

Section 2

Relational Self-Help Practice Exercises for Couples and Families in Conflict

Couples

Complaints
Sexuality
Depression
Difficulties
Arguing or Fighting
Violence
Controlling Violence

Families

When Parents Argue: From the Child's Eyes
When Parents and Children Argue: From the Eyes of a Child
Negotiation
Intimacy
Causes of Hurt Feelings

Couples

Complaints

The purpose of this practice exercise is to improve your relationship with your partner.

Answer each practice exercise individually and get together with your partner at predetermined times (set up at least 24 h ahead) to discuss your completed practice exercises for no longer than 1 h. If you get upset during this time, end the discussion and make another appointment for another time at least 24 h ahead.

Practice Exercise 1. Defining Complaints

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you define more clearly the nature of complaints most couples make about their relationships. Make sure that you understand and discuss with each other the meaning of each complaint that makes up this practice exercise.

1. Below are listed various complaints that cover a range of possibilities. If you have a complaint not found in this list, add it at the end; there is room for additional complaints. Define each complaint, and give two examples of how that complaint manifests itself in your relationship.

*Complaints and Definitions**Examples*

a. Trouble with children _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
b. Trouble with in-laws _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
c. Different social needs _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
d. Conflicts about children _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
e. Division of responsibilities _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
f. Partner does not understand me _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
g. Financial disagreements _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
h. Frequent arguments _____	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____

i.	Difficulty discussing problems _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
j.	Less interested in talking to each other _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
k.	Too little time spent together _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
l.	Boredom _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
m.	Physical attacks by partner _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
n.	Being blamed for everything that goes wrong _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
o.	Sexual dissatisfaction _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
p.	Partner's alcoholism _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
q.	Partner's drug use _____ _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____

- r. Partner's chronic or recurrent illness _____

 Example 1 _____

 Example 2 _____

- s. Partner's actual or suspected infidelity _____

 Example 1 _____

 Example 2 _____

- t. Partner's stubbornness _____

 Example 1 _____

 Example 2 _____

- u. Partner depends on me too much _____

 Example 1 _____

 Example 2 _____

- v. Lack of partner's ambition _____

 Example 1 _____

 Example 2 _____

- w. Partner's sloppiness _____

 Example 1 _____

 Example 2 _____

- x. Partner's excessive neatness _____

 Example 1 _____

 Example 2 _____

- y. Partner does not fill my emotional needs _____

 Example 1 _____

 Example 2 _____

- z. Partner does not respect me _____

 Example 1 _____

 Example 2 _____

aa. A complaint not listed above

Example 1

Example 2

bb. A complaint not listed above

Example 1

Example 2

cc. A complaint not listed above

Example 1

Example 2

2. Now that you have defined the meaning of these complaints, you need to rank-order them according to how troublesome they are to you in this relationship. Rank as No. 1 the complaint that is the most troublesome to you, rank as No. 2 the complaint that is next most troublesome to you, and so on; mark as N/A (not applicable) the complaints that are not troublesome to you or that do not apply to this relationship.

Complaints	Rank-orders		
	Mine	Partner	Joint
a. Trouble with children			
b. Trouble with in-laws			
c. Different social needs			
d. Conflicts about children			
e. Division of responsibilities			
f. Partner does not understand me			
g. Financial disagreements			
h. Frequent arguments			
i. Difficulty discussing problems			
j. Less interested in talking to each other			
k. Too little time spent together			
l. Boredom			
m. Physical attacks by partner			
n. Being blamed for everything that goes wrong			
o. Sexual dissatisfaction			
p. Partner's alcoholism			
q. Partner's drug use			
r. Partner's chronic or recurrent illness			

<i>Complaints</i>	<i>Rank-orders</i>		
	<i>Mine</i>	<i>Partner</i>	<i>Joint</i>
s. Partner's actual or suspected infidelity	_____	_____	_____
t. Partner's stubbornness	_____	_____	_____
u. Partner depends on me too much	_____	_____	_____
v. Lack of ambition of partner	_____	_____	_____
w. Partner's sloppiness	_____	_____	_____
x. Partner's excessive neatness	_____	_____	_____
y. Partner does not fill my emotional needs	_____	_____	_____
z. Partner does not respect me	_____	_____	_____
aa. A complaint not listed above	_____	_____	_____
bb. A complaint not listed above	_____	_____	_____
cc. A complaint not listed above	_____	_____	_____

3. Why did you rank-order these complaints the way you did?

Homework: During the coming week, make an appointment with your partner and go over your definitions and your rank-orders. Record your partner's rank-orders in the appropriate column and add both to achieve a joint rank-order. Take notes of your discussion while you are comparing and contrasting your answers. Give your completed practice exercises and your notes to the professional who is assisting you with this practice exercise.

Whatever joint rank-order you agree on will determine the order of future practice exercises. The next practice exercise must be given the title of the joint complaint that has been rated jointly as No. 1. After that practice exercise, all other practice exercises should follow the joint rank-order given above.

Standard Practice Exercise for Couple Complaints

Practice Exercise No. _____ Title of Complaint: _____

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to understand more about the complaint listed in the title.

1. How did this complaint start? Please explain in detail.

2. How often does this complaint take place? Check which answer applies to you:

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| a. Practically every day | _____ | e. Once every 6 months | _____ |
| b. Once a week | _____ | f. Once a year | _____ |
| c. A couple of times a month | _____ | g. Once every few years | _____ |
| d. Once a month | _____ | | |

3. Please explain further.

4. What generated this complaint? Do you remember how it started? Check which answer fits best:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. As we met for the first time | _____ |
| b. During courtship or while dating | _____ |
| c. Before marriage or before we started living together | _____ |
| d. During the honeymoon or as we were moving in together | _____ |
| e. Right after the honeymoon or right after we moved in together | _____ |
| f. A few months after the marriage or after we moved in together | _____ |
| g. 1 year after the marriage or when we moved in together | _____ |
| h. Years after marriage or when we moved in together | _____ |

5. Please explain further.

6. What does this complaint get you? Please explain.

7. Give three specific examples of how this complaint is hurtful to you.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

8. Give three specific examples of how this complaint is hurtful to those you love and who love you.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

Homework: Next week, plan to repeat the behavior that caused the complaint, if it belongs to you, or remind you partner to repeat it if it belongs to him or her. Make sure it is repeated at preset times (for instance, at 8 a.m., 12 noon, 4 or 7 p.m.) on at least 3 days. Write down what happened in detail. In case you wonder why this behavior should be started, keep in mind that if you or your partner start it, whoever starts it will acquire the power to end it.

For each time make sure to answer in writing the following four questions:

- (a) How did it start?
- (b) What followed?
- (c) How did it end?
- (d) What did this behavior get you or your partner?

Time 1 (write the time when it started _____)

- a. _____
-
-

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Time 2 (write the time when it started _____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Time 3 (write time it started _____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Check which of the following shows what you got out of this practice exercise:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| a. Completely useless | _____ | d. Somewhat useful | _____ |
| b. Somewhat useless | _____ | e. Extremely useful | _____ |
| c. So-so | _____ | | |

Write down how you feel about this homework practice exercise and what you got out of it.

Concluding Follow-Up Form for Couple Complaints

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this final practice exercise is to review whether the practice exercises in this practice exercise were helpful to you.

1. Which answer best fits how you feel about this practice exercise?
- a. I did not like working on this practice exercise at all.
I wish I never saw it.

b. I did not like this practice exercise, but I am glad I got to work
on it.

c. I am happy I got a chance to work on this.

d. I am not only delighted about this practice exercise, but I
wish all couples with difficulties could get it.
2. How helpful was it to work on this practice exercise? Please check the answer
that applies to you:
- a. Not helpful at all

b. Somewhat helpful

c. Helpful

d. Very helpful
3. Which practice exercise did you like best that was the most helpful to you?
Please rank-order the practice exercises from the one that you liked best (Rank
No. 1) to the one you liked next best (Rank No. 2) and so on; mark as N/A the
ones you did not like at all or did not apply to you.

Complaints	Rank-orders		
	Mine	Partner	Joint
a. Trouble with children			
b. Trouble with in-laws			
c. Different social needs			
d. Conflicts about children			
e. Division of responsibilities			
f. Partner does not understand me			
g. Financial disagreements			

h.	Frequent arguments	_____	_____	_____
i.	Difficulty discussing problems	_____	_____	_____
j.	Less interested in talking to each other	_____	_____	_____
k.	Too little time spent together	_____	_____	_____
l.	Boredom	_____	_____	_____
m.	Physical attacks by partner	_____	_____	_____
n.	Being blamed for everything that goes wrong	_____	_____	_____
o.	Sexual dissatisfaction	_____	_____	_____
p.	Partner's alcoholism	_____	_____	_____
q.	Partner's drug use	_____	_____	_____
r.	Partner's chronic or recurrent illness	_____	_____	_____
s.	Partner's actual or suspected infidelity	_____	_____	_____
t.	Partner's stubbornness	_____	_____	_____
u.	Partner depends on me too much	_____	_____	_____
v.	Lack of ambition of partner	_____	_____	_____
w.	Partner's sloppiness	_____	_____	_____
x.	Partner's excessive neatness	_____	_____	_____
y.	Partner does not fill my emotional needs	_____	_____	_____
z.	Partner does not respect me	_____	_____	_____
aa.	A complaint not listed above	_____	_____	_____
bb.	A complaint not listed above	_____	_____	_____
cc.	A complaint not listed above	_____	_____	_____

4. Explain why you have rank-ordered the practice exercises the way you did.

5. Make an appointment with your partner at least 24 h ahead and write down in the appropriate column your partner's rank-orders. Discuss (compare and contrast) whatever differences you may find in your individual rank-orders.

6. After completion of this practice exercise, write how you feel about it. Check which of these answers tells how you felt about it. There is also space for you to explain further, if you want to:

- I did not like it at all, a waste of time. I wish I never saw this stupid practice exercise. _____
- I did not like it very much, but I want to go on with another practice exercise. _____

- c. I liked it and I want to go on with another practice exercise. _____
 - d. I liked it a lot and I wish I had something like this practice exercise earlier. _____
 - e. I liked it so much that I wish all couples could get something like this practice exercise to work on. _____
7. How could this practice exercise be improved? Do you have any suggestions? Feel free to write whatever could improve this practice exercise.

Sexuality

The purpose of this practice exercise is to improve your skills in your sexual presence and performance.

Practice Exercise 1. Description

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to get more information about your sleeping patterns and how they relate to your sexuality.

Please answer the following questions:

1. What time do you usually get up in the morning?

a. 5–6:30 a.m.	_____	d. 9:45–11 a.m.	_____
b. 6:30–7:45 a.m.	_____	e. 11 a.m.–noon	_____
c. 7:45–9:45 a.m.	_____		
2. How easy is it for you to get up in the morning?

a. Not at all easy	_____	c. Fairly easy	_____
b. Not very easy	_____	d. Very easy	_____
3. How tired do you feel the first half-hour after getting up?

a. Very tired	_____	c. Fairly refreshed	_____
b. Fairly tired	_____	d. Very refreshed	_____

4. If you have to take a test or examination, at what time do you think you will perform best?
- | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| a. From 8 to 10 a.m. | _____ | d. From 5 to 7 p.m. | _____ |
| b. From 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. | _____ | e. From 7 to 9 p.m. | _____ |
| c. From 1 to 5 p.m. | _____ | | |
5. One night you must remain awake between 4 and 6 a.m. to take your turn on a night-watch patrol. You have no commitments the next day. How would you prepare for it?
- | | | | |
|--|-------|---|-------|
| a. I would not go to bed until the watch is over | _____ | c. I would sleep before and a nap after | _____ |
| b. I would take a nap before and sleep after | _____ | d. I would get all the sleep I could before the watch | _____ |
6. A friend invites you to jog between 7 and 8 a.m. How do you think you would perform?
- | | | | |
|--------------------|-------|----------------------------------|-------|
| a. Well | _____ | c. Would find it hard to do | _____ |
| b. Reasonably well | _____ | d. Would find it very hard to do | _____ |
7. If you have to wake up at a specific time every morning, how dependent are you on an alarm clock?
- | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| a. Not at all dependent | _____ | c. Fairly dependent | _____ |
| b. Slightly dependent | _____ | d. Very dependent | _____ |
8. At what time in the evening do you feel tired and need sleep?
- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| a. 8–9 p.m. | _____ | d. 12:45–2 a.m. | _____ |
| b. 9–10:15 p.m. | _____ | e. 2–3 a.m. | _____ |
| c. 10:15 p.m.–12:45 a.m. | _____ | | |

Scoring:

1. Give yourself 5 points for a, 4 for b, 3 for c, 2 for d, and 1 for e.
2. Give 1 point for a, 2 for b, 3 for c, and 4 for d.
3. Give 1 point for a, 2 for b, 3 for c, and 4 for d.
4. Give 6 points for a, 4 for b, 2 for c, and 0 for d.
5. Give 1 point for a, 2 for b, 3 for c, and 4 for d.
6. Give 4 points for a, 3 for b, 2 for c, and 1 for d.
7. Give 4 points for a, 3 for b, 2 for c, and 1 for d.
8. Give 5 points for a, 4 for b, 3 for c, 2 for d, and 1 for e.

A 15 high score means positive sleep habits, while a 14 low score means negative sleep habits. What is important here is that you and your partner have compatible sleep habits with each other, so that you can get together sexually in a reasonable frame of mind and with a relaxed body.

9. Compare and contrast your answers and scores with your partner to see whether you are either a night owl or a morning lark or neither. What do you conclude about your sleep patterns and those of your partner?

10. How do you experience time in terms of (a) your interest and involvement in the past, the present, or the future; and (b) your experiencing it as slow or fast:

a. _____

b. _____

11. How often do these differences in sleep patterns and time involvement cause conflicts between you and your partner?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|--------------------------|-------|
| a. More than once a day | _____ | e. Every couple of weeks | _____ |
| b. Once a day | _____ | f. Once a month | _____ |
| c. Two or three times a week | _____ | g. Other (explain): | _____ |
| d. Once a week | _____ | | |

12. How strong are these differences?

- | | | | |
|--|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| a. Very strong, causing a lot of conflict between us | _____ | d. Moderate | _____ |
| b. Very strong, but we manage to handle them | _____ | e. Hardly strong at all | _____ |
| c. Strong enough | _____ | f. Other (explain): | _____ |

13. What areas of your relationship are most affected by differences considered in Questions 1 and 3? Rank the most troublesome 1, the second 2, down to the least troublesome:

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------|-------------------------------|-------|
| a. Chores around the house | _____ | e. Relationships with others | _____ |
| b. Schedules | _____ | f. Children and child rearing | _____ |
| c. Sex | _____ | g. Health | _____ |
| d. Money use and budgeting | _____ | h. Other (explain): | _____ |

14. Do the different speeds at which you and your partner work affect your relationship? Please explain:

15. What have you done to solve and resolve some of these differences?

16. Of the troublesome areas listed in Questions 6, pick the one that you would like to change the most. Explain why.

17. How does the past affect this problem area?

18. How does the present affect this area?

19. How does the future affect this area?

Homework: Get together with your partner by making an appointment at least 24 h in advance and discuss with each other various ways of dealing with this problem area. Write down possible solutions.

Practice Exercise 2. Explanations

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to explain in greater detail how you see your sexuality.

1. The following is a list of what different experiences of time do for families (in this case spouses or partners) with regard to sex and sexuality. Get together for at least 1 h and discuss which of the following explanations applies specifically to your relationship.

*Experiences**Rank-order*

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. Experiencing sex at a slow pace is a way of relishing the event and making me feel cared about | _____ |
| b. Experiencing sex at a fast pace is a way of feeling passion that is much stronger | _____ |
| c. Bringing up past sexual experiences is a way of affirming our current relationship; people don't compare relationships unless these relationships are very important to them | _____ |
| d. Sexual problems are a good opportunity to discuss important issues that otherwise might not get brought up; these kinds of discussions are important to a relationship because they offer a chance to grow | _____ |
| e. Different speeds are very useful in different situations; going at different speeds is a good way of expressing individuality | _____ |
| f. Experiencing the present only is a good way of enjoying the moment and the sensual pleasure of the moment; not worrying about the past or the future is a good way of expressing complete interest in your mate | _____ |
| g. Fantasizing about the future is a good way of finding out what you wish for; this is important for setting goals and acting upon them | _____ |
| h. Having differences in your experience of time that upset you is proof that you care deeply about one another; people who don't love each other don't care and don't get upset | _____ |
| i. Going very slowly as you experience sex and refusing to speed it up is a way of saying how important your mate is because you want this experience to last for a long time | _____ |
| j. Not having time for sex could be due to the intense schedules you keep to take care of your family | _____ |
2. Now that you have read and discussed whether or not these explanations apply to you, rank them from 1 (most important) to 10 (least important).
3. If none of these apply to you, write down what you think is the most likely explanation for the problem(s) you have.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
4. Compare and contrast your rank-orders with those of your partner, by making an appointment 24 h in advance. Discuss what differences are present and what you could do to reconcile them.

Homework: During the coming week, think about how different experiences of time in dealing with your sexuality can be improved. Explain in detail.

Then go back to what you have written at the end of the first practice exercise and write down in detail your own (not your partner's) step-by-step plan to deal with these issues.

Homework: Make an appointment 24 h in advance. See if the two plans can be put together. Each of you should then write down what possible solutions could be worked out by putting both plans together. Do not talk about these plans. Do all of the communication in writing if you want to find a solution. If you do not want a solution, keep on talking and see if you come up with one.

Practice Exercise 3. Prescriptions

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you achieve greater control over your sexuality.

If you do not want to resolve your time differences in the area of sexuality, then you should ignore these guidelines. Although they may seem strange, just consider them steps toward your goal of a better sex life. You have been putting so much energy into having a positive sexual experience. Now put your energies in planning and having a bad sexual experience. In this way you may become free to have a better experience.

1. Be sure to set an appointment at least 24 h in advance to fail in your sexual experience. *It is important that you do everything you can to make this experience not work.* It needs to be planned in the future as well so that you can prepare for it. Set a time when sex would most likely occur naturally. Make sure that you will not be interrupted by the phone or by children. Set a timer for 30 minute. Then go ahead and begin to use completely different speeds and other time factors, such as bringing up the past and fantasizing about the future or

whatever will most likely cause failure. It might seem strange or weird to you, but if you can fail on purpose, you may succeed on purpose.

2. Follow these instructions without talking about this project. Do this as naturally as you can. However, do pay attention to what is happening so that you can discuss it afterward. Be sure to support each other so that one of you will not give in and fail this project by having a good sexual experience. It is important that neither of you give up.
3. You may even make this experience more extreme by exaggerating the time elements that cause you to fail.
4. Plan to do this experience at least three times during the next 2 weeks. You may discontinue this project only if the problem disappears. If this problem comes back when you are not trying to fail, implement the same procedure immediately. Go ahead and make that experience as unsuccessful as possible.
5. Take notes on the conversations that you have about your experience as well as of what happened in the experience. Discuss these notes with whoever has given you these practice exercises.

Note: If these homework practice exercises did not work for you, you need to consult with a specialist in the area of sexuality. Do not give up; keep in mind that people who care for themselves are the ones who ask for help.

Depression

The purpose of this practice exercise is to teach you how to deal with depression and depressive feelings.

Practice Exercise 1. Terrific Triangles: The Family Drama

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to learn more about destructive patterns that interfere with living with loved ones.

1. To keep the couple or family together and to protect it from change, we often create a triangle in which we, in one way or another, play all three parts at different times. The three parts are the victim, the persecutor, and the rescuer. These basic parts have variations within themselves. For instance, we may play the judge of other family members, and, on the basis of this part, we may then become jury and executioner. Below you will find three lists that relate to the three basic parts. Read them.

