

## Our Relationship Journal

If it is hard to bring up the difficult conversation or it's really hard to stay in the difficult conversations with each other. Having a shared journal that you pass back-and-forth could provide the interchange necessary to get your relationship back on track.

Here is how it works: The first person writes or journals their feelings that a certain question brings up for them and then gives it to the other. The second person reads what the first person wrote before writing or journaling their feeling about the same question then passing it back to the other; and the cycle repeats. The important thing about this is that you both need to keep the journal for at least 3 days at a time. This assures that you each have time to develop your thoughts, and you don't just react and push back on the other person. The idea is to implement real journaling where you sit and think about what you're writing. You're not writing a note. You're not writing emails to each other. Making an agreement together to share a journal like this can be a nice way to provide the discussion without the stress that brings on an argument every time.

Answers to these main questions might be different over time, so keep asking them.

1. What were your feelings in the beginning when we decided to commit to really being in Relationship together?
2. What was the hardest thing for you about being in this relationship during this experience?
3. What was the most joyful thing for you about being in this relationship during this experience?
4. What is the hardest thing about being in this relationship for you?
5. What is the greatest thing about being in this relationship for you?
6. What do you wish I would do/did differently?
7. What do you wish you would do/did differently?
8. What insecurities have you discovered that you have that you didn't know about before?
9. How have you noticed jealousy come up for you in our relationship?
10. What has this experience in our relationship brought up for you from your past?
11. What does this remind you of?
12. When in your life have you felt this way before?
13. Where did you get hurt this way before?

These are some primary questions to journal to, but feel free to add other questions along the way. Add questions that you want to know the answers to; even pose questions to each other. Just make sure they are not argumentative questions that make the other person have to defend him or herself. Let them be questions like, "I'm curious about you. I want to know you better. Tell me about this." Make sure you are coming from a place of curiosity that leads to more understanding and knowledge of each other. This is where the journal is useful because it

gives you time to get to that place in your heart, rather than just saying it out loud in an argumentative way.

Refrain from falling into discussing or deciding together whether it is good to be in relationship or not. Refrain from focusing on the question of “Are we good or bad from being in relationship or doing things in the relationship?” These are not the real questions underneath what the shared journaling is all about. It’s about finding answers to questions like, what does this bring up for each of us from our past? What insecurities are we discovering we had that we never thought we had before?

This journaling is about a shared discovery of uncovering honest feelings and emotions of perceptions, observations and discernments of truths and breakthroughs of self and in witnessing each other. It’s about getting to know yourselves and about getting to know your partner. It’s not about making decisions about how the relationship should function. The journal can help you keep turning back to that primary question of “Tell me how you’re feeling, I would like to understand you better.”

The thing that’s really underneath all of this are childhood wounds that have been scratched open by having this relationship both by the idea of it and the execution of it. Every single way that each of you struggled along the way is tied to a childhood thing. So really what you are doing is getting to know each other better. You are getting to know how the other got hurt as a kid and what they are most afraid of since childhood. You are getting to know where the other feels most vulnerable and what they really need in order to feel loved. Maybe you are each just now getting to know those things for yourselves. Those are things that all got opened in childhood and were in the background of both of your lives. Those are things you’re getting to know about each other now. The core thing is to consider that the way it appears that you’ve hurt each other, you may have also really hurt each other, but each one of those things only hurt so much because they were similar to a way you got hurt when you were a kid. So, if you implement that understanding, it’s going to take you out of the deadlock of “You against Me!” It’s going to pull you back to, “You poor thing! I want to know more. You poor, sweet child! You are so precious to me, tell me more!” It’s going to pull you back to a place where you can see each other as innocent rather than locked into “Are you right or am I right?” question, because that is not really the question. The deeper wounds are always about the childhood stuff.

For every issue that comes up, for every emotion or every accusation or for every whatever else that comes up; try to see if both of you can consider for yourselves “What does this remind me of? When in my life have, I felt this way before? It’s not to say that what happened or is happening between you isn’t real and legitimate. You may have hurt the other and they may have hurt you and that is real and really happened, but always it attaches to something that it reminded you of; and if you can get back to and think about what it reminds you of, it takes the charge off of what actually transpired between you. For instance, if you felt jealous of when she/he was with a certain other person. You realize that is how you felt about your siblings because they took all the attention away from your parents. You’re going to start to see that

once you don't have that big weight of sibling rivalry on top of this then, you are still hurt, but it's not that big of deal that she/he was with that certain person or whatever else. It's a way to pull some of the intensity and energy out of what's between you; otherwise you continue to argue about things that cannot be answered. You're arguing about how jealous you feel, when that jealousy is about your siblings. There is nothing that your partner can say or do that's going to relieve it for you. If you can keep going back to the "What does this remind me of?" question, then instead of this being a problem between you two, it's actually a golden opportunity. You both have created a scenario that's like a trail of breadcrumbs back out of the woods for each of you that leads you to those very places that you're most stuck inside. A place you would have been stuck inside for your whole lives, but this gives you a little trail to find it and clear it up. You have to keep turning your attention back to, "Where did I get hurt this way before?" Again, it's not to excuse what's transpired between you, it rather a way to go find some of the buried treasure that will make it clearer about what you really want to deal with in regard to each other.

**#1 What were my feelings in the beginning when we decided to commit --- to really being in Relationship together?**

**#2 What was the hardest thing for me about being in this relationship during this experience?**

**#3 What was the most joyful thing for me about being in this relationship during this experience?**

**#4 What is the hardest thing about being in this relationship for me?**

**#5 What is the greatest thing about being in this relationship for me?**



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**#6 What do I wish you would do/did differently?**



**#7 What do I wish I would do/did differently?**



**#8 What insecurities have I discovered that I have that I didn't know about before?**



**#9 How have I noticed jealousy come up for me in our relationship?**



**#10 What has this experience in our relationship brought up for me from my past?**



#11 What does this remind me of?



**#12 When in my life have, I felt this way before?**



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**#13 Where did I get hurt this way before?**





**#14 Additional Question:**



**#15 Additional Question:**



**#16 Additional Question:**

