements do I want to make in my life?
8. What is one of my favorite ways to be soothed?
9. Who is my greatest source of support?
10. Where is my favorite place?
11. What are some of the important events coming up in my life?
12. What would I consider my dream job?
13. What do I fear the most?
14. Who is my least favorite relative?
15. What kinds of books do I most like to read?
16. Name one of my current concerns or worries.
17. What medical problems do I worry about?
18. What was my worst childhood experience?
19. Name two of the people I admire most
20. What are two of my aspirations or wishes?

Questions Adapted from John Gottman
The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work

Your Practice Name Here

Therapist Name: Therapist Name

Relationship Resolution Worksheet

Client Name

Client Name: Client Name

Today's Date: 02/02/2022

Problems will arise in relationships. It's important to have healthy ways to resolve them to ensure your relationship is full and satisfying for both parties. Take time to sit down with your partner and complete this worksheet.

Meeting Place:	Date:	Time:
What is the issue you'd like to resolve? Explain in detail:		
Partner #1: I am not helping resolve this problem by:	Partner #2: I am not helping resolve this problem by:	
List out things you've both done to try to solve your conflict that have not worked:		
With your partner, think about different ideas to solve your conflict. Alternate 1 idea at a time:		
Discuss each solution above, Work together to rank each idea from best to worst.		
The solution both partners agree to try:		
Next Meeting Place to Discuss:	Date:	Time:

Couple's Gratitude Journal

Three Good Things

Monday
My partner showed me affection by...
I was happy when my partner...
The best part of the time we spent together today was...

Tuesday
Something good my partner did today was...
My partner made me laugh by...
I was grateful for my partner when...

Wednesday
Something my partner accomplished today...
My partner helped me by...

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Listening Accurately Worksheet

#1: Step In Their Shoes

Select someone that you would like to work on your relationship with. When you talk, try your best to take their point of view. For instance, try picturing that you are them, going about their day. Does your capacity to feel empathy change by taking their perspective?



#2: Fact-Check Your Interpretations

Reflect on the dialogues you and that person have had. Make a conscious effort to fact-check your interpretations and assumptions regarding what they said.



#3: Give Your Full Attention

During a conversation, start by giving your full attention to the other person. Before you move on to other things, consider what might occur if you asked: "I would like to clarify that I've understood you correctly. May I?" Almost every time, you'll get a positive response.



#4: Clarify What They've Said

Make an effort to clarify what you think you have heard - identify and reflect their emotions. If you are unsure whether you've understood correctly, just ask.



#5: Clarify What You've Said

During conversations, you might try asking the speaker if they could share what they've heard from you. How would you clear up any misunderstandings if they arose?



Marital Satisfaction

It is a simple yet valuable question: Are you satisfied in your relationship?

Fill out the following chart to find out if you are satisfied with your partner and what areas need change. Place an (x) in the box to the right of each relationship category that best describes how satisfied you feel.

	Very Dissatisfied	Slightly Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Or Dissatisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Very Satisfied	(X) The three areas you most want to change
Feeling Close To Your Partner						
Expression of Affection						
Satisfaction with Sexual Intimacy						
Handling Conflicts						
Expression of Anger						
Handling Finances						
Handling of Parenting						
Handling of Tasks						
Common Interests						
Degree of Admiration for Your Partner						
Satisfaction with your Role in the Relationship						
Satisfaction with your Partner's Role in the Relationship						
Overall Satisfaction with Your Relationship						

Fair Fighting Rules

Before you begin, ask yourself why you feel upset.

Are you angry because your partner left the mustard on the counter? Or are you angry because you feel like you're doing an uneven share of the housework, and this is just one more piece of evidence? Take time to think about your own feelings before starting an argument.

Discuss one topic at a time.

Don't let "You left dishes in the sink" turn into "You watch too much TV." Discussions that get off-topic are more likely to get heated, and less likely to solve the original problem. Choose one topic and stick to it.

No degrading language.

Discuss the issue, not the person. No put-downs, swearing, or name-calling. Degrading language is an attempt to express negative feelings while making sure your partner feels just as bad. Doing so leads to more character attacks while the original issue is forgotten.

Express your feelings with words.

"I feel hurt when you ignore my phone calls." "I feel scared when you yell." Structure your sentences as "I" statements ("I feel *emotion* when *event*") to express how you feel while taking responsibility for your emotions. However, starting with "I" does not give a license to ignore the other fair fighting rules.

Take turns speaking.

Give your full attention while your partner speaks. Avoid making corrections or thinking about what you want to say. Your only job is to understand their point of view, even if you disagree. If you find it difficult to not interrupt, try setting a timer allowing 1-2 minutes for each person to speak without interruption.

No stonewalling.

Sometimes, the easiest way to respond to an argument is to retreat into your shell and refuse to speak. This is called stonewalling. You might feel better temporarily, but the original issue will remain unresolved and your partner will feel more upset. If you absolutely cannot go on, tell your partner you need to take a time-out. Agree to resume the discussion later.

No yelling.

Yelling does not help anyone see your point of view. Instead, it sends the message that *only* your words matter. Even if yelling intimidates your partner into giving up, the underlying problem only grows worse.

Take a time-out if things get too heated.

In a perfect world, we would all follow these rules 100% of the time... but it just doesn't work like that. If an argument starts to become personal or heated, take a time-out. Agree on a time to come back and discuss the problem after everyone has cooled down.

Preview

for an understanding.

is an argument. Life is too messy for that. Do your best to come to a compromise (and take from both sides). If you can't come to a compromise, simply listening to your partner's perspective can help soothe negative feelings.

Relationship Green Flags

qualities of a healthy relationship

Every relationship is unique. For example, the way one couple expresses appreciation may be very different from how another couple does so. However, healthy relationships tend to be alike in many ways. These relationship green flags are associated with physical and mental wellness.

Appreciation

You respect and value your partner, and express gratitude often.

Balance

You find happiness in time spent together *and* apart. Some needs are met outside the relationship (through friendships, hobbies, etc.).

Commitment

You are invested in your partner and the relationship. You give the relationship adequate time and energy.

Commonality

You share important goals, beliefs, and values with your partner.

Conflict Resolution

You take responsibility for your actions, and work as a team to solve problems.

Effective Communication

You communicate your own needs and wishes, while respecting those of your partner.

Empathy

You take your partner's perspective and understand their feelings, even if you do not always agree.

Honesty

Your actions align with your words. The thoughts and feelings you express are genuine.

Independence

You have your own interests and goals separate from those of your partner.

Intimacy

You feel close and connected with your partner physically and emotionally.

Safety

You respect your partner's boundaries. You feel safe physically, intellectually (expressing thoughts), and emotionally (expressing feelings).

Self-Confidence

You feel comfortable being yourself in the relationship.