

Daily Dialogue for Couples

1. Appreciations
2. New Information
3. Puzzles (on mind recently)
4. Complaints with specific request for change
5. Wishes, Hopes, and Dreams

Couples Communication Exercise

Often there are problems in relationships because what is expected of each partner is not clear. Having expectations and not communicating them to our partner almost always results in misunderstandings and disappointment. Complete the following sentence with a maximum of five statements for your partner.

In our relationship, I would like from you...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Assumptions also prevent effective communication. When we assume something about the other person or assume the other person knows something about us, we can often base our feelings and behaviors on incorrect beliefs. Clarifying our assumption of each other can help avoid serious blocks to effective communication. Complete the following statement with no more than five assumptions:

I have assumed you knew, but in case you do not, I would like to tell you ...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

I have difficulty sharing these feelings with you:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

I feel distant from you when ...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

I feel close to you when ...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Often we fail to share with our partner things that are an issue in the relationship. Due to feelings of shame or guilt or fear, we avoid bringing up areas of concern and the resulting tension contributes to difficulties in other areas. Circle each of the areas below which are a concern in your relationship. Please circle all that apply whether they are a huge concern or just a minor irritation. Use the blank spaces to list concerns I have not thought of.

Communications	Hygiene	Sex	Intimacy
Trust	Neatness	Drugs/Alcohol	Parenting
Money/finance	Work/Career	Driving	In-laws
TV	Music	Home Décor	Friends
Spending	Shopping	Pets	Chores
Food	Religion	Politics	Passions/Hobbies
Gambling	Pornography	Clothes	Nicknames
Touching	Affection	Traditions	Holidays
Anniversaries	Birthdays		

Improving a relationship requires both people making a commitment to work on the improvement. Think of behavioral changes you are willing to make, or actions you are willing to take, or activities in which you are willing to participate in order to improve your relationship. Be specific and make sure these are things you are both willing and able to do.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Part of being known is receiving recognition for the things we value in ourselves, the things we are proud of. Sometimes we assume our partner knows what we like about ourselves. This can be difficult to share because it may seem like bragging. Nevertheless, it is important to share this information in the interests of intimacy. Think carefully about the things you like about your self.

These are the traits I value most in my self ...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

We also often make the false assumption that our partner knows what we like, love and appreciate about them. Thus we do not tell them and they may not have any idea of the things we value about them. Think about what you like, love, enjoy about your partner and share these.

These are the traits I value most in you ...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.