<i>Persecutor</i>	<i>Victim</i>	<i>Rescuer</i>
Judge	Criminal	Therapist
Parent	Defendant	Know-it-all
Juror	Invalid (sick)	Expert (teacher, preacher, consultant)
Policeman	Child	Big Daddy
Patriot	Drug addict	Tycoon
Detective	Servant	Peacemaker
Hellfire-and-brimstone preacher	Martyr	Caretaker Red Cross nurse or paramedic
Executioner	Sinner	Meddler
Inquisitor	Culprit	Saint/Missionary
Oppressor	"Poor little me"	Superman/Superwoman
Inspector general	Oppressed	Wholesaler
Interrogator	Innocent	Advice giver

2. Circle the part and the variations on the part that you recognize in yourself. Then indicate which of these parts you play best (a), second best (b), and third best(c). Write in detail how you play each part.

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

3. What happens to your partner or the rest of the family when you play these parts? Explain in detail.

4. Do you need to play these parts and what do you get out from playing them? Explain in detail.

5. Who is responsible for your playing these parts?

6. How do you get yourself set up to play these parts? Explain in detail.

7. Unless you like playing these parts and you do get something positive out of playing them, how can you avoid setting yourself up to play them? Explain in detail.

Homework: During the coming week, you must continue to play these three parts as you have done in the past. However, from now on jot down and log every time you find yourself playing one of these parts. In addition, since keeping logs is usually not enough, make an appointment with yourself or your partner (if you have one) at specific, prearranged times (e.g., 8 o'clock p.m. on Tuesdays) to play these parts and learn to control them, rather than these parts controlling you. The purpose of these meetings is for you to become aware of how these parts are played within and without the family. If necessary you may need more than one meeting to play these parts until these parts no longer effect you and the family (unless, of course, the family wants to continue playing these parts). Keep notes of these meetings to discuss with your professional helper.

Practice Exercise 2. Terrific Triangles: Distance in the Family

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to learn about another destructive pattern that increases depression in families.

Another terrific triangle we often play to keep the family together and protect it from change has three parts: the pursuer, the distancer, and the distance regulator.

For instance, a distancer may avoid emotional closeness but become a pursuer sexually. An emotional pursuer, by the same token, may become a sexual distancer. The distance regulator may want people to come close, but when they do, they are put off or even rejected. Write your responses below.

1. Which of these parts do you play best?
2. How do you play it?
3. Which of these parts do you play second best?
4. How do you play it?
5. Which of these parts do you play third best?
6. How do you play it?
7. What happens to you and to the rest of the family when you play these parts? Please explain in detail.
8. How do you set yourself up to play these parts?
9. Unless you like playing them and you get something out of playing them, how can you avoid setting yourself up to play them?

Homework: Make sure to continue playing these parts until each family member is completely aware of how destructive these parts are. Discuss (compare and contrast) your answers with your partner/family members and keep notes about the discussion. Discuss these notes with your professional helper.

Practice Exercise 3. Defining Depression

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to define depression as you understand it. There are many definitions of depression and it is important that members of the family define it as they see it.

1. What does depression mean to you?
2. Are you willing to consider the following explanations of depression? (For this step it is sufficient to read the opinions listed below):

Definitions

Rank-order

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. Depression is a valuable signal that we could use other people's help and support in our lives | _____ |
| b. Being depressed is a sign of our strength and willingness to recognize what we are feeling; many people are unwilling or unable to recognize their depression! | _____ |
| c. Depression is a feeling that all of us experience to some degree; we cannot live and not be depressed because all of us, as human beings, are vulnerable to hurts | _____ |

Definitions	Rank-order
d. Saying that we are depressed indicates that we know how we feel inside and that therefore we can begin to do something about it; if we did not know how we felt or if we did not admit to feeling depressed, we might do something destructive, such as drinking, abusing drugs, gambling, etc.	_____
e. Depression can be a useful feeling and one that, used correctly, may eventually lead us to understand and appreciate its importance	_____
f. Instead of being considered an enemy and a foe, depression can be thought of as a friend: something we are able to join, use well, and, eventually, something we learn to live with and even enjoy	_____
g. Depression is the royal road to self and selfhood; it allows us to have time to ourselves, to be by ourselves, to listen to ourselves, and thus to learn more about ourselves	_____
h. When we experience our depression fully, we are being honest and real with ourselves; when we deny or reject our depression, we are being phony, essentially withdrawing from our emotional selves	_____
i. Depression is a choice; up to now, depression has controlled you, your life, and perhaps your marriage and your family; perhaps you can choose whether you allow it to control you or you will learn how to control it	_____
3. After you have read these explanations of depression, rank them from 1 to 9, according to how closely each of them resembles you in your depression; rank the most familiar or applicable with No. 1; rank the second most familiar with No. 2, and so on, ranking the least familiar to you with No. 9.	
4. If none of the preceding descriptions fit you in any way, please explain why.	
5. Even if none of the descriptions seems to fit you, try choosing three that seem as if they might be useful to you as a way of describing depression.	
6. If any of the descriptions do fit you, please explain how.	

Homework: During the next few days, choose three of the most applicable, or useful, descriptions of depression and notice carefully how well (or how poorly) these descriptions apply to depression during the coming week.

Practice Exercise 4. The Positive Element

Name _____ Sex ____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you see that there may even be some good in what at first seems to be such a bad, negative experience of depressed feelings.

1. We need to check last week's homework. How well did the descriptions you chose apply to your depression during the week?
2. As you may have noticed, depression often contains a positive element that is helpful to the person who is depressed. Write down two of the positive or useful aspects of your depression – however small or insignificant they appear to be.
3. Because depression may contain some useful and valuable ingredients, it would not make sense (nor would it be possible) to try to eliminate depression. We cannot be alive and not be depressed. It may, however, be useful to learn from it and to control it by deciding when to experience depression.

Homework: During the coming week, allow yourself to be depressed. Now, on three separate occasions, pay attention to the positive and valuable aspects of your depression. Notice the subtle, perhaps small, but real benefits of this experience. Write down the results of this homework practice exercise. In addition, during the week, decide whether the depression is controlling you and your family or whether you and the family want to control the depression.

Practice Exercise 5. Achieving Control

Name _____ Sex ____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you achieve greater control over depression. You must make up your mind whether depression is going to control you and your family or whether you and your family are going to control it. One way to learn greater control is to make sure that regular, preset meetings will take place for the family members to share what they are learning from these homework practice exercises.

1.
 - a. We need to check last week's homework. What positive or useful aspects of your depression were you able to find?
 - b. Did you find that you controlled the depression, or was the depression controlling you?
2. Despite the usefulness of depression, most people seem to allow their depression to control and overwhelm them. You will learn that you can choose to allow your depression to control you, or you can learn how to begin to control it. If you are interested in learning how to control your depression,

proceed to the next step. If not, stop here and list the many ways that depression is controlling your life and how you are going to let it control you and your family.

3. Although depression is a valuable and useful method of learning about ourselves, it is not enough simply to recognize this fact. It is important to achieve some control over when we choose to experience depression. To achieve some control over depression, we may begin by learning and practicing how to start being depressed. Thus, if you want to stop it, start it! Most people don't realize that they have the freedom to start a depression on command. We can start a depression by controlling its content. For example, we can start being depressed in the following ways:
 - a. By thinking negative thoughts about ourselves
 - b. By thinking negatively about the world around us
 - c. By thinking negatively about our future
4. Which method can you use to start to make yourself feel depressed? Which one works best for you? Do you have your own creative and effective ways of becoming depressed?
5. Although depression can often be a valuable and useful experience, it is helpful to learn to control it in order to use it at our leisure. We can control depression by starting it in a specific place at a specific time. Where do you most often tend to feel depressed? At home? At work? Outside?
 - a. At what times do you tend to feel most depressed? In the morning, the afternoon, the evening, or before going to bed?

Homework: During the coming week begin practicing to control depression by starting it two times during the week. However, make sure that you remain alone and isolated during these first depression practice sessions. It is important to be free of distractions so that you can allow yourself to experience your depression fully. In addition, start the depression at a prearranged time (e.g., 8 p.m.) and not when you most often feel depressed. Do, however, place a time limit on these depressive times. Do it for 20–30 minute at the most. Remember not to go over the agreed time limit. It may even be useful to set an alarm clock to remind you when the time is up. Finally, in addition to concentrating on being depressed, it is important that you write down all the thoughts and feelings that come to your mind during the controlled depression practice sessions. You can use the experience to learn more about yourself by reviewing your written notes. Good luck in taking this important step.

Practice Exercise 6. Flexible Control

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to learn better ways to control your depression.

1. We need to check on last week's practice exercise. Describe your two controlled depressive episodes. Review your notes on the main thoughts and feelings you had during these episodes.
2. What did you learn about yourself through these experiences?
3. If you didn't perform this homework practice exercise, do you feel somewhat depressed about that? If so, write down your thoughts and feelings on this matter. If not, make note of your growing ability not to have to perform perfectly at all times in order to feel OK.
4. Part of learning the art of control is acquiring flexibility and adapting to life's changing conditions. To improve your control of your depression, you may have to arrange to be depressed at different times, for different periods of time, and under varying situations. In this way, you can begin to master your depressive episodes and to learn to observe and study them in all kinds of situations.
 - a. At what time do you tend to feel somewhat less depressed?
 - b. In what places (home, work, etc.) do you tend to feel less depressed?
 - c. Under what conditions (working, socializing, exercising, etc.) do you tend to feel somewhat less depressed?

Homework: To acquire further control over your depression, during the coming week practice getting depressed three times, for 20 minute each time. However, arrange these periods to take place (a) at times that are prearranged at least 24 h ahead, and (b) in places where you often tend to feel less depressed. Write down everything you think and feel at the time of the appointment. Make sure you keep a written record. Discuss your notes with your professional helper. Remember to recall and write down for later review what you experience during these controlled depressive times.

Practice Exercise 7. Letting Others Help

Name _____ Sex ____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to use depression to allow others to help you without your rejecting them in order to be miserable all by yourself.

1. Did you do your homework on arranging three depressive times this week? What new insights (if any) did you have about your inner depressive processes?

2. As we mentioned in an earlier lesson, depression can be viewed as an ally, a friend who reminds us that we could use other people's help and support. Who do you most often discuss your depression with?
3. To further increase your control over your depression, it would be useful to enlist the help of these people. Which of the people you listed could you ask to help you to control your depression? If there is no one, try to think of someone who might be willing to help you out (a friend, family member, coworker, professional helper).
4. Sometimes it is difficult to find the energy to remember to schedule a depression a specific number of times during the week. A friend can help by reminding you to do so.

Homework: During this coming week, find someone who will be willing to remind you to schedule some controlled depressive times during the week. That person can even help you to decide which days and how long to be depressed. (Make sure, however, that you practice at least three times this week. It is important to maintain your skill level.) In addition, your helper can check on your progress during the week to make sure that you are doing your homework correctly. Again, remember to record, in writing, your experience of these controlled depressions.

Practice Exercise 8. Using Depression

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to make sure that you have learned to use and even enjoy depression, by learning more about yourself.

1. Did you find someone to help you to schedule your depressions last week? Were you able to follow through and complete your practice exercise fully?
2. Review your notes on your depressions. Were you able to learn anything more about yourself during your self-initiated depressions?
3. What have you concluded about your growing ability to control your depression at will? Have you noticed any change in your feelings about yourself and that gold mine of potential self-knowledge – your depression?
4. Learning how to schedule, initiate, time, record, and review one's own depressions is clearly a difficult skill to master. Those who are willing and able to practice this skill usually feel more confident and feel better about themselves. They realize that they have truly accomplished something special. They have learned a new skill and have been able to use the depression, at their own leisure, to learn more about themselves. What was your experience of this process?
5. You are entitled to feel proud of yourself for having mastered this new skill. On the other hand, there is no need to feel depressed or to belittle yourself for not having completely mastered this skill. If, after completion of all these

lessons, you continue to feel uncomfortable depressed, stop and consider the following step. Pay attention to your depression; remember that it can be a signal reminding us that we need to ask others for help. Are you strong enough to ask for help? Only the strong can give themselves permission to seek help from others.

Depression Feedback Form

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this form is to receive your feedback about the helpfulness and usefulness of this practice exercise to help control depression. Now that you have completed this practice exercise, respond to the following questions concerning the use of these written homework practice exercises.

- Using a scale of 1–8, rank the practice exercises according to their usefulness in coping with depression. Rank the most useful task as No. 1. Rank the second most useful as No. 2, and so on until you rank the least useful as No. 8.

<i>Practice Exercise</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Practice Exercise</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Drama triangle	_____	Achieving control	_____
Distance triangle	_____	Flexible control	_____
Defining depression	_____	Letting others help	_____
The positive element	_____	Using depression	_____

- How useful did you find this practice exercise in understanding and coping with depression?

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| a. Very useful | _____ | d. Slightly useful | _____ |
| b. Quite useful | _____ | e. Not at all useful | _____ |
| c. Somewhat useful | _____ | | |

- How useful would you rate this practice exercise in terms of developing or improving your attitude toward yourself in general?

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| a. Very useful | _____ | d. Slightly useful | _____ |
| b. Quite useful | _____ | e. Not at all useful | _____ |
| c. Somewhat useful | _____ | | |

- How likely would you be to recommend this practice exercise to other people you know who might be depressed?

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| a. Very likely | _____ | d. Slightly likely | _____ |
| b. Quite likely | _____ | e. Not likely at all | _____ |
| c. Somewhat likely | _____ | | |

5. your own words, what did you find useful about this practice exercise?
6. comments could you give that could improve this practice exercise? We would appreciate any suggestions that would make this practice exercise better.

Difficulties

The purpose of this practice exercise is to improve your relationship with your partner, either in the marriage or in a committed couple relationship. Answer each practice exercise individually and get together with your partner at preset times (arranged at least 24 h ahead) to share and discuss your completed practice exercises for no longer than 1 h. If you get upset during this time, end the discussion to cool off, and make another appointment for another time at least 24 h ahead.

Practice Exercise 1. Defining Difficulties

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you define more clearly the nature of difficulties most couples encounter in their relationships. Make sure that you understand and discuss with each other the meaning of each difficulty that makes up this practice exercise.

1. Below are listed various difficulties that cover a range of possibilities. If you have a difficulty not found in this list, add it at the end (there is room for additional difficulties). Define each difficulty, and give two examples of how that difficulty is shown concretely in your relationship.

<i>Difficulties and Definitions</i>	<i>Examples</i>
a. Doubts about the relationship's future (divorce; separation) _____ _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
b. Disrespectful behavior (intentional rudeness, contemptuous remarks, blatant disregard for partner's desires, lying) _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____
c. Extramarital intimacy boundary issues (jealousy, use of pornography, dancing with other people) _____	Example 1 _____ _____ Example 2 _____ _____

- d. Excessive or inappropriate displays of anger (innocuous or innocent situation leads to partner getting angry; unfair accusation; yelling or attacking) _____
Example 1 _____
Example 2 _____
- e. Sexual interaction (initiation, arousal, frequency, interest) _____
Example 1 _____
Example 2 _____
- f. Lack of communication (refusal to talk, not sharing feelings, not expressing desires) _____
Example 1 _____
Example 2 _____
- g. In-laws and extended family (conflict with in-laws, time spent with relatives, spouse's behavior around extended family) _____
Example 1 _____
Example 2 _____
- h. Confusing, erratic, or emotional behavior (suddenly becoming upset, sudden change of mind, behavior that contradicts a previous plan) _____
Example 1 _____
Example 2 _____
- i. Criticism (correcting, blaming, explaining how partner should have done something, challenging partner's viewpoint) _____
Example 1 _____
Example 2 _____
- j. Poor communication skills (being unclear or hard to understand, failure to negotiate) _____
Example 1 _____
Example _____

- k. Child-rearing issues (discipline, expectations, partner's behavior in front of children) _____
Example 1 _____
Example 2 _____
- l. Finances (how to spend money, dealing with bills, shopping) _____
Example 1 _____
Example 2 _____
- m. Lack of follow-through (disregarding previous plans or commitments with partner, not doing something as agreed, forgetting to keep a promise) _____
Example 1 _____
Example 2 _____
- n. Showing support in public or social situations (contradicting spouse in front of others, not standing up to others on spouse's behalf) _____
Example 1 _____
Example 2 _____
- o. Showing affection (lack of comfort, not showing affection, lack of romance) _____
Example 1 _____
Example 2 _____
- p. Lack of listening (poor listening, not listening, problem solving instead of understanding, defensive listening) _____
Example 1 _____
Example 2 _____
- q. Annoying behavior (unconventional behavior, wishing partner would change a habit, use of undesirable language, bothersome idiosyncrasies, lack of punctuality, etc.) _____
Example 1 _____
Example 2 _____
- r. Important decisions (major purchases, vacations, where to live, job change, retirement, education plans) _____
Example 1 _____
Example 2 _____

- s. Extent or quality of time together (wanting more intimate time together, time for quality communication, being too tired or too busy to do activities together) _____
 Example 1 _____

 Example 2 _____

- t. Careless or unthinking behavior (mistakes that cause inconvenience, forgetting something) _____
 Example 1 _____

 Example 2 _____

- u. Household tasks (chores, cleanliness, responsibilities, standards and methods of household maintenance) _____
 Example 1 _____

 Example 2 _____

- v. Showing recognition or appreciation (failure to notice or appreciate something, failure to acknowledge skills and competencies) _____
 Example 1 _____

 Example 2 _____

- w. Outside frustration or potential stress (worries about the job or having a bad day) _____
 Example 1 _____

 Example 2 _____

- x. Social and entertainment activities (whether to attend something) _____
 Example 1 _____

 Example 2 _____

- y. A difficulty not listed above _____

 Example 1 _____

 Example 2 _____

- z. A complaint not listed above _____

 Example 1 _____

 Example 2 _____

2. Now that you have defined the meaning of these difficulties, you need to rank-order them according to how troublesome they are to you in this relationship. Rank as No. 1 the difficulty that is the most troublesome to you, rank as No. 2 the difficulty that is next troublesome to you, and so on; mark as N/A the difficulties that may not be troublesome to you at all or that does not apply to this relationship.

<i>Difficulties</i>	<i>Rank-Orders</i>		
	<i>Mine</i>	<i>Partner</i>	<i>Joint</i>
a. Doubts about the relationship's future	_____	_____	_____
b. Disrespectful behavior	_____	_____	_____
c. Extramarital intimacy boundary	_____	_____	_____
d. Excessive or inappropriate displays of anger	_____	_____	_____
e. Sexual interaction	_____	_____	_____
f. Lack of communication	_____	_____	_____
g. In-laws and extended family	_____	_____	_____
h. Confusing, erratic, or emotional behavior	_____	_____	_____
i. Criticism	_____	_____	_____
j. Poor communication skills	_____	_____	_____
k. Child-rearing issues	_____	_____	_____
l. Finances	_____	_____	_____
m. Lack of follow-through	_____	_____	_____
n. Showing support in public or social situations	_____	_____	_____
o. Showing affection	_____	_____	_____
p. Lack of listening	_____	_____	_____
q. Annoying behavior	_____	_____	_____
r. Important decisions	_____	_____	_____
s. Extent or quality of time together	_____	_____	_____
t. Careless or unthinking behavior	_____	_____	_____
u. Household tasks	_____	_____	_____
v. Showing recognition or appreciation	_____	_____	_____
w. Outside frustration or potential stress	_____	_____	_____
x. Social and entertainment activities	_____	_____	_____
y. A difficulty not listed above	_____	_____	_____
z. A complaint not listed above	_____	_____	_____

Homework: During the coming week, make an appointment with your partner and go over your definitions and your rank-orders of your difficulties as you see them. Record your partner's rank-orders in the appropriate column and add both to achieve a joint rank-order. Take notes of your discussion while you are discussing (comparing and contrasting) your answers. Give your completed practice exercises and your notes to the professional who is assisting you with this practice exercise. If

you do not have a professional helping you with this practice exercise, ask the advice of a friend to break any deadlock you both may have reached.

