

Reconnect and Feel Closer



A practical
exercise for
couples
looking to
reconnect



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Couples Exercise: Reconnect and Feel Closer



Every couple trudges through the desert of disconnection now and then, a stretch of time where it feels as if you're living with a stranger. I think the worst part is feeling that this person, who once really got you, now thinks you're crazy or ridiculous. That sense of having our loved ones shrink away from what we're saying leaves us feeling alone and unloved. This is condemned isolation.

Try this exercise to bring you two back into each other's emotional space. You may need to do this more than once, so just relax and see what happens. As long as you treat each other with respect, you can't mess this up, no matter how awkward you feel.

Couples Exercise: Reconnect and Feel Closer

1

Pick a time when you have quiet and privacy, perhaps after the kids are in bed, or even early in the morning. Get two sheets of paper, two pens, and two writing surfaces. Find a comfortable place to sit together. For a few minutes, just be quiet in each other's presence. Take several deep breaths and exhale slowly.

2

Write the following sentence (both of you) on your paper. "I love my partner [name], but I don't always feel as close as I'd like to, because _____."

3

Trade papers.

4

Finish the thought for your partner. Really try to get inside your loved one's heart/mind and write the rest of that sentence or paragraph or page as if you are her/him. Take your time with this.



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5

When you've both finished writing each other's thoughts/feelings, trade papers again.

6

Read what your partner wrote, silently, and see if it fits for you. Did he/she get it? Spend a few minutes in silence, just breathing.

7

Take turns reading the papers aloud to each other. Say what fit and what did not fit. Talk about any pieces that feel left out or not quite accurate for you. Take notes about what your partner is saying.



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8

As you listen to each other clarify what's been written, be silent and breathe. Don't ask questions. Don't try to argue or fix anything. Don't apologize. Just hear and take notes.

9

Later, after at least three hours, you can come back and ask questions or apologize, if you feel a need, as long as you don't try to change your partner's feelings or pressure them to see things your way. Just let their feelings and thoughts be exactly what they are.

10

Repeat this exercise daily if you're having an especially difficult time together - - monthly to keep in tune with each other.



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I learned this exercise from Carol Coulson, an EMDR therapist in St.Louis. Now, I use this with my couples in therapy as a way to promote mutual empathy.

Mutual empathy cures condemned isolation by bringing us back into a supported space with another human, in particular, a person we love.



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If you find this exercise does not bring you closer, you may have needs that require a licensed therapist who works with couples. Please call me if you'd like to talk about it. I've been where you are and I know how it feels to be in condemned isolation.....like sitting in a cold, dark corner by yourself. Let's work together to pull you back into light, hope, and the warmth of each other.