Whatever joint rank-order you agree with will determine the order of future practice exercises. The next practice exercise must be given the title of the joint complaint that has been rated together as No. 1. After that practice exercise, all other practice exercises should follow the joint rank-order given above.

Standard Practice Exercise for Couple Difficulties

Practice Exercise No. ____ Title of Difficulty _____

Name _____ Sex ____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to understand more about the difficulty listed in the title.

1. How did this difficulty start? Explain in detail.

2. How often does this difficulty take place? Check which answer applies to you:

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| a. Practically every day | _____ | e. Once every 6 months | _____ |
| b. Once a week | _____ | f. Once a year | _____ |
| c. A couple of times a month | _____ | g. Once every few years | _____ |
| d. Once a month | _____ | | |

3. Please explain further.

4. How did this difficulty come about? Do you remember how it started? Check which answer fits best:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. As we met for the first time | _____ |
| b. During courtship or while dating | _____ |
| c. Before marriage or before we started living together | _____ |
| d. During the honeymoon or as we were moving in together | _____ |

- e. Right after the honeymoon or right after we moved in together _____
- f. Few months after the marriage or after we moved in together _____
- g. 1 year after the marriage or when we moved in together _____
- h. Years after marriage or when we moved in together _____

5. Please explain further.

6. What does this difficulty get you? Please explain.

7. Give three specific examples of how this difficulty is hurtful to you.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

8. Give three specific examples of how this difficulty is hurtful to those you love and who love you.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

Homework: Next week, plan to repeat this difficulty, if it belongs to you, or remind you partner to repeat it if it belongs to him or her. Make sure it is repeated at pre-set times (for instance, at 8 a.m., 12 noon, 4 or 7 p.m.), at least three times. Write down what happened in detail. In case you wonder why this difficulty should be started, keep in mind that if you or your partner start it, whoever starts it on time, will acquire the power to end it. For each time make sure to answer in writing the following four questions:

- (a) How did it start?
- (b) What followed?
- (c) How did it end?
- (d) What did this behavior get you or your partner?

Time 1 (write the time when it started _____)

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

Time 2 (write the time when it started_____)

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

Time 3 (write time it started_____)

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

Check which of the following indicates what you got out of this practice exercise:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| a. Completely useless | _____ | d. Somewhat useful | _____ |
| b. Somewhat useless | _____ | e. Extremely useful | _____ |
| c. So-so | _____ | | |

Write down how you feel about this homework practice exercise and what you got out of it.

Concluding Follow-Up Form for Couple Difficulties

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this final practice exercise is to review whether the practice exercises in this practice exercise were helpful to you.

1. How do you feel about this practice exercise?
 - a. I did not like working on this practice exercise at all. I wish I never saw it. _____
 - b. I did not like this practice exercise, but I am glad I got to work on. _____
 - c. I am happy I got a chance to work on this. _____
 - d. I am not only delighted about this practice exercise, but I wish all husbands who use abusive or violent thinking could get it. _____

2. How helpful was it to work on this practice exercise? Please check the answer that applies to you:
- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| a. Not helpful at all | _____ | c. Helpful | _____ |
| b. Somewhat helpful | _____ | d. Very helpful | _____ |
3. Which practice exercise did you like best that was the most helpful to you? Rank-order the practice exercises. Rank as No. 1 the one that you liked best, rank as No. 2 the one you liked next best, and so on; mark as N/A the ones you did not like at all or did not apply to you.

<i>Difficulties</i>	<i>Rank-Orders</i>		
	<i>Mine</i>	<i>Partner</i>	<i>Joint</i>
a. Doubts about the relationship's future	_____	_____	_____
b. Disrespectful behavior	_____	_____	_____
c. Extramarital intimacy boundary	_____	_____	_____
d. Excessive or inappropriate displays of anger	_____	_____	_____
e. Sexual interaction	_____	_____	_____
f. Lack of communication	_____	_____	_____
g. In-laws and extended family	_____	_____	_____
h. Confusing, erratic, or emotional behavior	_____	_____	_____
i. Criticism	_____	_____	_____
j. Poor communication skills	_____	_____	_____
k. Child-rearing issues	_____	_____	_____
l. Finances	_____	_____	_____
m. Lack of follow-through	_____	_____	_____
n. Showing support in public or social situations	_____	_____	_____
o. Showing affection	_____	_____	_____
p. Lack of listening	_____	_____	_____
q. Annoying behavior	_____	_____	_____
r. Important decisions	_____	_____	_____
s. Extent or quality of time together	_____	_____	_____
t. Careless or unthinking behavior	_____	_____	_____
u. Household tasks	_____	_____	_____
v. Showing recognition or appreciation	_____	_____	_____
w. Outside frustration or potential stress	_____	_____	_____
x. Social and entertainment activities	_____	_____	_____
y. A difficulty not listed above	_____	_____	_____
z. A complaint not listed above	_____	_____	_____

4. Explain why you have rank-ordered the practice exercises the way you did.

5. Make an appointment with your partner and write down in the appropriate column your partner's rank-orders. Discuss (compare and contrast) whatever differences you may find in your individual rank-orders.

6. After completion of this practice exercise, write how you feel about it. Check which of these answers tells how you felt about it. There is also space for you to explain further, if you want to:

- a. I did not like it at all, a waste of time. I wish I never saw this stupid practice exercise. _____
- b. I did not like it very much, but I want to go on with another practice exercise. _____
- c. I liked it and I want to go on with another practice exercise. _____
- d. I liked it a lot and I wish I had something like this practice exercise earlier. _____
- e. I liked it so much that I wish all couples could get something like this practice exercise to work on. _____

7. How could this practice exercise be improved? Do you have any suggestions? Feel free to write whatever could improve this practice exercise.

Arguing or Fighting

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you stop arguing and fighting in favor of negotiating over your differences. However, before learning how to negotiate, you need to give up arguing and fighting as a way of connecting with each other. It will not be easy but you should to give it a good try.

Practice Exercise 1. Description

Name _____ Sex ____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is for each of you, independently of the other partner, to write about your arguing or fighting. After you have answered this practice exercise individually, set up an appointment at least 24 h ahead to discuss your answers with each other. If you get too angry during this discussion, take time out and get together within 24–48 h.

1. Define what an argument or fight is for you.

2. How does it take place in your home?

3. How often do you have these arguments or fights?

- a. Once a day or more _____
- b. Two or three times a week _____
- c. Once a week _____
- d. Once a month _____
- e. Once every 2 or 3 months _____
- f. Never or hardly ever _____

4. How long do these arguments or fights last?

- a. Sometimes the whole day or more _____
- b. A couple of hours or half a day _____
- c. About an hour or more _____
- d. Less than 30 minute _____
- e. 1 minute at the most _____

5. How heated, strong, or intense are these arguments or fights?

- a. Very strong to the point of physical violence _____
- b. Very intense but without physical violence _____
- c. Strong and verbally abusive _____
- d. Not very strong _____
- e. We get excited but we calm down soon _____
- f. Usually we keep cool and rational _____
- g. We never lose our cool, we just avoid each other _____
- h. We do not argue or fight, we just bicker _____
- i. Other (explain): _____

6. How do these arguments or fights get started?

- a. I usually start them _____
- b. My partner usually starts them _____
- c. Sometimes I start them, sometimes my partner starts them _____
- d. I don't know _____
- e. Other (explain): _____

7. How do these arguments or fights end?

- a. We kiss and make up _____
- b. We stay mad for hours _____
- c. We stay mad for days _____
- d. We stay mad for weeks on end _____
- e. We stay away from each other until we have another argument or fight _____
- f. Other (explain): _____

8. What are the major problems that start the argument or fight? Rank 1 for the most troublesome problem, 2 for second, etc. down to the least troublesome problem.

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|
| a. Money | _____ | e. Parents or in-laws | _____ |
| b. Sex | _____ | f. Friends | _____ |
| c. Working hours and schedule | _____ | g. Neighbors | _____ |
| d. Children | _____ | h. Other (explain): | _____ |

9. Add whatever information you feel is important to better understand your arguments or fights. After you have answered these questions make an appointment (at least 24 h in advance) with your partner to look over your answers and to talk about them together. If possible, keep notes of your discussion and bring this completed practice exercise and your notes to your professional helper.

Practice Exercise 2. Explanations

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to find out what explanations you have for your arguing or fighting. If you do not like the explanations given below, come up with your own. After you have completed this practice exercise, get together (by preset appointment only) with your partner to compare and discuss your answers. If you get too angry, take time out and set up another appointment 24 or 48 h ahead.

A. Here is a list of what arguments or fights usually do for couples. Read them carefully on your own and think about which of the following explanations applies specifically to your relationship or family.

Arguments

Rank-order

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Arguments are a good way of being involved, because as long as we spend energy on each other, we do not have to waste this energy either on our selves or outside of the family | _____ |
| 2. Arguments are one way of showing we care passionately about our family; usually we do not argue or fight with strangers or people we do not really care about | _____ |

*Arguments**Rank-order*

3. Arguments can be a good form of distraction; as long as we argue we do not need to worry about bills to be paid, how to set limits on each other, etc. _____
 4. Arguments can also be a form of protection; we keep each other busy arguing so that the other one will not get depressed or leave the home or do more destructive things _____
 5. Arguments are good ways of finding out how far we can go with each other and other members of the family; every time we have an argument, we test the limits of each other's endurance and patience _____
 6. Arguments are a good way of blowing off steam and expressing oneself and letting other(s) in the family know how we feel about what we argue about _____
 7. Arguments can be good way of providing excitement where there is nothing but boredom and apathy; they are a good way of proving we are alive _____
 8. Arguments are one way of showing we are attracted to someone we love; we usually avoid people we do not like; therefore, arguments are better than withdrawing and avoiding contact by leaving the house _____
 9. Arguments are one form of confrontation that indicate the need for change and progress in the family; without these confrontations, there would not be any improvement _____
 10. Arguments are one form of conflict that is necessary in all families to settle accounts and to even scores among the various parties; without conflict, family members would not know how and where everybody stands on any problem _____
- B. Now that you have read whether or how these explanations apply to you and to your relationship, rank-order them from the one that seems to apply the best to the one that applies the least to your arguments/fights. Rank as No. 1 the one that applies the most to you, rank as No. 2 the one that applies to you next best, and so on, down the line to the one that does not apply to you at all (No. 10).
- C. If none of these explanations applies to you, disregard them and write down what you think is the most likely explanation for these arguments or fights.

- D. What have you (personally, not your partner) done to improve these arguments or fights?

- E. What could you (personally, not your partner) do to improve these arguments or fights? Explain in detail.

- F. What could your partner do to improve these arguments or fights?

- G. How are your present arguments or fights similar to or different from those your parents had (or failed to have)?

Homework: Make an appointment (at least 24 h ahead of time) to discuss (compare and contrast) your individual answers. It would help if you kept written notes of your discussion to bring to your professional helper.

Practice Exercise 3. Prescriptions

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to show you how to argue or fight dirty. Have you ever had a clean argument or fight? If you have, more power to you. The more aware you become of how you argue or fight, the better will you be able to

give it up. However, you will not be able to give it up until you are completely aware of how wasteful these arguments or fights are.

Here are guidelines on how to argue or fight really dirty. Note that if you want ensure that both of you and the whole family will lose, disregard completely these guidelines. You may also follow part of these guidelines and ignore other parts or withdraw completely and avoid confrontation and conflict. If you do not want to learn anything, keep on avoiding having any argument or fighting. In this way you will ensure that these arguments will go on. If you are interested in both you and your partner failing at arguments, as well as in other areas of your life, you may not only ignore these guidelines but also find something wrong with the author of these guidelines (He also is no darn good!)

- A. Be sure to set an appointment date for the fight or argument at least 24 h in advance. It would be most helpful if you could agree (although it may be impossible) for you to argue on a regular schedule, like at a specific time on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, or Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, or just on weekends, 8 o'clock, 9 o'clock, etc.
- B. Choose a comfortable setting, preferably at the dining room or kitchen table or in the living room. You will need a table to take notes. Make sure that you sit as close to each other as possible.
- C. Just before the argument or fight is to start, set a timer or alarm clock for just 1 h. Stop the argument as soon as the alarm rings. If your argument is not finished, reschedule the time for another argument at least 24 h in advance, then separate and go as far away from each other as your house (and your partner) will allow. If or when you meet again for a second argument, make sure you set the timer for 1 h.
- D. Make a tape recording of your argument or fight. This recording is absolutely necessary. If you do not have a recording device, borrow or rent one. Also keep detailed written notes of what happened during and after the argument. Write down what you think or feel went on during the argument.
- E. Follow as much as you can the following six destructive patterns that take place in most couple difficulties. If you follow a destructive pattern not contained in these instructions, make detailed notes of this pattern, describe it in detail, and bring it up the next time you meet with your counselor. In arguing, be sure to follow these seven destructive patterns as closely as possible:
 1. Use "You" statements exclusively, accusing, blaming, and name-calling each other as much as you can. For instance, use "You never_" and "You always_" statements as much as possible. Do not use either "I" or "We" statements under any conditions.
 2. Keep bringing up the painful past in as much negative detail as possible. Keep remembering dates, places situations, and occasions where you were hurt deeply. Keep on hurting each other by reliving as much as possible all of your past painful experiences in this relationship, which were obviously

the fault of your partner. See if each of you can top the other in remembering as many painful details as possible. Do not forget (or let alone forgive!) any single possible past hurt!

3. Read each other's mind. Try to tell each other what you think or feel. Disclose to each other all of the many evil intentions each of you knows the other one harbors. Bring up all of the possible nasty and guilty thoughts or feelings that your partner is guilty of thinking and feeling, let alone doing.
4. Use emotional blackmail and bribery, such as, "If you do not do what I want, I will leave you," or "If you do not give me what I want, I will call the lawyer," or "Either you quit (drinking, gambling, etc.) or I will take the children away," etc.
5. As part of point 4, give each other ultimatums. Threaten each other with the worst possible consequences that will follow from your partner's behavior. Make sure to specify dates and circumstances when you will make good on your ultimatum.
6. Make as many excuses as you can to justify your own behavior, especially by using your partner's behavior as an excuse: "I did such and such because you did such and such." Do not allow your partner to make any excuses for his or her behavior. Follow the principle that it is perfectly acceptable to behave miserably as long as your partner behaves miserably as well! Have a really dirty argument. Bring the recording to the next meeting.
7. Try to distract your partner from the major issue you are arguing about. Change the topic, sidetrack to another argument, find other issues to talk about that are not connected to the one you are arguing or fighting about.

Have a Good Dirty Argument or Fight!

Practice Exercise 4. Instructions

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is for you to become painfully aware of, and perhaps give up, the destructive patterns that take place more often without you even knowing about them. The sooner you become aware of each destructive pattern, the better off you and your partner will be.

After recording the argument or fight prescribed in Practice Exercise No. 3 on a tape recorder, go back by yourself alone to listen to the recording of the argument or fight, without your partner. Below, there is list of the seven destructive patterns you were told to follow, plus whatever other pattern you have discovered that is

peculiar to your arguing or fighting. Listen to the recording carefully and note each time you (not your partner) are indulging in any one of these patterns:

1. "You" statements: Total _____
2. Bringing up the painful past: Total _____
3. Mind-reading: Total _____
4. Blackmail or bribery: Total _____
5. Ultimatums or threats: Total _____
6. Excuses: Total _____
7. Distracting: Total _____
8. Your peculiar pattern: Total _____

Show and discuss these results with your partner after s/he has completed the same practice exercise. Then bring them with a written summary of your discussion to your next meeting with your professional helper. You will receive practice exercises that are specifically geared to deal with destructive patterns in the order of the highest total scores first, moving down to the lowest.

Instructions to professional helper: Administer the next practice exercises to each partner according to the number of times each partner has scored on each particular pattern. For instance, if one partner has the highest number of "you" statements, he or she should be administered the "you" statements practice exercise. By the same token, if the other partner has the highest number of statements on "mind-reading," he or she should receive the "mind-reading" practice exercise. Continue to administer practice exercises according to the scores given in Practice Exercise No. 4 in a descending order from most frequent to least frequent, or until they are no longer necessary.

Practice Exercise About Making "You" Statements

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is for you to become aware of how hurtful and destructive "you" statements are to you, to your partner, and to your relationship, so that perhaps you can stop using them.

1. How often do you think and speak about your partner?
 - a. All the time _____
 - b. Quite often (more than twice a week) _____
 - c. Often enough (at least once a week) _____
 - d. Sometimes (once or twice as month) _____

2. When do you think about your partner? Check which answer applies best:

- a. Only when I am angry _____
- b. Only when I am sad _____
- c. Only when I hurt _____
- d. Only when I am upset _____
- e. Only when (please complete this sentence): _____

3. What is that you think about your partner?

- a. All negative _____
- b. More negative than positive _____
- c. More positive than negative _____
- d. All positive _____

4. Why do you think so much or so negatively about your partner? (Check more than one if appropriate):

- a. It keeps me busy and alive _____
- b. It distracts me from becoming sad _____
- c. It shows how much I care for my partner _____
- d. It takes away from my worries _____
- e. As long as I think and worry about my partner I do not have to worry about myself _____
- f. Give your own reason: . _____

5. What are your reactions to the possibility that thinking about your partner takes away from you and weakens your identity, hurting yourself?

6. What do you think about this other possibility: “I do not have to take responsibility for my behavior, because as long as I focus my energy on my partner, it leaves very little energy left for me to take care of myself and possibly change my behavior.”

7. What do you think about the possibility that thinking excessively or negatively about your partner puts the whole burden of change on your partner rather than on you?

8. Now think about the usual result of your thinking too much and/or negatively about your partner:

- a. What does it do to you?

- b. What does it do to the relationship?

- c. What does it do to your partner?

- d. What is the result, then, of your thinking excessively and/or negatively about your partner?

9. What would be the result if your partner were to do exactly what you are doing (that is, thinking excessively and/or negatively about you)?

10. Our language has mutually exclusive pronouns. If and when we use “you,” it will be impossible for us to use the “I” or “we” pronouns. What do you think about this statement?

11. What are your reactions to the statement that using the “you” pronoun, that is, thinking and talking about your partner excessively and/or negatively, is the cancer of relationships?

12. Think of one or more positive reasons for continuing to use the “you” pronoun in thinking and talking about your partner:

13. Sometimes we can think of destructive patterns (described in Practice Exercise No. 4) as “suicidal” patterns. Why would this be so? What does the term “suicidal” mean to you?

14. “Suicidal” means to kill oneself. What do you think about using any behavior of this kind as destructive rather than suicidal?

Homework: Next week, see what happens to you and to your partner when you use the pronoun “You” instead of the “I” or “We” pronouns. Make sure you use “You” at least three times. Describe in detail what happened and what the outcome was.

Time No. 1 How did you use the “You?”

Outcome

Time No. 2 How did you use the “You?”

Outcome

Time No. 3 How did you use the “You?”

Outcome

Homework: If you want to have a miserable relationship, or if you want your relationship to end, all you have to do is continue thinking excessively and/or negatively about your partner by using the pronoun “You.” Next week, write down three times when you used the pronouns “I” or “We” instead of the pronoun “You.” Describe in detail what happened before, during, and after you used them.

Time No. 1 Before

During

After

Time No. 2 Before

During

After

Time No. 3 Before

During

After

After you have completed this practice exercise, make an appointment at least 24 h in advance with your partner to show and discuss your answers and their implications for the future of your relationship. Keep notes of your discussion and bring them to your professional helper with your completed practice exercises.

Practice Exercise About Bringing Up the Painful Past

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is for you to become aware of how hurtful to yourself, to your partner, and to your relationship bringing up the past is, so that perhaps you will learn to stop doing it.

1. How often do you bring up the painful past when dealing with your partner?
 - a. Almost every day _____
 - b. At least once or twice a week _____
 - c. Once every 2 or 3 weeks _____
 - d. Once a month or less _____
 - e. Once in a blue moon _____
 - f. Never _____

If “f” is your answer, then this practice exercise must have been given to you in error. Check with your partner and your professional helper to find out why you were given this practice exercise.

2. When do you bring up the painful past?

- a. Only when we are fighting _____
- b. Only when we make love _____
- c. Anytime I feel bad, mad, or sad _____
- d. When (please complete as you see fit): _____

3. What does it get you to bring up hurts from the past? (Check more than one if appropriate):

- a. It makes me feel better about myself _____
- b. It makes my partner look bad _____
- c. I enjoy it _____
- d. It makes my partner feel bad _____
- e. Give your own reason: _____

4. What things (memories, events, episodes, hurts, etc.) from the past do you enjoy bringing up?

- | | | | |
|----------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| a. Always pleasant | _____ | d. Mostly unpleasant | _____ |
| b. Sometime pleasant | _____ | e. Always unpleasant | _____ |
| c. Mostly hurtful | _____ | f. None of the above | _____ |

5. What does bringing up the painful past do to:

a. You?

b. Your relationship?

c. Your partner?

6. What do you think about this statement: "As long as we keep on bringing up the painful past we have no time or energy left for a pleasant present or a better future?"

7. Suppose your partner kept on bringing up the painful past in the same way you do. What would happen:

a. To you?

b. To your relationship?

c. To your partner?

Homework: During the coming week, note how often you keep bringing up the painful past and write down what happened for at least three of the times:

a. To you:

Time No. 1

Time No. 2

Time No. 3

b. To your relationship:

Time No. 1

Time No. 2

Time No. 3

c. To your partner:

Time No. 1

Time No. 2

Time No. 3

After you have completed this practice exercise, make an appointment with your partner at least 24 h in advance to show, discuss, and compare your answers to the questions above. Summarize and record your discussion.

Practice Exercise About Mind Reading

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to make you aware of how hurtful mind reading is to you, to your relationship, and to your partner.

As part of your caring for and committing to your relationship, you might be spending a great deal of time and energy wondering what your partner feels, thinks, and does. Often you may even be sure that you know exactly beforehand, without asking or checking it out, what your partner feels, thinks, or does. This kind of behavior is frequent in couples who care a great deal about each other but who cannot separate one's self from the other's self. Does this behavior apply to you? If your answer is no, stop this exercise. If your answer is yes, go on.

1. How often do you wonder about your partner's feelings, thinking, motives, and behavior?

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| a. All the time | _____ | d. Rarely | _____ |
| b. Very often | _____ | e. Almost never | _____ |
| c. Often enough | _____ | | |

2. What do you wonder about or really know about your partner? Describe in detail:

- a. His/her feelings

b. His/her attitudes

c. His/her thinking

d. His/her motives

e. His/her behavior

f. Any other area or topic not covered by questions asked above:

3. Are there special or particular times when you wonder and know what your partner is feeling or thinking?

a. When we fight

b. When we make love

c. When we are apart

- d. When I feel sad _____
- e. When I am angry _____
- f. Any other occasion or situation not covered by the above items: _____

4. What does reading your partner's mind do for you?

- a. It makes me happier _____
- b. It makes my partner happier _____
- c. It keeps me busy _____
- d. It makes him/her mad _____
- e. It makes me sad _____
- f. It makes me feel better about myself _____
- g. Any other result not included in the above items: _____

5. What does reading your partner's mind do for your relationship?

- a. It improves it considerably _____
- b. It keeps it exciting _____
- c. It renews it _____
- d. It makes it worse _____
- e. It's the pits! _____

6. Describe in greater detail what reading your partner's mind does for you and for your relationship:

7. What would happen to your relationship if your partner read your mind the way you read your partner's?

8. Why do you think mind reading is a suicidal pattern in any close and prolonged relationship?

9. What would happen to you if you did not read your partner's mind?

10. What would happen to your relationship if you did not read your partner's mind?

Homework: During the coming week, write down every time you find yourself reading your partner's mind; keep track of at least three times. Record what happens to you and to your relationship when you read your partner's mind.

Time No. 1 What did your mind reading consist of?

What was the result of your mind reading?

Time No. 2 What did your mind reading consist of?

What was the result of your mind reading?

Time No. 3 What did your mind reading consist of?

What was the result of your mind reading?

Write down three times when you did *not* read your partner's mind and instead you asked and checked out what s/he was feeling, thinking, or planning to do. What happened?

Time No. 1

Time No. 2

Time No. 3

Homework: After you have finished answering this practice exercise, make an appointment with your partner at least 24 h in advance to discuss your answers to the questions above. Keep notes of your discussion and bring them with your completed practice exercises to your professional helper.

Practice Exercise About Blackmail/Bribery

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to make you aware of how hurtful blackmail or bribery is to you, to your partner, and to your relationship, so that perhaps you can stop doing it.

Most examples of this suicidal/homicidal pattern are emotional, and they are usually preceded by an “If,” as in, “If you do not do what I want, I will leave you.” In other words, emotional blackmail or bribery is an abusive form of control, coercion, and manipulation in order to get one’s way.

1. Do you use this pattern in your relationship? If your answer is no, you may stop this practice exercise. If your answer is yes, continue.

2. How often do you use it?

- a. Very often (once a day) _____
- b. Often (two or three times a week) _____
- c. Sometimes (once every 2 weeks) _____
- d. Seldom (once every 2 or 3 months) _____

3. How and when do you use blackmail? Describe in detail:

4. How and when do you use bribery?

5. What do you get out of using either blackmail or bribery?

6. How does this pattern affect your relationship?

7. How does this pattern affect your partner?

8. What happens or what would happen if or when your partner were to use this pattern with you?

9. Can you remember how you learned this pattern? When did you start using it?

10. Are you ready to give it up? If your answer is no, don't go any further. Keep on using this pattern and see what it gets you in the long run. If your answer is yes, then read on and do the following homework practice exercise.

Homework: During all of next week, use this pattern at least three times. Remember that: if you want to stop it, you have to learn to start it. Write in detail what specific kind of blackmail you used and the situation in which you used it. What was the result?

Time No. 1 Use

Result

Time No. 2 Use

Result

Time No. 3 Use

Result

Also during the next week record three times when you used bribery. How did you use it and what was the result?

Time No. 1 Use

Result

Time No. 2 Use

Result

Time No. 3 Use

Result

After completing this homework, make an appointment with your partner at least 24 h ahead of time to show and discuss your answers to this practice exercise. Bring your completed practice exercises and notes to your professional helper.

Practice Exercise About Excuses

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to show you how hurtful excuses are to you, to your partner, and to your relationship.

Often excuses are used to explain or justify one's behavior. For instance, you may use your partner's (rotten!) behavior to justify your own actions: "I did this and that because you did this and that." In other words, we make excuses for our (rotten!) behavior on the basis of our partner's behavior. Usually, however, we do not accept the same pattern of excuses from our partner. The premise behind this pattern is that it is perfectly acceptable to behave miserably as long as our partner behaves miserably as well!

1. How often do you use this pattern?
 - a. Very often (almost every day) _____
 - b. Often (once or twice a week) _____
 - c. Sometimes (once or twice a month) _____
 - d. Seldom (once every 2 or 3 months) _____
 - e. Never _____

If you never use excuses, then this practice exercise was given to you by mistake. Discuss this possibility with your partner and your professional helper. If either one (partner or helper) feels that you do use excuses while you do not feel you do, let them record your excuses in writing and present them to you after 1 or 2 weeks. Only then will you be able to go on with this practice exercise.

2. How do you make excuses? Describe in detail:

-
-
3. What does this pattern mean? Check more than one if necessary:
- a. I am unable to take responsibility for myself and my behavior _____
 - b. I behave better than my partner _____
 - c. My partner is wrong and I am right _____
 - d. My behavior is excusable, but my partner's behavior is not _____
 - e. As long as my partner behaves miserably I have the same right _____
 - f. Write your own explanation: _____
-
-
-
-
-

4. How do you react to the following statement: "Children find excuses for their behavior; adults need to take responsibility for their actions?"
-
-
-
-
-

5. What do you get out of making excuses for your behavior?
-
-
-
-
-

6. What would happen to your relationship if both you and your partner made excuses about your behavior?
-
-
-
-
-

7. How did you learn to make excuses? Explain in detail:

Homework: If you want to learn to stop this pattern, follow these instructions. Next week, try to find at least three situations where you can make excuses for your behavior. Write below each situation in detail and report on the results.

Situation No. 1 Excuse used

What happened?

Situation No. 2 Excuse used

What happened?

Situation No. 3 Excuse used

What happened?

Homework: After you have completed this practice exercise, make an appointment with your partner at least 24 h in advance. Show and discuss your answers with your partner. See whether together you can come up with more helpful ways to take responsibility for your behavior than just finding excuses. Make notes of your discussion and bring them to your professional helper.

Practice Exercise About Ultimatums

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to become aware of how hurtful ultimatums are to you, to your partner, and to your relationship.

1. What does the word “ultimatum” mean to you? Check one:

- a. A meaningless foreign word _____
- b. One of those big words doctors use to make themselves feel important _____
- c. Another form of bribery/blackmail _____
- d. One of those words your partner uses to be one up on you _____

- e. Find your own definition (you may use your dictionary if you want): _____

2. Would you agree that an ultimatum consists of a deadline or of a consequence that would have negative results for your partner? Please comment:

3. How often do you use ultimatums?

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|
| a. Practically every day | _____ | d. Once in a blue moon | _____ |
| b. Once a week | _____ | e. Other (explain): | _____ |
| c. Once a month | | | |

4. When do you use ultimatums?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| a. When my partner makes me mad | _____ |
| b. When I make my partner mad | _____ |
| c. When I am under pressure | _____ |
| d. When I don't know what else to do | _____ |
| e. When I (complete it you rself): | |

5. What kind of ultimatums do you give your partner? Give at least three examples:

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

6. Why do you give ultimatums? Check as many as apply:

- a. Because I enjoy it

- b. Because it makes me feel good

- c. Because it gives me a sense of satisfaction

- d. Because in this way I can control my partner

- e. Because it worked for my parents

- f. Because (give a reason not listed above):

7. What do ultimatums do

a. To you?

b. To your relationship?

c. To your partner?

8. How did you learn to use ultimatums?

9. What would happen to your relationship if your partner were to give you ultimatums?

Homework: Next week, try to use as many ultimatums as you can. List at least three of them below. Write

- a. What kind of ultimatum you used
- b. With whom
- c. What kind of result you got out of it

Ultimatum No. 1

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

Ultimatum No. 2

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

Ultimatum No. 3

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

Homework: After completing this practice exercise show and discuss it with your partner after setting an appointment at least 24 h ahead of time. Discuss what you learned from it and write down what you two discussed about it. Bring this practice exercise and your notes to your professional helper.

Practice Exercise About Your Own Peculiar Pattern

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is for you to become aware of any pattern that may be hurtful to you, to your partner, and to your relationship, so that perhaps you can stop doing it.

By listening to the recording of your last fight, in addition to reviewing the seven destructive patterns listed in Practice Exercise No. 3, you might have been able to find a peculiar destructive pattern that is specific to how you two argue or fight. For instance, another common destructive pattern is “Distracting,” that is, changing the subject or introducing extraneous or irrelevant arguments. If you find another pattern, congratulations! Not many partners can. Do you want to replace it or do you want to keep it?

1. Define and describe in detail this peculiar pattern. What does it consist of?

2. Write down the advantages and disadvantages of this pattern.

- a. Advantages

- b. Disadvantages

3. How often do you use it?

- a. Very often (almost every day) _____
- b. Often enough (once or twice a week) _____
- c. Occasionally (once every 2 or 3 weeks) _____
- d. Once in a while (once every 2 or 3 months) _____

4. When does it take place?

5. What does it get either one of you? Check more than one answer if necessary:

- a. It shows we love each other _____
- b. It keeps us busy _____
- c. It allow us to make contact _____
- d. It keeps us excited _____
- e. It keeps us from being bored _____
- f. Give your explanation for using this pattern: _____

6. Do you enjoy it? In what way?

7. If you enjoy it, keep it up, and stop answering these questions. If you do not enjoy it and you want to replace it with a more positive pattern, complete the following homework practice exercise.

Homework: During the coming week, make sure that either one of you will use this peculiar pattern at least three times. If necessary, flip a coin to decide which of you should use it first. Write down how this pattern was used and what the result was.

Time No. 1 Use

Result

Time No. 2 Use

Result

Time No. 3 Use

Result

Homework: After completing this practice exercise, make an appointment with your partner, at least 24 h in advance, and discuss how you could replace this peculiar pattern with a more positive one. Make notes of your discussion and bring them to your professional helper.

Violence

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help couples at risk for violence in their relationship confront and control thoughts that may lead them to violence.

Practice Exercise 1. Defining Thoughts About Violence in the Relationship

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to understand what thoughts of partner violence consist of in your particular case.

1. Below there is a list of violent or abusive thoughts that may come to mind when you are angry. You will find some of these words about your thoughts rather strange and unusual. If you do not understand what the thought listed below means, consult a dictionary or ask your partner, a friend, or whoever is helping you learn to control your violence. After you have defined each thought, give two examples for each specific thought listed.

Definitions of Violent Thoughts

Examples

- a. Placing hostile blame on partner

Example 1 _____

Example 2 _____

- b. Magnification

Example 1 _____

Example 2 _____

- c. Either/or thinking

Example 1 _____

Example 2 _____

- d. Arbitrary inference

Example 1 _____

Example 2 _____

- e. Demandingness

Example 1 _____

Example 2 _____

- f. Anger-control statements

Example 1 _____

Example 2 _____

- g. Personalization

Example 1 _____

Example 2 _____

h. "Awfulizing"	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
i. Overgeneralization	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
j. Negative self-thoughts	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____
k. Low frustration tolerance	Example 1 _____
_____	_____
_____	Example 2 _____
_____	_____

2. Check whether each thought applies to you not at all, sometimes, or most of the time:

<i>Violent Thoughts</i>	<i>Applies</i>			<i>Rank-</i>
	<i>Not at all</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Most of the time</i>	<i>order</i>
a. Placing hostile blame on partner	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Magnification	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Either/or thinking	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Arbitrary inference	_____	_____	_____	_____
e. Demandingness	_____	_____	_____	_____
f. Anger-control statements	_____	_____	_____	_____
g. Personalization	_____	_____	_____	_____
h. "Awfulizing"	_____	_____	_____	_____
i. Overgeneralization	_____	_____	_____	_____
j. Negative self-thoughts	_____	_____	_____	_____
k. Low frustration tolerance	_____	_____	_____	_____

3. Now rank-order these thoughts according to how frequent, serious, or strong they are in your relationship with your partner. Rank as No. 1 the thought that is the strongest or most frequent, rank as No. 2 the thought that is second

strongest or most frequent, and so on; mark as N/A the thoughts that may not apply to your relationship.

4. Which of these thoughts were present in your family of origin? Please check whether they applied to your mother (or mother substitute), father (or father substitute), brothers, or sisters, if present. Check all that apply:

<i>Violent Thoughts</i>	<i>Mother</i>	<i>Father</i>	<i>Brothers</i>	<i>Sisters</i>
a. Placing hostile blame on wife/husband	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Magnification	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Either/or thinking	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Arbitrary inference	_____	_____	_____	_____
e. Demandingness	_____	_____	_____	_____
f. Anger-control statements	_____	_____	_____	_____
g. Personalization	_____	_____	_____	_____
h. "Awufulizing"	_____	_____	_____	_____
i. Overgeneralization	_____	_____	_____	_____
j. Negative self-thoughts	_____	_____	_____	_____
k. Low frustration tolerance	_____	_____	_____	_____

Homework: During the next few days write down all of the advantages and disadvantages you get from thinking violent thoughts.

Standard Practice Exercise for Violence in a Relationship

Practice Exercise No. _____ Title: _____

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to understand more about the thought listed in the title.

1. How did you start using this thought? Please explain in detail:

2. How often do you use this thought? Check which answer applies to you:

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| a. Practically every day | _____ | e. Once every 6 months | _____ |
| b. Once a week | _____ | f. Once a year | _____ |
| c. A couple of times a month | _____ | g. Once every few years | _____ |
| d. Once a month | _____ | | |

3. Please explain further:

4. How did this thought come about? Do you remember when you started thinking it?

Check the answer that fits best:

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. When I was a child (younger than 5 years of age) | _____ |
| b. In elementary school | _____ |
| c. In middle school | _____ |
| d. In high school | _____ |
| e. Any other time | _____ |

5. Please explain further:

6. What does this thought do for you or get you? Please explain:

7. Give three specific examples of how this thought was hurtful to you in the past:

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

8. Give three specific examples of how this thought is hurtful to you in the present:

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

9. Give three specific examples of how this thought will be hurtful to you in the future:

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

10. Give three specific examples of how this thought was hurtful to those you love and who love you:

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

Homework: Next week plan to repeat this thought at preset times (for instance, at 8 a.m., 12 noon, 4 or 7 p.m.), at least three times. Write down what you thought in detail. *If you can start it, you can stop it.* For each time this thought comes to mind, make sure to answer in writing the following four questions:

- (a) How did you start it?
- (b) What followed?
- (c) How did it end?
- (d) What did this behavior get you?

Time 1 (write time you started _____)

a.

b.

c.

d.

Time 2 (write time you started _____)

a.

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Time 3 (write time you started _____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Check which of the following shows what you got out of this practice exercise:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| a. Completely useless | _____ | d. Somewhat useful | _____ |
| b. Somewhat useless | _____ | e. Extremely useful | _____ |
| c. So-so | _____ | | |

Write down how you feel about this practice exercise and what you got out of it:

Final Follow-Up Form for Violence in a Relationship

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this form is to review whether the practice exercises in this practice exercise were helpful to you.

1. Which answer best fits how you feel about this practice exercise?
 - a. I did not like working on this practice exercise at all. I wish I never saw it. _____
 - b. I did not like this practice exercise, but I am glad I got to work on it. _____
 - c. I am happy I got a chance to work on this. _____
 - d. I am not only delighted about this practice exercise, but I wish all husbands who use abusive or violent thinking could get it. _____
2. How helpful was it to work on this practice exercise? Please check the answer that applies to you:

a. Not helpful at all _____	c. Helpful _____
b. Somewhat helpful _____	d. Very helpful _____
3. Which practice exercise did you like best? Rank as No. 1 the one that you liked best, rank as No. 2 the one you liked next best, and so on; mark as N/A the ones you did not like at all or did not apply to you.

Violent Thoughts

Rank-order

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| a. Placing hostile blame on partner | _____ |
| b. Magnification | _____ |
| c. Either/or thinking | _____ |
| d. Arbitrary inference | _____ |
| e. Demandingness | _____ |
| f. Anger-control statements | _____ |
| g. Personalization | _____ |
| h. "Awfulizing" | _____ |
| i. Overgeneralization | _____ |
| j. Negative self-thoughts | _____ |
| k. Low frustration tolerance | _____ |

4. Now that you have completed this practice exercise, check which of these answers describes how you feel about it. There is also space for you to explain further, if you want to:
- a. I did not like it at all, a waste of time. I wish I never saw this stupid practice exercise. _____
 - b. I did not like it very much, but I want to go on with another practice exercise. _____
 - c. I liked it and I want to go on with another practice exercise. _____
 - d. I liked it a lot and I wish I had something like this practice exercise earlier. _____
 - e. I liked it so much that I wish all partners with violent or abusive thoughts could get something like this practice exercise to work on. _____
5. How could this practice exercise be improved? Do you have any suggestions? Feel free to write whatever could improve this practice exercise.

Controlling Violence

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help partners at risk for violence confront and control their tendencies toward violence. The purpose of this practice exercise is to understand what violence consists of in your particular case.

Practice Exercise 1. Defining Violence in a Relationship

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

1. Below is a list of violent or abusive behaviors. Please check whether each behavior applies to you not at all, sometimes, or most of the time:

<i>Abusive or Violent Behaviors</i>	<i>Applies</i>			<i>Rank</i>
	<i>Not at all</i>	<i>Some- times</i>	<i>Most of the time</i>	
a. Insulting or swearing	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Sulking or refusing to talk	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Stomping out	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Crying	_____	_____	_____	_____
e. Doing or saying something to spite	_____	_____	_____	_____

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|-------|-------|-------|
| f. Threatening to hit or throw | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| g. Throwing an object | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| h. Throwing object at partner | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| i. Pushing-grabbing-shoving partner | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| j. Slapping partner | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| k. Kicking-biting-hitting with fist | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| l. Hitting with object | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| m. Beating up | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| n. Choking or strangling | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| o. Threatening with knife or gun | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| p. Using knife or gun | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| q. Any other physical violence | (_____) | _____ | _____ | _____ |

2. Now rank-order these behaviors according to how frequent, serious, or strong they are in your relationship. Rank as No. 1 the behavior that is the strongest or most frequent, rank as No. 2 the behavior that is second strongest or most frequent, and so on; mark as N/A the behaviors that may not apply to your relationship.
3. Which of these behaviors were present in your family of origin? Please check whether they applied to your mother (or mother substitute), father (or father substitute), brothers or sisters if present. Check all that apply:

<i>Abusive or Violent Behaviors</i>	<i>Applies</i>			
	<i>Mother</i>	<i>Father</i>	<i>Brother</i>	<i>Sister</i>
a. Insulting or swearing	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Sulking or refusing to talk	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Stomping out	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Crying	_____	_____	_____	_____
e. Doing or saying something to spite	_____	_____	_____	_____
f. Threatening to hit or throw	_____	_____	_____	_____
g. Throwing an object	_____	_____	_____	_____
h. Throwing object at partner	_____	_____	_____	_____
i. Pushing-grabbing-shoving partner	_____	_____	_____	_____
j. Slapping partner	_____	_____	_____	_____
k. Kicking-biting-hitting with fist	_____	_____	_____	_____
l. Hitting with object	_____	_____	_____	_____
m. Beating up	_____	_____	_____	_____
n. Choking or strangling	_____	_____	_____	_____
o. Threatening with knife or gun	_____	_____	_____	_____
p. Using knife or gun	_____	_____	_____	_____
q. Any other physical violence	(_____)	_____	_____	_____

Homework: During the next few days write down all of the advantages and disadvantages you get from behaving in an abusive or violent fashion.

Standard Practice Exercise for Violence in a Relationship

Practice Exercise No. ____ Title: _____

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to understand more about the behavior listed in the title.

1. How did you start to use this behavior? Please explain in detail:

2. How often do you use this behavior? Check which answer applies to you:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| a. Practically every day | _____ |
| b. Once a week | _____ |
| c. A couple of times a month | _____ |
| d. Once a month | _____ |
| e. Once every 6 months | _____ |
| f. Once a year | _____ |
| g. Once every few years | _____ |

3. Please explain further:

4. How did this behavior come about? Do you remember when you started it? Check which answer fits best:

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. When I was a child (younger than 5 years of age) | _____ |
| b. In elementary school | _____ |
| c. In middle school | _____ |
| d. In high school | _____ |
| e. Any other time | _____ |

5. Please explain further:

6. What does this behavior get you?
Please explain:

7. Give three specific examples of how this behavior was hurtful to you. Please explain:

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

8. Give three specific examples of how this behavior was hurtful to those you love and who love you.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

Homework: Next week plan to repeat this behavior at preset times (for instance, at 8 a.m., 12 noon, 4 or 7 p.m.), at least three times. Write down what happened in detail. For each time make sure to answer in writing the following four questions:

- (a) How did you start it?
- (b) What followed?
- (c) How did it end?
- (d) What did this behavior get you?

Time 1 (write time you started _____)

- a.

- b.

- c. _____

- d. _____

Time 2 (write time you started _____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Time 3 (write time you started _____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Check which of the following shows what you got out of this practice exercise:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| a. Completely useless | _____ | d. Somewhat useful | _____ |
| b. Somewhat useless | _____ | e. Extremely useful | _____ |
| c. So-so | _____ | | |

Write down how you feel about this homework practice exercise and what you got out of it:

Concluding Feedback Form for Violence in a Relationship

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this form is to review whether practice exercises in this practice exercise were helpful to you.

1. Which answer fits how you feel about this practice exercise?
 - a. I did not like working on this practice exercise at all.
I wish I never saw it. _____
 - b. I did not like this practice exercise, but I am glad
I got to work on. _____
 - c. I am happy I got a chance to work on it. _____
 - d. I am not only delighted with this practice exercise, but I wish all people
who use abusive or violent behavior could get it. _____

2. How helpful was it to work on this practice exercise? Please check the answer that applies to you.

a. Not helpful at all _____	c. Helpful _____
b. Somewhat helpful _____	d. Very helpful _____

3. Which practice exercise did you like best? Rank as No. 1 the one that you liked best, rank as No. 2 the one you liked next best, and so on; mark as N/A the ones you did not like at all or did not apply to you.

Abusive or Violent Behaviors

Rank-order

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| a. Insulting or swearing | _____ |
| b. Sulking or refusing to talk | _____ |
| c. Stomping out | _____ |
| d. Crying | _____ |
| e. Doing or saying something to spite | _____ |

- f. Threatening to hit or throw _____
- g. Throwing an object _____
- h. Throwing object at partner _____
- i. Pushing-grabbing-shoving partner _____
- j. Slapping partner _____
- k. Kicking-biting-hitting with fist _____
- l. Hitting with object _____
- m. Beating up _____
- n. Choking or strangling _____
- o. Threatening with knife or gun _____
- p. Using knife or gun _____
- q. Any other physical violence (_____) _____

4. Now that you have completed this practice exercise, check which of these answers indicates how you feel about it. There is also space for you to explain further, if you want to:

- a. I did not like it at all, a waste of time. I wish I never worked on this stupid practice exercise. _____
- b. I did not like it very much, but I want to go on with working on practice exercises of this type. _____
- c. I liked it and I want to go on with another practice exercise. _____
- d. I liked it a lot and I wish I had received something like this practice exercise earlier in my life. _____
- e. I liked it so much that I wish all violent or abusive individuals could get something like this practice exercise to work on. _____

5. How could this practice exercise be improved? Do you have any suggestions? Feel free to write whatever could improve this practice exercise.

Families

When Parents Argue: From the Eyes of a Child

Instructions to the professional: Make sure both parents sign an informed consent form. Parents should make an appointment with each other at pre-stated, pre-arranged times. They are to complete each practice exercise individually and then

compare, contrast, and discuss with each other their answers to each practice exercise by appointment. They should not meet for longer than 1 h (by preset timer). If they get too angry, should call time out, go to opposite corners, and reschedule another appointment at least 24 h ahead.

The second and subsequent practice exercises should be administered according to the combined rank-orders of arguments given by both parents. The practice exercise that receives the lowest combined score should be administered first. The one that receives the second lowest combined score should be administered second, and so on. The title and number of each practice exercise should be written on top of each practice exercise. The number of practice exercises to be administered depends on the number of items parents agree or disagree about. The more virulent the arguments, the greater should be the number of practice exercises to be administered.

To parents: The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you both have better arguments, that is, instead of arguing, learning how to negotiate by “proacting” with each other rather than reacting to each other. If you both have agreed to work together on this practice exercise, it means that you love each other enough to make things better for both and your children. This practice exercise, however, may be useless unless you set appointments with each other at predetermined, agreed-upon times to discuss your individually completed practice exercises. If, during one of these appointments you find yourself getting too angry, call for time out and reschedule another appointment at least 24 h ahead. This postponement will allow you to cool off and process what is going on between you two. Keep in mind that indifference is the opposite of love. If you get upset with each other, it means you still care.

Practice Exercise 1. What Do You Argue About?

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to find out how you see the seriousness of your arguments:

1. How often do you have these arguments or fights?

- a. Once a day or more _____
- b. Two or three times a week _____
- c. Once a week _____
- d. Once a month _____
- e. Once every 2 or 3 months _____
- f. Never or hardly ever _____

2. How long do these arguments or fights last?

- a. Sometimes the whole day or more
- b. A couple of hours or half a day
- c. About an hour
- d. Less than 30 minute
- e. 1 minute at the most

3. How heated, strong, or intense are these arguments or fights?

- a. Very strong to the point of physical violence
- b. Very intense but without physical violence
- c. Strong and verbally abusive
- d. Not very strong
- e. We get excited but we calm down soon
- f. Usually we keep cool and rational
- g. We never lose our cool, we just avoid each other
- h. We do not argue or fight, we just bicker
- i. Other (explain)

4. How do these arguments or fights get started?

- a. I usually start them
- b. My partner usually starts them
- c. Sometimes I start them, sometimes my partner starts them
- d. I don't know
- e. Other (explain)

5. How do these arguments or fights end?

- a. We kiss and make up
- b. We stay mad for hours
- c. We stay mad for days
- d. We stay mad for weeks on end
- e. We stay away from each other until we have another argument or fight
- f. Other (explain):

6. Why do you argue or fight? Rank as No. 1 the most troublesome reason for arguing, rank as No. 2 the second most troublesome reason for arguing, and so on; mark as N/A the reasons that do not apply.

<i>Reasons for Arguing</i>	<i>Your Rank-order</i>	<i>Partner's Rank-order</i>	<i>Combined Rank-order</i>
a. It's our fault when we do it	_____	_____	_____
b. One partner wants things one way and the other wants them another way	_____	_____	_____
c. Work	_____	_____	_____
d. We do not know how to get along	_____	_____	_____
e. We do not understand each other	_____	_____	_____
f. Money	_____	_____	_____
g. Our children misbehave and do something wrong	_____	_____	_____
h. One partner is worried about something	_____	_____	_____
i. Chores or jobs around the house	_____	_____	_____
j. One partner had a bad day	_____	_____	_____
k. The other partner had a bad day	_____	_____	_____
l. People outside the family, relatives/ friends	_____	_____	_____
m. One partner is worried about something	_____	_____	_____
n. One partner does not feel good	_____	_____	_____
o. It's our children's fault	_____	_____	_____
p. One partner does not feel well	_____	_____	_____
q. The kind of person one partner is	_____	_____	_____
r. Our children are bad	_____	_____	_____
s. It's one partner's fault	_____	_____	_____
t. One partner is the kind of person who likes to argue	_____	_____	_____
u. The kind of person the partner is	_____	_____	_____
v. We really do not like each other	_____	_____	_____
w. It's the other partner's fault	_____	_____	_____
x. The other partner is the kind of person who likes to argue	_____	_____	_____
y. State your own reason (_____)	_____	_____	_____

7. Now state why you rank-ordered these reasons for arguing the way you did it.

Homework: By preset appointment, compare, contrast, and discuss with each other your answers to this practice exercise. Write down the respective rank-orders of your partner on your sheet and combine the two rankings in the last column above. Give copies of your completed practice exercises to whoever is helping you with this practice exercise.

Standard Practice Exercise for Arguing and Fighting

Practice Exercise No. _____ Title of Practice Exercise _____

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to understand more about the reason for arguing listed in the title.

1. How did you start to use this reason this way? Please explain in detail:

2. How often do you use this reason? Check which answer applies to you:

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| a. Practically every day | _____ | e. Once every 6 months | _____ |
| b. Once a week | _____ | f. Once a year | _____ |
| c. A couple of times a month | _____ | g. Once every few years | _____ |
| d. Once a month | _____ | | |

3. Please explain further:

4. How did this reason come about? Do you remember when you started it?
Check which answer fits best:

- a. When I was a child (younger than 5 years of age) _____
- b. In elementary school _____
- c. In middle school _____
- d. In high school _____
- e. Any other time _____

5. Please explain further:

6. What does this reason get you? Please explain:

7. Give three specific examples of how using this reason is hurtful to you.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

8. Give three specific examples of how this reason is hurtful to your partner.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

Homework: If you want to stop undesirable behavior, learn to start it. If you learn to start it, you will learn to stop it. Next week plan to repeat it using this reason at preset times (for instance, at 8 a.m., 12 noon, 4 or 7 p.m.) at least three times. Write down what happened in detail. For each time make sure to answer in writing the following four questions:

- (a) How did you start it?
- (b) What followed?
- (c) How did it end?
- (d) What did this reason get you?

Time 1 (write the time you started _____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Time 2 (write the time you started _____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Time 3 (write the time you started _____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Check which of the following shows what you got out of this practice exercise:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| a. Completely useless | _____ | d. Somewhat useful | _____ |
| b. Somewhat useless | _____ | e. Extremely useful | _____ |
| c. So-so | _____ | | |

Write down how you feel about this homework practice exercise and what you got out of it.

Concluding Feedback Form

Name_____Sex_____Date_____

The purpose of this form is to understand what you learned from working on this practice exercise.

1. Which answer fits how you feel about this practice exercise?
 - a. I did not like working on this practice exercise at all. I wish I never saw it.

 - b. I did not like this practice exercise, but I am glad I got to work on it.

 - c. I am happy I got a chance to work on this practice exercise. _____
 - d. I am not only delighted about this practice exercise, but I wish all couples who argue could get it. _____

2. How helpful was it to work on this practice exercise? Please check the answer that applies to you.
- a. Not helpful at all _____ c. Helpful _____
- b. Somewhat helpful _____ d. Very helpful _____
3. Which practice exercise did you like best? Rank as No. 1 the one that you liked best, rank as No. 2 the one you liked next best, and so on; mark as N/A the ones you did not like at all or did not apply to you.

<i>Reasons for Arguing</i>	<i>Your Rank-order</i>	<i>Partner's Rank-order</i>	<i>Difference Scores</i>
a. It's our fault when we do it	_____	_____	_____
b. One partner wants things one way and the other wants them another way	_____	_____	_____
c. Work	_____	_____	_____
d. We do not know how to get along	_____	_____	_____
e. We do not understand each other	_____	_____	_____
f. Money	_____	_____	_____
g. Our children misbehave and do something wrong	_____	_____	_____
h. One partner is worried about something	_____	_____	_____
i. Chores or jobs around the house	_____	_____	_____
j. One partner had a bad day	_____	_____	_____
k. The other partner had a bad day	_____	_____	_____
l. People outside the family, relatives/friends	_____	_____	_____
m. One partner is worried about something	_____	_____	_____
n. One partner does not feel good	_____	_____	_____
o. It's our children's fault	_____	_____	_____
p. One partner does not feel well	_____	_____	_____
q. The kind of person one partner is	_____	_____	_____
r. Our children are bad	_____	_____	_____
s. It's one partner's fault	_____	_____	_____
t. One partner is the kind of person who likes to argue	_____	_____	_____
u. The kind of person the partner is	_____	_____	_____
v. We really do not like each other	_____	_____	_____
w. It's the other partner's fault	_____	_____	_____
x. The other partner is the kind of person who likes to argue	_____	_____	_____
y. State your own reason (_____)	_____	_____	_____

4. By appointment only, check with your partner and compare, contrast, and discuss your answers to this practice exercise. Write each other's rank orders and subtract them from each other's (even if it results in a minus number). Add all the difference scores and discuss this total score with your professional helper to see how it compares with scores of other couples.
5. Now that you have completed this practice exercise, check which of these answers indicates how you felt about it. There is also space for you to explain further, if you want to:
 - a. I did not like it at all, a waste of time. I wish I never worked on this stupid practice exercise. _____
 - b. I did not like it very much, but I want to go on with working on practice exercises of this type. _____
 - c. I liked it and I want to go on with another practice exercise. _____
 - d. I liked it a lot and I wish I had received something like this practice exercise earlier in our life together. _____
 - e. I liked it so much that I wish all arguing couples could get something like this to work on. _____
6. How could this practice exercise be improved? Do you have any suggestions? Feel free to write whatever could improve this practice exercise.

When Parents and Children Argue: From the Eyes of a Child

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help this family have better arguments, that is, instead of arguing, learning how to negotiate by “proacting” with each other rather than reacting to each other. If you all have agreed to work together on this practice exercise, it means that you love each other enough to make things better for yourselves. This practice exercise, however, may be useless unless you set appointments to meet at predetermined, agreed-upon times to discuss your individually completed practice exercises. If, during one of these appointments you find you are getting too angry, call for time out and schedule another appointment at least 24 h ahead. This postponement will allow you to cool off and process what is going on among yourselves.

Practice Exercise 1. What Do You Argue About?

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to find out how you see the seriousness of your arguments.

1. How often do you have these arguments or fights?
 - a. Once a day or more _____
 - b. Two or three times a week _____
 - c. Once a week _____
 - d. Once a month _____
 - e. Once every 2 or 3 months _____
 - f. Never or hardly ever _____
2. How long do these arguments or fights last?
 - a. Sometimes the whole day or more _____
 - b. A couple of hours or half a day _____
 - c. About an hour _____
 - d. Less than 30 minute _____
 - e. 1 minute at the most _____
3. How heated, strong, or intense are these arguments or fights?
 - a. Very strong to the point of physical violence _____
 - b. Very intense but without physical violence _____
 - c. Strong and verbally abusive _____
 - d. Not very strong _____
 - e. We get excited but we calm down soon _____
 - f. Usually we keep cool and rational _____
 - g. We never lose our cool, we just avoid each other _____
 - h. We do not argue or fight, we just bicker _____
 - i. Other (explain) _____
4. How do these arguments or fights get started?
 - a. I usually start them _____
 - b. Another family member usually starts them _____
 - c. Sometimes I start them, sometimes someone else starts them _____
 - d. I don't know _____
 - e. Other (explain) _____
5. How do these arguments or fights end?
 - a. We all kiss and make up _____
 - b. We stay mad for hours _____
 - c. We stay mad for days _____

- d. We stay mad for weeks on end _____
- e. We stay away from each other until we have another argument _____
or fight
- f. Other (explain)_____

6. Why do you argue or fight? Rank as No. 1 the most troublesome reason for arguing, rank order as No. 2 the second most troublesome reason for arguing, and so on; mark as N/A the reasons that do not apply.

<i>Reasons for Arguing</i>	<i>Your Rank-order</i>	<i>Combined Family Rank-order</i>
a. Parents want things one way and children want them another way	_____	_____
b. All of us are at fault	_____	_____
c. The children do not listen	_____	_____
d. Parents are worried about something	_____	_____
e. Chores or jobs around the house	_____	_____
f. We do not understand each other	_____	_____
g. Children are upset about something	_____	_____
h. Children had a bad day	_____	_____
i. Parents had a bad day	_____	_____
j. School	_____	_____
k. One child is mad at another child in the family and is taking it out on the parent	_____	_____
l. One parent does not feel well	_____	_____
m. Parents are mad at one child and are taking it out on another child	_____	_____
n. We do not know how to get along	_____	_____
o. Money	_____	_____
p. Parents are mad at each other and one is taking it out on the children	_____	_____
q. Parents' work	_____	_____
r. The kind of person the parent is	_____	_____
s. Parents are unfair	_____	_____
t. People outside the family, such as relatives and friends	_____	_____
u. The child is the kind of person who likes to argue	_____	_____
v. It's the parent's fault	_____	_____
w. The child does not feel well	_____	_____
x. The child is a bad child	_____	_____
y. The parent is the kind of parent who likes to argue	_____	_____
z. The kind of person the child is	_____	_____
aa. It's the child's fault	_____	_____

<i>Reasons for Arguing</i>	<i>Your Rank-order</i>	<i>Combined Family Rank-order</i>
bb. We really do not like each other	_____	_____
cc. One parent is a bad parent	_____	_____
dd. State your own reason (_____)	_____	_____

7. Now state why you rank-ordered these reasons for arguing the way you did.

Homework: By preset appointment, compare, contrast, and discuss your answers to this practice exercise. Add up all the family rankings in the last column above. Give copies of your completed practice exercises to whoever is helping you with this practice exercise.

Standard Practice Exercise No. _____ Title of Practice Exercise _____

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to understand more about the reason for arguing listed in the title.

1. How did you start using this reason this way? Please explain in detail:

2. How often do you use this reason? Check which answer applies to you:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| a. Practically every day | _____ |
| b. Once a week | _____ |
| c. A couple of times a month | _____ |
| d. Once a month | _____ |
| e. Once every 6 months | _____ |
| f. Once a year | _____ |
| g. Once every few years | _____ |

3. Please explain further:

4. How did this reason come about? Do you remember when you started it?
Check which answer fits best:

- a. When I was a child (younger than 5 years of age) _____
- b. In elementary school _____
- c. In middle school _____
- d. In high school _____
- e. Any other time _____

5. Please explain further:

6. What does this reason get you? Please explain:

7. Give three specific examples of how using this reason is hurtful to you.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

8. Give three specific examples of how this reason is hurtful to your family.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

Homework: If you want to stop undesirable reasons, learn to start them. Keep in mind that if you learn to start it, you will learn to stop it. Next week plan to repeat this reason at preset times (for instance, at 8 a.m., 12 noon, 4 or 7 p.m.) on at least 3 days (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, or Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday).

Write down what happened in detail. For each time make sure to answer in writing the following four questions:

- (a) How did you start it?
- (b) What followed?
- (c) How did it end?
- (d) What did this reason get you?

Time 1 (write the time you started_____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Time 2 (write the time you started_____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Time 3 (write the time you started_____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Check which of the following shows what you got out of this practice exercise:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| a. Completely useless | _____ | d. Somewhat useful | _____ |
| b. Somewhat useless | _____ | e. Extremely useful | _____ |
| c. So-so | _____ | | |

Now that you have completed this practice exercise, check which of these answers indicates how you feel about it. There is also space for you to explain further, if you want to:

- a. I did not like it at all, a waste of time. I want to quit this stupid practice exercise. _____
- b. I did not like it very much, but I want to go on with this practice exercise. _____
- c. I liked it and I want to go on with this practice exercise. _____
- d. I liked it a lot and I wish I had something like this practice exercise earlier. _____
- e. I liked it so much that I wish all arguing parents and children could get something like this to work on. _____

Write down how you feel about this homework practice exercise and what you got out of it.

Concluding Feedback Form

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this form is to understand what you learned from working on previous practice exercises.

- Which answer fits how you feel about this practice exercise?
 - I did not like working on this practice exercise at all. I wish I never saw it. _____

- b. I did not like this practice exercise, but I am glad I got to work on it. _____

c. I am happy I got a chance to work on this practice exercise. _____

d. I am not only delighted about this practice exercise, but I wish all couples who argue could get it. _____
2. How helpful was it to work on this practice exercise? Please check the answer that applies to you.

a. Not helpful at all _____

b. Somewhat helpful _____

c. Helpful _____

d. Very helpful _____
3. Which practice exercise did you like best? Rank as No. 1 the one that you liked best, rank as No. 2 the one you liked next best, and so on; mark as N/A the ones you did not like at all or did not apply to you.

<i>Reasons for Arguing</i>	<i>Your Rank-order</i>	<i>Combined Family Rank-orders</i>
a. Parents want things one way and children want them another way	_____	_____
b. All of us are at fault	_____	_____
c. The children do not listen	_____	_____
d. Parents are worried about something	_____	_____
e. Chores or jobs around the house	_____	_____
f. We do not understand each other	_____	_____
g. Children are upset about something	_____	_____
h. Children had a bad day	_____	_____
i. Parents had a bad day	_____	_____
j. School	_____	_____
k. One child is mad at another child in the family and is taking it out on the parent	_____	_____
l. One parent does not feel well	_____	_____
m. Parents are mad at one child and are taking it out on another child	_____	_____
n. We do not know how to get along	_____	_____
o. Money	_____	_____
p. Parents are mad at each other and one is taking it out on the children	_____	_____
q. Parents' work	_____	_____
r. The kind of person the parent is	_____	_____
s. Parents are unfair	_____	_____
t. People outside the family, such as relatives and friends	_____	_____
u. The child is the kind of person who likes to argue	_____	_____
v. It's the parent's fault	_____	_____
w. The child does not feel well	_____	_____

<i>Reasons for Arguing</i>	<i>Your Rank-order</i>	<i>Combined Family Rank-orders</i>
x. The child is a bad child	_____	_____
y. The parent is the kind of parent who likes to argue	_____	_____
z. The kind of person the child is	_____	_____
aa. It's the child's fault	_____	_____
bb. We really do not like each other	_____	_____
cc. One parent is a bad parent	_____	_____
dd. State your own reason (_____)	_____	_____

4. Compare, contrast, and discuss your answers to this practice exercise with each other (by appointment only). Add all the individual scores and discuss the total rankings you obtained for each practice exercise with your professional helper.
5. Now that you have completed this practice exercise, check which of these answers indicates how you felt about it. Use a separate piece of paper.
 - a. I did not like it at all, a waste of time. I wish I never worked on this stupid practice exercise. _____
 - b. I did not like it very much, but I want to go on with working on practice exercises of this type. _____
 - c. I liked it and I want to go on with another practice exercise. _____
 - d. I liked it a lot and I wish I had received something like this practice exercise earlier in our family life. _____
 - e. I liked it so much that I wish all arguing parents and children could get something like this to work on. _____
6. How could this practice exercise be improved? Do you have any suggestions? Feel free to write whatever could improve this practice exercise.

Negotiation

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help couples (and families) learn how to negotiate, problem-solve, and even bargain successfully together. If you have agreed to work on the practice exercises contained in this practice exercise, you

must care for each other a great deal. Care and troublesome thought, however, are not enough. Negotiation is also necessary. Many couples and families have not had the experience of knowing how to negotiate because they never saw it take place in their families of origin. Answer all the questions in each practice exercise. Then meet with each other at a time preset at least 24 h in advance. It is very important that you meet by appointment and not discuss your completed individual practice exercises by chance appointments. After you meet, for no more than one hour, read each other's answers and discuss their similarities and differences. Take notes because you may forget what you discussed. If during this meeting either one becomes upset or, worse, angry, interrupt the meeting and set up another appointment for another time 24 h in advance.

Homework Practice Exercise 1. The Goals of Marriage

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this homework practice exercise is for you to start thinking about and stating clearly what you want out of this marriage (family).

1. What? Write specific constructive results you want to achieve in this marriage (family).

2. Why? Write the benefit to each of you from achieving a result.

3. How? Clarify ways you plan to achieve a result.

4. When? State clearly frequencies, times, and extent of the ways of achieving a result.

5. Set goals for tomorrow. Write specifically what you will do tomorrow that you have not done today. Discuss your answers with your partner (family members) for at least 1 h before your meet with your professional helper.

Results

Successful (explain why):

Unsuccessful (explain why):

Canceled (explain why):

Practice Exercise 2. The Law of Give and Take: The Golden Rule

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is for you to practice the Golden Rule. Even though you may know about it, you may not have practiced it in your relationship.

1. Have you ever heard of the Golden Rule? What does the Golden Rule mean to you?

2. How are the Golden Rule and the Law of Give and Take related to each other?

3. Do you agree that the Golden Rule means dealing with others the way we want them to deal with us? Please comment.

4. What happens when we fail to follow this rule in our dealings with others?

5. What happens to your relationship (marriage, family) when you fail to follow this rule?

6. What are the advantages of following the Golden Rule in your relationship?

7. What are the disadvantages?

8. What do you think would happen to your relationship if you were to commit yourself to follow the Golden Rule?

9. What do you think would happen to your relationship if both you and your partner (mate, companion, parent, or child) failed to follow it?

10. How committed are you to following this rule, and why?

11. List specific instances of when and where you failed to follow this rule and the outcome of that failure.

12. List specific instances of when and where you followed this rule and the outcome of having followed it.

13. Discuss your answers with your partner (family members) and discuss similarities and differences in your answers. What did you learn from this discussion?

14. During the next week, concentrate on writing down four specific instances in which you followed the Golden Rule and the outcome.

Instance 1:

Outcome:

Instance 2:

Outcome:

Instance 3:

Outcome:

Instance 4:

Outcome:

Practice Exercise 3. “I” Statements

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you learn how to speak for yourself and not for your partner or other family members. Some people have trouble starting sentences with the pronoun “I”; instead, they most often use the pronoun “you.” Using the “you” pronoun can be very hurtful to marriages and to families. The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you practice making “I” statements. Using sentences that begin with “I” can be especially helpful when trying to express feelings or deal with emotional issues in your relationships.

The following sentence stems have been found helpful in making “I” statements. One blank has been provided under each heading so that you can make up a stem of your own. Write your completions for each of the sentence stems on the lines provided, and start thinking about other possible completions for these sentences. After completing all the responses, discuss your answers with your partner.

1. Self
I wish _____
I should _____
I need _____
I feel _____
I _____
2. Marriage/relationship with partner
It pleases me when _____
I fear _____
I love _____
I hurt _____
I _____
3. Children
I remember _____
I want _____
It pleases me when _____
It hurts me when _____
I _____
4. Parents/in-laws
I avoid _____
I understand _____
I must _____
I won't _____
I _____

5. Siblings or relatives

I feel _____
 I ought _____
 I avoid _____
 I trust _____
 I _____

6. Work

Sometimes I _____
 I enjoy _____
 I dread _____
 I'd like _____
 I _____

7. Friends

I sense _____
 I fear _____
 I wonder _____
 I enjoy _____
 I _____

8. Leisure time

I like _____
 If I could _____
 I enjoy _____
 I don't want _____
 I _____

Make an appointment with your partner (or family members) to compare and discuss your answers with theirs.

The stimulus sentences listed below represent typical statements made by one partner to another in a relationship. One partner reads the stimulus sentences, one at a time, while the other partner responds in each of the three styles. Blanks have been provided for you to supply your own stimulus sentences unique to your relationship. Write your responses to each stimulus sentence in each of the three styles in the spaces provided. After completion, the partners switch roles.

Don't be overly concerned if a particular style or stimulus sentence does not seem to fit your relationship. Do the best you can in responding to each one. We are interested in your learning the styles at this point and in your being able to note differences between them. Don't be afraid to make mistakes or take risks.

Definitions:

Abusive/apathetic (AA) style: Signs/behaviors of inattentiveness, or using verbal abuse (name-calling, blaming, bringing up the past, blackmailing/bribery, using "you" statements, mind-reading, and ultimatums). Example: Partner: "You're stupid!"

Respondent: "Guess who's coming over for dinner?" or "I don't know and I don't care!"; "It's all your fault!"

Reactive/repetitive (RR) style: An immediate, impulsive-like statement, often said without thinking, in which you criticize, act defensively, or suggest that you will take care of everything. Example: Partner: "You're stupid!" Respondent: "What do you think you are?"

Creative/conductive (CC) style: A statement in which you request more information from your partner, rephrase what your partner has said to see if you've understood what s/he was trying to say, or otherwise indicate that you are in charge of yourself. Example: Partner: "You're stupid!" Respondent: "I know that I behave stupidly sometimes. How have I offended you?"

Stimulus sentence 1: Did your mother/father call today?

Styles in responding

AA _____
RR _____
CC _____

Stimulus sentence 2: Did you put the garbage out/do the laundry today as you promised?

Styles in responding

AA _____
RR _____
CC _____

Stimulus sentence 3: The bank called to tell us the last check you wrote bounced.

Styles in responding

AA _____
RR _____
CC _____

Stimulus sentence 4: How late did you get in last night?

Styles in responding

AA _____
RR _____
CC _____

Stimulus sentence 5: How did work/school go today?

Styles in responding

AA _____
RR _____
CC _____

Stimulus sentence 6: I'm going out with the guys/girls Friday night
 Styles in responding

AA _____
 RR _____
 CC _____

Stimulus sentence 7: I'm sorry I wasn't there to pick you up.
 Styles in responding

AA _____
 RR _____
 CC _____

Stimulus sentence 8: What shall we do tonight?
 Styles in responding

AA _____
 RR _____
 CC _____

9. Make up your own stimulus sentences (the more the better):

Styles in responding

AA _____
 RR _____
 CC _____

Homework: During the coming week, write down answers that fall in any of the three styles you practiced in this practice exercise. If you do not follow-up by writing them down, chances are you will go back to using AA or RR instead of CC styles.

Practice Exercise 4. Options in Responding: Part 1

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this task is to identify the first three of five response options – emotional (E), rational (R), and actional (A) – in a relationship and give you and your partner some practice telling them apart. Always using emotional, rational,

or actional options in responding often does not result in good outcomes for couples or families when they try to deal with differences or conflicts in their relationship.

The stimulus sentences and situations listed below represent typical statements or typical situations found in relationships. One partner reads the stimulus sentences and situations, one at a time, while the other partner answers in each of the three different response options. Four blanks have been provided for each of you to supply your own stimulus sentences or situations related to your own relationship. Make sure that you write your answers to each of the stimulus sentences and situations in the space provided. After completion, partners must switch roles.

Again, don't be overly concerned if a particular option, stimulus sentence, or stimulus situation does not seem to fit your relationship. Do the best you can in responding to each one. We are interested in your learning the various response options and in your being able to note differences between them. Don't be afraid to make mistakes or take risks.

Definitions:

Emotional response (E): A quick or cutting response given without any thought or awareness. Example: Partner: "That was sure dumb of you!" Respondent: "You're dumb, too!"

Rational response (R): A logical, computer-like, or intellectualized response used in preaching and lecturing, rather than discussing. Example: Partner: "That was sure dumb of you" Respondent: "The word 'dumb' needs to be defined."

Actional response (A): A response including either a nonverbal behavior or a verbal threat involving action. Example: Partner: "That was sure dumb of you!" Respondent: (Slams the door as s/he storms out) or "If you don't take that back, I'm going to _____ you!" Actional responses do not need to be acted out. They can be written down as to what one would actually do in response.

Stimulus Sentence 1: I'm very angry at you!

Response Options

Emotional (E) _____

Rational (R) _____

Actional (A) _____

Stimulus Sentence 2: Why are you so late?

Response Options

Emotional (E) _____

Rational (R) _____

Actional (A) _____

Stimulus Sentence 3: You know I love you.

Response Options

Emotional (E) _____

Rational (R) _____

Actional (A) _____

Stimulus Sentence 4: Did you pay the bill?

Response Options

Emotional (E) _____

Rational (R) _____

Actional (A) _____

Stimulus Situation 1: Your partner comes back from the store. You notice s/he didn't get an item you need very badly and that your partner said s/he'd remember to pick up for you.

Response Options

Emotional (E) _____

Rational (R) _____

Actional (A) _____

Stimulus Situation 2: You and your partner both want to take a shower or bath. It's agreed s/he can go first. When it's your turn, you notice that there is no hot water left.

Response Options

Emotional (E) _____

Rational (R) _____

Actional (A) _____

Stimulus Situation 3: You've had a hard day. You go home thinking you will be able to relax. You walk in the door and are immediately reminded by your partner that you promised to go somewhere with him/her right after work.

Response Options

Emotional (E) _____

Rational (R) _____

Actional (A) _____

Stimulus Situation 4: You and your partner have decided to go out this weekend. You think it will be just the two of you. On Friday your partner tells you s/he ran into an old acquaintance who you're not fond of and has invited him/her to join the two of you.

Response Options

Emotional (E) _____

Rational (R) _____

Actional (A) _____

*Make up your own stimulus sentences:**Response Options*

Emotional (E) _____

Rational (R) _____

Actional (A) _____

Homework: During the coming week, write down answers that fall in any of the three response options you practiced in this practice exercise. If you do not follow-up by writing them down, chances are you will go back to using AA or RR instead of CC styles.

Practice Exercise 5. Options in Responding: Part 2

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to identify two additional response options – awareness and contextual – in a relationship and to give you and your partner practice in telling them apart and in using them. Unlike the first three options covered in Practice Exercise No. 4 (emotional, rational, and actional), both of these response options usually result in good outcomes when partners try to deal with differences or conflicts in their relationship.

The stimulus sentences and situations listed below represent possible statements and situations found in relationships. One partner reads the stimulus sentences and situations one at a time, while the other partner answers using each of the two response options. Blanks have again been provided for each of you to supply stimulus sentences or situations related specifically to your relationship. Write your stimulus sentences or situations along with responses to them and to each of the supplied stimulus sentences and situations using the different options in responding in the spaces provided. When finished, partners change roles.

Again, don't be overly concerned if a particular option, stimulus sentence, or stimulus situation does not seem to fit your relationship. Do the best you can in responding to each one. We are interested in your learning these two additional response options and in your being able to use them. Don't be afraid to make mistakes or take risks.

Definitions:

Awareness response (Aw): A response that starts with the "I" pronoun or an "It," a self statement, indicating an awareness of one's own behavior or internal process.

Example: Partner: "You never listen to me!" Respondent: "I know that I sometimes don't pay attention to you well. I wish we could find a way for me to pay attention to you more often."

Contextual response (C): A response that asks for more information about reasons and background for the other person's statement, which is in the form of a self-statement. Example: Partner: "I don't want to go back to see them again ever!" Respondent: "You seem really upset. Will you tell me what happened? I really need to know more about the situation to understand your response."

Stimulus Sentence 1: You're just like your father/mother!

Response Options

Awareness (Aw) _____

Contextual (C) _____

Stimulus Sentence 2: I can't trust you.

Response Options

Awareness (Aw) _____

Contextual (C) _____

Stimulus Sentence 3: You're really sloppy!

Response Options

Awareness (Aw) _____

Contextual (C) _____

Stimulus Sentence 4: If only you wouldn't do that 20 times a day!

Response Options

Awareness (Aw) _____

Contextual (C) _____

Stimulus situation 1: You and your partner have agreed to go to see a movie that starts at 8 o'clock. Your partner has to work but promises to be home on time to go. By 8:30 s/he's not home and hasn't called. At 8:45 s/he finally walks in the door.

Response Options

Awareness (Aw) _____

Contextual (C) _____

Stimulus situation 2: Your partner appears angry and hasn't said anything to you all day.

Response Options

Awareness (Aw) _____

Contextual (C) _____

Stimulus situation 3: Your partner tells you s/he feels you aren't affectionate or sexy enough toward him/her.

Response Options

Awareness (Aw) _____
Contextual (C) _____

Stimulus situation 4: Your partner teases you about one of your personal or physical characteristics.

Response Options

Awareness (Aw) _____
Contextual (C) _____

Make up your own stimulus sentences:

Stimulus situation:

Response Options

Awareness (Aw) _____
Contextual (C) _____

Homework: During the coming week, write down answers that fall in any of the two response options you practiced in this practice exercise. If you do not follow-up by writing them down, chances are you will go back to using AA or RR instead of CC styles.

Practice Exercise 6. Priorities

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this homework is to examine important areas of your life and how they relate to your relationship with your partner (and/or family). Listed below are seven stages that represent the development of a family over time. Please circle one stage or category that best fits you currently. If you have been married before, circle the stage or category in which you currently see yourself and your present partner.

Family Life Cycle Stages

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. Unattached young adult | 5. Launching children and moving on |
| 2. Newly married couple | 6. Family in later life |
| 3. Family with young children | 7. Couple who has decided not to have children |
| 4. Family with adolescents | |

- Keeping your current family life cycle stage or category in mind, please rank-order in terms of importance the following areas in your life. Use a scale from 1 to 7, with your first ranked area being most important to you down to your seventh ranked area being the least important.

<i>Area</i>	<i>Rankings of Importance</i>		
	<i>Now</i>	<i>Before</i>	<i>After</i>
Selfhood	_____	_____	_____
Marriage/relationship with partner	_____	_____	_____
Children	_____	_____	_____
Parents/in-laws/siblings	_____	_____	_____
Work	_____	_____	_____
Friends	_____	_____	_____
Leisure time	_____	_____	_____

Now rank-order the same areas for both the stage before and the stage following (after) the one you have indicated you are currently in. Example: If you see yourself best fitting into stage 2 now, you would rank-order the areas as you saw them when you were in stage 1 – unattached young adult – and as you expect them to be in the next stage, stage 3 – family with young children. For those of you currently in stage 1, for your previous stage use your late adolescence. For those of you in stage 6 – family in later life – for your next stage use the time when you will be a couple with grandchildren or great-grandchildren. For those of you who chose stage 7 – couple who has decided not to have children – for your previous stage use either stage 1 or 2 – unattached young adult or newly married couple – and for your next stage, use stage 6 – family in later life.

2. The cornerstone of all these priorities is selfhood. How do you define it and what does it mean to you?

3. Self-fulness. If selfhood is the state of having a self, self-fulness means having a positive sense of self-importance. What does self-fulness mean to you?

4. How does self-fulness express or manifest itself?

5. Selfishness: How to you define it and how does it express or manifest itself?

6. How is selfishness different from self-fulness?

7. Selflessness: How do you define it and how does it express or manifest it?

7. How is selfishness different from either self-fulness or selflessness?

8. No-self: How would you define it and how does it express or manifest itself?

9. How does no-self express or manifest itself?

10. Responsibility: What does it mean to you to take responsibility for yourself?

11. To take responsibility for oneself means to use the personal pronoun “I,” instead of the pronoun “You.” Give instances where your negative use of the pronoun “You” instead of the pronoun “I,” as in blaming, putting down, name-calling, etc., has resulted in negative consequences for your partner and/or your family.

Instance a:

Instance b:

Instance c:

12. Are you convinced that using sentences with the negative “You” produces negative consequences for you and your partner (family)? If you are not yet convinced, go on and use the negative “You.” See what happens to you and your partner or family.

13. Perfection: How would you rate yourself as far as having high standards (i.e., perfectionism)? Circle which of these ratings apply to you:

High Medium Low Very Low

If you rate High or Medium, tell what perfectionism does to you and your partner (family).

14. What are the positive consequences?

15. What are the negative consequences?

16. Now briefly describe yourself in four of your major family roles as you were in the past, as you are now in the present, and as you want to be in the future.

Role

- a. As a child (son, daughter) to your parents:

Past _____
 Present _____
 Future _____

- b. As a person in your own right:

Past _____
 Present _____
 Future _____

c. As a partner to your partner:

Past _____

Present _____

Future _____

d. As a parent to your children:

Past _____

Present _____

Future _____

e. As a parent to your parents:

Past _____

Present _____

Future _____

Homework: During the coming week, think about what is important to you in the long run. Answer the following questions in writing and discuss them with your partner or family members by appointment.

1. What will happen to your sense of importance when you retire?

2. What would happen to your sense of importance if you were fired or handicapped by illness?

3. If you do not take good care of yourself, who will?

4. If you do not take care of yourself, how will you be able to take care of those you love and who love you?

Practice Exercise 7. The Triangle of Living

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to explain how the three sides of a triangle of living apply to you.

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

A. Having

1. Money

- a. What does money mean to you (your partner relationship or family)?

- b. What kinds of conflicts are there about money?

2. Goods

- a. What do goods (possessions, material things) mean to you (your partner relationship or family)?

- b. What kinds of conflicts are there about goods (gifts, things, purchases)?

B. Doing, performance, reading, etc.

1. Services

a. Who performs what chores (or services) in your household?

b. How does this arrangement work for this household?

2. Information: What kind of information is allowed in this home?

a. TV programs (what kind, for how long) and movies:

b. Newspapers and magazines:

c. Books (who reads what?):

d. Relatives, friends and neighbors (get-togethers, frequency of meetings, feelings about visits, etc.):

e. Others (visitors, drop-ins, entertainments, etc.):

f. Which of the preceding are most important?

i. To whom?

ii. How?

iii. Why?

C. Being

1. Love

a. What does love mean to your relationship with your partner or family?

b. How is love shown or demonstrated?

c. Is love used as a commodity to bribe or blackmail family members?

2. Intimacy as defined by the sharing of joys and hurts.

a. How does this definition apply to your intimate relationships?

- b. From that definition how intimate is your partner/family?

3. Importance

- a. How important are you to yourselves and to others in the family?

- b. How is this importance shown or expressed inside the family?

- c. How is this importance shown or expressed outside the family?

- d. How do you fail to show your individual importance?

D. Balance of having, doing, being

1. Which of these – having, doing, being – is most important to you?

2. Why? (i.e., What does it get you?)

3. Are you satisfied with the way you rank these resources?

4. If you are satisfied, why?

5. If you are not satisfied, why not?

6. How could each of you do better?

Homework: After answering these questions, discuss them with your partner or family by appointment only.

Practice Exercise 8. Guidelines for Negotiation

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

Dear Partners (or Family Members):

The purpose of these guidelines is to help you learn what most of us do not know how to do, that is, to negotiate important issues and differences with others. These guidelines are based on the assumption that negotiation is the most important factor in most intimate relationships. We cannot promise you happiness. However, we can help you learn this process if each of you is committed to learning. In our experience with countless couples and families, we have found that the major deficit we have is our inability to negotiate creatively and constructively. We hope these guidelines will help you to do so. However, if any one of you is committed to failing and to defeating yourself and the other, there is no question that neither these guidelines nor any other form of service will be helpful to you.

Most of these guidelines are negotiable; that is, if you find that some other approach or deviation from these guidelines is helpful to you, by all means use it. Do let us know what you have found useful so that we can make it part of our experience. There are two guidelines that we feel are not negotiable: (a) negotiating by appointment, and (b) negotiating in writing.

a. Negotiating by appointment: We believe that it is absolutely necessary for a couple or a family to set up 1 h a week in the home to practice and apply the principles and skills we plan to teach you. If you want to save money and time, there is no substitute for your meeting together at a prearranged time, which we consider part of our work. Of course, if you want to defeat us and yourselves, the best way to do it is to avoid setting and keeping these appointments.

b. Negotiating by writing: We believe that it is essential for couples to start keeping a record of what they negotiate about. What you negotiate about is your business, which you may tell us about to the extent that it will help us understand how well you negotiate or fail to negotiate. Each of you should start keeping a notebook in which you jot down issues that arise in your relationship that you feel you need to negotiate with your partner. As you progress, you may be able to develop one notebook for both of you. However, to begin with we would like to see each of you keep separate notes. You may write them before your appointment, during, or after, as you find most comfortable.

Once we have established these two guidelines, we want to let you in on our principle for negotiation, which is at the basis of the next five guidelines to follow: On any issue for couples and family, feelings and emotions must be expressed nonjudgmentally and discussed first, followed by a rational discussion of alternative courses of action (if necessary) and an eventual agreement on which course of action would be mutually satisfactory. Once a course of action is implemented, each of you needs to become more aware of how it is or is not working. You need then to get together to consider how and why this course of action is working (or not working), what changes are necessary, or other action(s) needed to work for both of you.

We have divided this principle into five steps:

Step 1. Emotionality: The function of emotions and feelings in an intimate union is to be discussed to increase intimacy. If there is no intimacy, there is no negotiation possible, since most issues found in couples and families are emotional issues. To deal with emotionality, all of us need to practice “I” statements and avoid making “You” statements. If you want to destroy this marriage and family, continue using “You” statements followed by “never” or “always.” We cannot stop you.

Once feelings have been expressed and discussed by both of you (i.e., by using “I” statements) you may be ready to enter the next step. In any of these steps and especially the first step, you may need more than one meeting to conclude matters. The longer it takes to finish each step, the more stressed and troubled the relationship is. If you cannot share your feelings properly, stop! There is no need to go any further.

Step 2. Rationality: At this point, each of you may need to generate as many alternative actions (solutions, possibilities, etc.) that may seem to alleviate or to solve whatever problem you are negotiating. Generate as many alternatives as you can freely, no matter how outlandish they may be. Once each of you has done it, come

up with whatever patterns (actions or solutions) may be helpful and satisfactory to you. If you can't and have reached a stalemate or you are becoming emotional, stop, and agree to continue next week at an appointed time to see whether you can come up with a solution to help (re)solve this impasse.

Step 3. Activity: Implement whatever course of action you have agreed upon. However, keep in mind that whatever you have agreed to do or not to do is preliminary and tentative. It does not become set until each of you is able to evaluate its usefulness and you have discussed with the other whatever misgivings (or lack of them) you may have. Give yourself time for this pattern to take place before evaluating its success or failure (up to 3 months if appropriate).

Step 4. Evaluation (awareness and feedback): Is the agreed-upon solution working? How well and at what costs? What rewards? Should you (a) persist with it, (b) change parts of it and improve it, or (c) start using an altogether different solution? At this point (as in Step 1), you need to discuss whatever feelings you may have about what is going on before considering alternatives or changes.

Step 5. Context: It is important that throughout this process (steps 1–4) you become aware of whatever physical and time contexts and constraints you may be negotiating about. Are you negotiating only within your relationship? Or are you negotiating issues or conflicts that include others outside your relationship, such as your children, in-laws, neighbors, or agencies (schools, health care)? Are you dealing with the past, present, or future? You may need to clarify the limits of your negotiation in terms of how and what you control (usually the past and the future are not negotiable).

In spite of these guidelines, we know that you will experience defeats, failures, false starts, wrong turns, detours, and blind alleys. They are all part of the process of trial and error that is necessary to learn to negotiate. To gain some experience in applying these guidelines for negotiation, we have constructed an exercise for you and your partner to do. Please list below five issues, differences, or troublesome aspects of your relationship that you feel you would like to negotiate. Rank-order them from 1 to 5 with your first ranked item being a small difference or issue in your relationship down to your fifth ranked item being one of large conflict size or difficulty. Use all numbers from 1 to 5 only once. Each of you is to make up a list of your own.

After you've made up your list, pick either your number 1 or 2 ranked issue and apply the guidelines for negotiation of this issue with your partner. At this point we want you to tackle only an issue or conflict of low intensity. We suggest you pick an easy issue first because we want you to (a) learn the process of negotiation with a minimum of trouble, and (b) experience some initial success with this new approach. Once you have learned the process, you can use it as an approach to larger and more difficult issues requiring future negotiations in your relationship. Good luck!

<i>Issue/Difference/Conflict</i>	<i>Rankings</i>	<i>Issue/Difference/Conflict</i>	<i>Rankings</i>
1 _____	_____	4 _____	_____
2 _____	_____	5 _____	_____
3 _____	_____		

Feedback Form for Negotiation Practice Exercise

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this form is for you to provide feedback to whoever has administered this practice exercise to you about how you feel about completing all the homework practice exercises. Now that you have completed this practice exercise, please respond to the following questions concerning the use of these homework practice exercises.

- Using a scale of 1–9, rank the homework practice exercises according to their usefulness in developing effective communications for your family. Rank the most useful practice exercise as No. 1, rank the least useful as No. 9. You may use copies of your past practice exercises to reach a decision about these rankings.

<i>Practice Exercise</i>	<i>Rank-Order</i>	<i>Practice Exercise</i>	<i>Rank-Order</i>
The Goals of Marriage or Being a Couple	_____	Options in Responding, Part 2	_____
The Golden Rule	_____	Priorities	_____
"I" Statements	_____	The Triangle of Living	_____
Styles in Intimacy	_____	Negotiation Guidelines	_____
Options in Responding, Part 1	_____		

- How useful did you find this practice exercise for facilitating/developing more effective negotiation skills in your family?
 - Very useful _____
 - Quite useful _____
 - Somewhat useful _____
 - Slightly useful _____
 - Not useful at all _____
- How helpful would you rate this practice exercise for teaching/developing negotiation skills to other families?
 - Very helpful _____
 - Quite helpful _____
 - Somewhat helpful _____
 - Slightly helpful _____
 - Not helpful at all _____

4. How useful would you rate this practice exercise in terms of developing or improving your relationships in general?

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| a. Very useful | _____ | d. Slightly useful | _____ |
| b. Quite useful | _____ | e. Not useful at all | _____ |
| c. Somewhat useful | _____ | | |

5. How likely would you be to recommend this practice exercise to other couples you know?

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| a. Very likely | _____ | d. Slightly likely | _____ |
| b. Quite likely | _____ | e. Not at all likely | _____ |
| c. Somewhat likely | _____ | | |

6. Using your own words, what did you find useful about this practice exercise?

7. How could this practice exercise be improved?

Intimacy

The purpose of this practice exercise is to improve intimacy between partners and among family members. If partners cannot discuss intimacy, it will be very difficult for family members to discuss it as well. Intimacy is the most direct expression of love. Many loving relationships may not discuss intimacy. It is up to you to decide whether you want to become more intimate with your partner and/or family members.

Practice Exercise 1. Loving and Caring

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

Before we deal with intimacy, however, we need to know more about how you define love. The purpose of this practice exercise is to find out what love means to you.

1. What is love? Please write your own definition.

2. For a moment think about the following definition of love: Love includes at least four separate and distinct parts: (a) caring, (b) seeing the good, (c) forgiveness, and (d) intimacy. Can you improve on these four parts? Feel free to add whatever other part you think is necessary for love.

3. For you, what is caring?

- a. What does it mean to you to show care?

- b. How do you show caring emotionally?

- c. Physically?

d. Mentally?

e. Financially (with money)?

4. How do you take care of yourself?

a. Emotionally

b. Physically

c. Mentally

d. Financially (with money)

5. How do you express your care for people you love and who love you? Please respond in detail.

a. Partner (if any)

b. Children

c. Parents (and in-laws)

d. Other intimates (name them_____)

6. How could you improve the way you care for yourself? What would you do?

7. How can you improve caring for those you love and who love you? What exactly would you do?

a. Partner

b. Children

c. Parents

d. In-laws

e. Other intimates. Who are they?_____

8. How is your caring similar and how is it different from the ways your partner cares for you?

9. Families differ in the way caring is expressed. For example, different cultures can vary markedly in how they express caring. Does it seem to you that some families you have known are better at showing care than others? Who are they and what did they do?

Homework: Make an appointment with your partner at least 24 h ahead of time. Compare and contrast your answers with those of your partner. See if you can come up with an agreement about how you both need to care for yourselves and for each other.

Practice Exercise 2. Seeing the Good

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to know more about how you see the good in yourself, your partner, and intimate others.

1. What does “seeing the good” mean to you?

2. What do you see that is good in yourself (explain)?

- a. Is it hard to see the good in yourself? Why?

- b. Write down your positive points or characteristics.

- c. How do you feel when you think of the good in yourself?

3. Why do you have a hard time seeing the good in yourself?

4. Now write down possibly negative points or characteristics about yourself.
How does this make you feel?

5. Is it easier/harder to see the bad in yourself? Why?

6. How would we gain by seeing the good in ourselves and in intimate others? Do you see the good in others? Is it easy or hard?

7. Is it easier to see the faults of intimate others? Do you have a reason? What is your reason?

8. Why should we seek the good?

a. In ourselves?

b. In our partner?

c. In intimate others?

9. If we cannot see the good in ourselves, how can we see it in others?

10. Please list your significant others; rate with a checkmark your ability to see the good in each one of them. Who is the easiest/hardest?

Easy Moderate Difficult Impossible Why?

Partner

Mother

Father

Sister(s)

Brother(s)

In-laws

Best friend(s)

Homework: During the next week discuss your answers to these questions with your partner by appointment 24 h ahead and not on impulse.

a. What similarities and differences did you find in each other's answers?

b. Can you find a substitute for seeing the good?

- c. How will you and your partner continue to see the good in yourselves and each other? Make sure that this is a joint decision.

Practice Exercise 3. Love and Forgiveness

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you forgive past errors in yourself and in those you love and who love you.

1. What does forgiveness mean to you?

2. How often do you practice forgiveness? Please check which answer applies to you best:

a. Most of the time	_____	c. Almost never	_____
b. Once in a while	_____	d. Never	_____

3. Think for a moment about the following definition of forgiveness: Forgiveness is canceling expectations of perfection in ourselves and intimate others. Could you accept this definition? Why yes? Why not?

4. Expectations could exist in the following ways. Please explain how each way applies to you.

a. Perfection

b. Performance

i. At home

ii. At work

iii. In leisure activities

c. Production of:

i. Money

ii. Goods

iii. Services

d. Problem-solving, bargaining, or negotiating

e. Presence, that is, being emotionally available to yourself and to your partner

5. Do you think it is possible to love yourself and others without forgiveness? Explain.

6. What kinds of feeling do you have when you forgive or are forgiven?

a. Is forgiving others the same as forgiving yourself?

b. Can you forgive others if you cannot forgive yourself?

7. Who has been the most forgiving person in your life? What did you learn from him/her?

8. Who has been the least forgiving person in your life? What did you learn from that experience?

9. Often we think that perfection means goodness and imperfection means badness. This is a very destructive match. To be perfect means to be heavenly and to be imperfect means to be human. To be human means to make mistakes. How do you feel about forgiving yourself for being human and for having made mistakes?

10. Why do you not forgive yourself?

a. Are some things easier to forgive? What are they?

b. Why some and not others?

11. Do you find it hard to forgive others? If so, why?

12. If you were to forgive yourself or your partner, what would happen to you and to your relationship with your partner?

13. What would you have to give up in order to forgive?

14. Do you think you could use forgiveness to restore or improve love in your life?
In what way?

15. List several ways you could use forgiveness to restore a damaged relationship or hurt feelings.

16. What would you give up in the process?

Homework: Discuss your answers to these questions with your partner and/or family members by making an appointment at least 24 h ahead of time. During the next week, list all the instances in which you used forgiveness. Use the rest of this sheet to list all instances of forgiveness during this week. Discuss them with your partner or family members.

Practice Exercise 4. Discussing Hurts: Part 1

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you increase intimacy in your relationship with your partner and/or family members.

1. What does intimacy mean to you?

2. How intimate are you? Please check which answer applies to you best:

- a. Very intimate _____ c. Not at all intimate _____
b. Somewhat intimate _____

3. Why are you as intimate as you just checked?

4. Think for a moment about the following definition of intimacy: Intimacy consists of discussing hurts and fears of being hurt with those we love and who love us.

- a. Does this definition have meaning for you? Yes No
b. What meaning does this definition have for you?

- c. If you agree, why? If you disagree, why?

5. This definition stresses that love and hurt are intertwined to the extent that we hurt when those we love also hurt. What do you think about this intertwining?

6. If this definition is acceptable to you, we need to define hurt as any action, situation, or event that saddens us, like frustrations, losses, put-downs, rejections, neglect, and humiliations. Facing up to our errors, mistakes, and neediness can also be hurtful. Can you think of other hurts?

7. When was the last time you discussed your hurts with your partner? Do you remember it?

- a. How did you feel afterwards?

- b. How did your partner feel afterwards?

- c. How often do you and your partner discuss hurts? Check which answer applies to you:

- | | | | |
|---------------------|-------|------------------|-------|
| i. Every day | _____ | v. Once a year | _____ |
| ii. Once a week | _____ | vi. Almost never | _____ |
| iii. Once a month | _____ | vii. Never | _____ |
| iv. Once in a while | _____ | | |

8. Discussing our hurts and our fears of being hurt with those we love and who love us is very hard because:

- a. We need to have a sense of self to discuss it with others. How does this point apply to you?

- b. We only hurt the ones we love. How does this point apply to you?

- c. We need to seek comfort from the very ones we have hurt or who have hurt us. How does this point apply to you?

- d. What is your explanation about how hard it is to discuss your hurts and fears with your partner?

Homework: Make an appointment with your partner and compare your answers to the issues raised in this practice exercise with each other.

1. Think of instances where you were able (or failed) to discuss your hurts with those you love and who love you.
2. Take the risk and tell your partner about a recent failure on your part to discuss your hurts with him/her.
3. Recall instances in which you saw your parents discuss their hurts and fears of being hurt. Perhaps they may have failed in discussing hurts with each other. If that is the case, how could learn how to discuss hurts? Discuss these instances with each other and write them down for future discussions.

Practice Exercise 5. Discussing Hurts: Part 2

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to strengthen your intimacy with each other. It is not as easy as you may think.

1. What are some recent instances where you were able to or failed to discuss your hurts with someone you love?

What happened?

2. Up till now, how have you dealt with your hurts and fears of being hurt? List these ways and describe how you may have avoided discussing these hurts with someone you love.

3. How did your approach work for you in the past? Did you get what you wanted?

4. How did it work for those who love you?

5. Are you now ready to discuss your hurts with the one you love and who loves you? If yes, why? If no, why not?

6. What are you afraid might happen if you did discuss your hurts with your partner?

7. Discussing hurts is very scary because we are afraid of losing our sense of self, losing our mind, losing control, breaking down, or even losing our lives. What does discussing your hurts mean to you?

8. If you are not ready to discuss your hurts with your partner, would you be willing to discuss his/her hurts? If yes, why? If no, why not?

Homework: After you have met by appointment, discuss these issues with your partner and think more about possible reasons why you may not be ready to discuss your hurts with him or her. Write here any added comments you did not have a chance to write above.

Practice Exercise 6. Discussing Hurts: Part 3

Name_____Sex_____Date_____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to see whether you and your partner can really become intimate with each other, in the sense of discussing hurts and fears of being hurt.

1. What have you concluded about your inability to discuss your hurts with your partner, if that is indeed the case?

2. Is your not discussing hurts due to unwillingness or to inability?

3. Where does this inability or unwilling to discuss hurts come from?

4. Do you think that you could develop this skill of discussing hurts with time?

5. Are you willing to work on discussing your hurts? If you are not ready, stop here and do not go any further. If you are ready, go on. The two hardest words in the English language are “I hurt.” The three hardest words are “It hurts me_” Before discussing with your partner, allow yourself to get in touch with whatever hurts you. Sit close with your partner and join hands with each other. Close your eyes if necessary and concentrate on getting in touch with your hurts. When you are ready, complete the following stems:

- a. I hurt when

- b. It hurts me when

6. We do not need to find excuses or reasons for our hurts. We hurt because we are human beings, not robots. Do not allow anyone, especially yourself, to belittle your hurts or “reason” yourself out of your hurts. Stay with your hurts and do not try to avoid them. You are entitled to feel hurt. However, we are not entitled to use our hurts to clobber our partners with them. Please comment.

7. How we feel our hurts is one thing; how we express them is another. We need to feel our hurts but we do not need to hold them inside of us, making ourselves and our partners miserable. Please comment.

8. Take the risk of discussing your hurts with your partner, as suggested. Then write in the space below what happened.

Homework: If you still have trouble discussing your hurts with your partner, take 15 minute a day for 4 days to write down all the hurts you received by those you love and all the hurts you have produced in those you love and who love you. After you have finished with this homework, discuss it with your partner by appointment. If this discussing has taken place, did you find it helpful to you? If not, why not? If yes, why?

Afterwards, review the whole practice exercise practice exercises from the beginning. Write down any comment or reaction that would be useful in improving this practice exercise.

Final Feedback Form for Intimacy

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

Now that you have completed this practice exercise, please respond to the following questions concerning the usefulness of these intimacy tasks.

1. On a scale of 1–6, rank-order the six intimacy practice exercises according to their usefulness in improving/developing closeness with your partner. Rank the most useful task as No. 1, rank the least useful task as No. 6.

<i>Task</i>	<i>Rank-order</i>	<i>Task</i>	<i>Rank-order</i>
Loving and Caring	_____	Discussing Hurts – Part 1	_____
Seeing the good	_____	Discussing Hurts – Part 2	_____
Love–forgiveness	_____	Discussing Hurts – Part 3	_____

2. How useful did you find the whole practice exercise for improving/developing greater intimacy between you and your partner or between you and your family members?

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| a. Very useful | _____ | d. Slightly useful | _____ |
| b. Quite useful | _____ | e. Not useful at all | _____ |
| c. Somewhat useful | _____ | | |

3. Please explain why you answered the way you did.

4. How would you rate this practice exercise's helpfulness for teaching couples and families to develop intimacy?

- | | | | |
|---------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|
| a. Very helpful | _____ | d. Slightly helpful | _____ |
| b. Quite helpful | _____ | e. Not helpful at all | _____ |
| c. Somewhat helpful | _____ | | |

5. Please explain why you answered the way you did.

6. How likely would you be to recommend this practice exercise to other couples of families you know?

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| a. Very likely | _____ | c. Somewhat likely | _____ |
| b. Quite likely | _____ | d. Not at all likely | _____ |

7. Using your own words, what did you find useful about this practice exercise?

8. What about this practice exercise did you not find useful? Feel free to express your feelings and opinion.

9. How could this practice exercise be improved?

Hurt Feelings

The purpose of these practice exercises is to help you understand and perhaps learn to control and regulate your hurt feelings. You will receive additional practice exercises after completion of this one and after satisfactory completions of others. Make sure that you were given information about the nature of these proactive exercises and that you signed an informed consent form given to you at the beginning.

Practice Exercise 1.

Name_____ Sex_____ Date_____

Step 1. The purpose of this step is to obtain more information about the kind of hurt feelings you have experienced in your life. Rate these hurt feelings on a scale of 10 points, with 0 meaning no hurt feeling was ever experienced, 1 meaning a slightly painful experience, up to 10 meaning extremely and exceedingly painful feeling. Circle the number that best indicates your experience with that particular hurt feeling.

<i>Feeling</i>	<i>Painfulness</i>										
Anguish	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bereavement	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Desperation	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Devastation	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Distress	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Grief	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sorrow	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Suffering	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Trauma	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Upset	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Explain how it felt to complete rating these hurt feelings. Feel free also to explain why you rated the feelings the way you did.

Could you report on how you feel about answering the above question?

Step 2. Define the hurt feelings listed below with the help of a dictionary and give two examples of how that particular feeling can be expressed.

1. Anguish

Definition _____

Example 1:

Example 2:

2. Bereavement

Definition _____

Example 1:

Example 2:

3. Desperation

Definition _____

Example 1:

Example 2:

4. Devastation

Definition _____

Example 1:

Example 2:

5. Distress

Definition _____

Example 1:

Example 2:

6. Grief

Definition _____

Example 1:

Example 2:

7. Sorrow

Definition _____

Example 1:

Example 2:

8. Suffering

Definition _____

Example 1:

Example 2:

9. Trauma

Definition _____

Example 1:

Example 2:

10. Upset

Definition _____

Example 1:

Example 2:

11. A hurt feeling not listed above. Write what it is _____

Definition _____

Example 1:

Example 2:

Now that you have defined these feelings according to how painful they are and were to you, please rank-order them according to how much you have experienced these feelings. Rank as No. 1 the feeling that you have experienced the most, rank as No. 2 the feeling that you have experienced next, and so on; mark as N/A the feelings that were not experienced by you, so that you rank only those specific feelings that you have experienced in you life.

Rank-order	Feeling (Fill in)	Rank-order	Feeling (Fill in)
No. 1	_____	No. 6	_____
No. 2	_____	No. 7	_____
No. 3	_____	No. 8	_____
No. 4	_____	No. 9	_____
No. 5	_____	No. 10	_____

Now that you have defined the items in this list and rank-ordered your hurt feelings, please explain how it felt to define and rank-order them. Feel free also to explain why you rank-ordered these feelings the way you did.

Could you report on how you feel about answering the above question?

After completing this practice exercise you should receive a general form directed to your No. 1 rated hurt feeling.

Practice Exercise No. _____ Name of Hurt Feeling _____

Name of Participant _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to help you improve those hurt feelings that were rated either 10, 9, or 8 or that were ranked from 1 to 6 in your first practice exercise. Usually you should not be working on more than one hurt feeling at a time.

1. How did you experience this hurt feeling? Please explain in detail.

2. How often do you feel or are you aware of this hurt feeling?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| a. Practically every day | _____ | e. Once every 6 months | _____ |
| b. Once a week | _____ | f. Once a year | _____ |
| c. A couple of times a month | _____ | g. Once every few years | _____ |
| d. Once a month | _____ | | |

3. Please explain further:

4. How did this hurt feeling come about? Do you remember when you became aware of it? Check which answer fits best:

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. When I was a child (younger than 5 years of age) | _____ |
| b. When I was in elementary school | _____ |
| c. When I was in middle school | _____ |
| d. When I was in high school | _____ |
| e. After high school | _____ |
| f. Any other time | _____ |

5. Please explain further:

6. Was this hurt feeling acceptable or unacceptable? Why was this hurt feeling acceptable or unacceptable? Please explain:

7. Give three specific examples of how this hurt feeling affects you in the present

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

Homework: Next week, plan to write about this hurt feeling at preset times (for instance, at 8 a.m., 12 noon, 4 or 7 p.m.) on at least 3 days (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, or Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday). If you can start thinking about it through writing, you might develop ways to make it stronger than it was in the past. Write down what happened in detail. For each time you start thinking about this hurt feeling, make sure to answer in writing the following four questions:

- a. How did you start thinking it?
- b. What followed?
- c. How did it end?
- d. What did this hurt feeling get you?

Time 1 (write the time you started_____)

a.

b.

c.

d.

Time 2 (write the time you started_____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Time 3 (write the time you started_____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Please, check which of the following shows how you feel about this practice exercise:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| a. Completely useless | _____ | d. Somewhat useful | _____ |
| b. Somewhat useless | _____ | e. Extremely useful | _____ |
| c. So-so | _____ | | |

Explain in greater detail how you feel about this practice exercise and what you got out of it if anything.

(Optional) General Feedback Form for Single Practice Exercises

Name_____Sex_____Date_____

Practice Exercise No._____

The purpose of this feedback form is to learn how this practice exercise affected you.

Now that you have completed this practice exercise, please respond to the following questions concerning it.

1. How useful did you find this task for understanding the sourcebook topic?

a. Very useful _____

b. Quite useful _____

c. Somewhat useful _____

d. Slightly useful _____

e. Not useful at all _____
2. How important is the skill or attitude addressed by this practice exercise?

a. Very important _____

b. Quite important _____

c. Somewhat important _____

d. Slightly important _____

e. Not important at all _____

3. Put into your own words what you got out of doing this practice exercise.

4. How could this practice exercise be improved or changed?

Causes of Hurt Feelings

The purpose of these practice exercises is to help you understand and perhaps learn more about the causes and sources of hurt feelings in your life. These causes may have produced extremely hurtful feelings that may have affected you all your life.

You will receive one practice exercise after completion of this one and after satisfactory completion of others. Make sure that you were given information about the nature of these practice exercises and that you signed an informed consent form given to you at the beginning of this homework.

Step 1. Define the causes of hurt feelings listed below (with the help of a dictionary if necessary). Give two examples of how that particular cause was hurtful to you. If a cause does not apply to you personally, please define it and give two examples anyway.

1. Abandonment

Definition

Example 1:

Example 2:

2. Emotional verbal abuse

Definition

Example 1:

Example 2:

3. Physical abuse

Definition

Example 1:

Example 2:

4. Sexual abuse

Definition

Example 1:

Example 2:

5. Betrayal

Definition

Example 1:

Example 2:

6. Discounting

Definition

Example 1:

Example 2:

7. Frustration

Definition

Example 1:

Example 2:

8. Humiliation

Definition

Example 1:

Example 2:

9. Loss

Definition

Example 1:

Example 2:

10. Neglect

Definition

Example 1:

Example 2:

11. Rejection

Definition

Example 1:

Example 2:

12. Put-downs

Definition

Example 1:

Example 2:

13. A cause not listed above. Write what it is _____

Definition

Example 1:

Example 2:

14. A cause not listed above. Write what it is _____

Definition

Example 1:

Example 2:

Step 2. The purpose of this step is to obtain more information about present and past causes of hurt feelings you have experienced in your life. Rate these causes hurt feelings on a scale of 10 points, with 0 meaning no hurtfulness was ever experienced, 1 meaning a slightly hurtful experience, up to 10 meaning extremely and exceedingly hurtful feeling. Circle the number that indicates how hurtful that cause was to you and how seriously that cause affected your life.

<i>Causes</i>	<i>Degree of Hurtfulness</i>									
1. Abandonment	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 10
2. Emotional abuse	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 10
3. Physical abuse	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 10
4. Sexual abuse	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 10
5. Betrayal	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 10
6. Discounting	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 10
7. Frustration	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 10
8. Humiliation	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 10
9. Loss	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 10
10. Neglect	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 10
11. Rejections	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 10
12. Put-down	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 10
13. Your specific cause	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 10
14. Your specific cause	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9 10

Now that you have completed this list, please explain how it felt to rate the causes of your hurt feelings. Feel free also to explain why you rated these causes the way you did.

Could you report on how you feel about answering the above question?

Step 3. Now that you have defined and rated these causes according to how hurtful they are and were to you, please rank-order them according to how hurtful these causes were to you. Rank as No. 1 the cause that has been the most hurtful, rank as No. 2 the cause that was next in hurtfulness, and so on; mark as N/A the causes that do not apply to you at all.

<i>Rank-order</i>	<i>Cause (Fill in)</i>	<i>Rank-order</i>	<i>Cause (Fill in)</i>
No. 1	_____	No. 8	_____
No. 2	_____	No. 9	_____
No. 3	_____	No. 10	_____
No. 4	_____	No. 11	_____
No. 5	_____	No. 12	_____
No. 6	_____	No. 13	_____
No. 7	_____	No. 14	_____

Now that you have defined, rated, and rank-ordered the causes of your hurt feelings according to how hurtful they were to you, please explain how it felt to define, rate, and rank-order them. Feel free also to explain why you defined, rated, rank-ordered these causes the way you did.

Could you report on how you feel about answering this practice exercise?

After completing this practice exercise, you should receive as many general practice exercises as necessary to explain further the nature of the causes you rated on how hurtful they have been to you.

General Practice Exercise No. _____

Name of Hurtful Cause _____

Name of Participant _____ Sex _____ Date _____

The purpose of this practice exercise is to explain further a cause that produced hurtful feelings that you may suffered all your life.

1. How did you experience this cause? Please explain in detail what happened that hurt your feelings.

2. How often do you feel or are you aware of this cause?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| a. Practically every day | _____ | e. Once every 6 months | _____ |
| b. Once a week | _____ | f. Once a year | _____ |
| c. A couple of times a month | _____ | g. Once every few years | _____ |
| d. Once a month | _____ | | |

3. Please explain further:

4. How did this cause come about? Do you remember when you became aware of it? Check which answer fits best:

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. When I was a child (younger than 5 years of age) | _____ |
| b. When I was in elementary school | _____ |
| c. When I was in middle school | _____ |
| d. When I was in high school | _____ |
| e. After high school | _____ |
| f. Any other time | _____ |

5. Please explain further:

6. Was this cause acceptable or unacceptable? Why? Please explain:

7. Give three specific examples of how this cause effects you in the present.

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

Homework: Next week, plan to write about this cause at preset times (for instance, at 8 a.m., 12 noon, 4 or 7 p.m.) on at least 3 days (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, or Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday). If you can start thinking about it through writing, you might develop ways to make it weaker than it was in the past. Write down what happened in detail. For each time you start thinking about this cause, make sure to answer in writing the following four questions:

- a. How did you start thinking it?
- b. What followed?
- c. How did it end?
- d. What did this hurt feeling get you?

Time 1 (write the time you started_____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Time 2 (write the time you started_____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

- c. _____

- d. _____

Time 3 (write the time you started_____)

- a. _____

- b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

Check which of the following shows how you feel about this practice exercise:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| a. Completely useless | _____ | d. Somewhat useful | _____ |
| b. Somewhat useless | _____ | e. Extremely useful | _____ |
| c. So-so | _____ | | |

Explain in greater detail how you feel about this practice exercise and what you got out of it, if anything:

(Optional) General Feedback Form for Single Practice Exercises

Name _____ Sex _____ Date _____

Practice Exercise No. _____

The purpose of this feedback form is to learn how this practice exercise affected you.

Now that you have completed this practice exercise, please respond to the following questions concerning it.

- How useful did you find this practice exercise for understanding the causes of your hurt feelings?

a. Very useful	_____	d. Slightly useful	_____
b. Quite useful	_____	e. Not useful at all	_____
c. Somewhat useful	_____		

2. How important is the way that was used to give you this practice exercise?

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| a. Very important | _____ | d. Slightly important | _____ |
| b. Quite important | _____ | e. Not important at all | _____ |
| c. Somewhat important | _____ | | |

3. In your own words write what you got out of doing this practice exercise.

4. How could this practice exercise be improved or changed?

Informed Consent About Hurt Feelings

I _____ (the undersigned) have been informed about the possible use of written practice exercises about hurt feelings as homework assignments, either by themselves written at a distance (by mail, fax, or Internet), or as additions to other verbal, face-to-face professional approaches, like prevention, psychotherapy, or rehabilitation. I understand that this approach is still experimental and that it needs to be evaluated before being available to everybody. I am aware of the possible dangerous consequences that may be provoked by answering written practice exercises about hurt feelings at a distance. I agree to participate in this type of intervention with the full understanding that it may bring up painful memories in my past and that this approach, at least initially, may produce some upset in me, my partner, or my family. I understand further that all information about me will be considered absolutely confidential because all of my writing will be limited between myself and the professional who is administering these written homework assignments. To maximize this anonymity, I can use the following five-digit number instead of my name in completing practice exercises:

I can drop out from this type of intervention any time I want without any penalty or consequence and I can only disclose whatever I want at my discretion during the course of these homework assignments. If I were to become upset because of the nature of this approach, it will be up to me to deal with this upset in any way I deem satisfactory to me. First, I should discuss this upset with the professional who is administering this intervention, if I do desire or see fit. Second, I can discuss my upset with whoever I choose. I may keep it to myself or discuss it with my loved ones, friends, clergy, or physician.

I can answer and send my completed homework assignments through the Internet in whatever manner that will guarantee absolute confidentiality, e.g., encryption. I do have the choice of using the Internet to communicate with the professional who is administering these homework assignments.

This professional, after proper evaluation, either through an interview and objective psychological tests, does have the option to inform me whether this approach will or will not be helpful to me. I will be informed of this option verbally and in writing.

I undertake answering in writing homework assignments about hurt feelings at a distance from a professional by my own free will and choice. I will not hold _____ responsible for any possible upset that may result from this intervention. Doctor, Mr., or Ms. _____ is offering this intervention in good faith, using as many precautions as are humanly and professionally possible. I agree to complete in writing homework assignments given to me until completion of an agreed-upon practice exercise and, if necessary, to be evaluated before administration, after completion of these practice exercises, and even at a given period of time after termination to be agreed with the professional.

Signature of Participant Signature of Professional

_____ Date _____ Date _____

One copy of this signed informed consent form should be kept by the participant and another copy by the professional.

Note: Do you presently use any antidepressant or mood-changing medication? If so, inform the mental health professional who is offering these practice exercises about this medication. Ask permission and consent from your attending physician to participate in this type of intervention. Make sure you obtain a written consent from your physician that indicates knowledge and consent for you to participate in this type of homework assignments. Give a copy of the physician's consent to the professional. If necessary, have the mental health professional talk with your physician. In this case, you will need to give written permission to this professional to talk with your physician.