

New Earth Relationships

A Guide for Couples in the 21st Century

EXERCISES

A Companion Workbook for

NEW EARTH RELATIONSHIPS

A Guide for Couples in the 21st Century

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Prescription / Exercises

Performing the following exercises as recommended here is a lot of work but so worth the effort. If your relationship is already in decent shape, performing these exercises seriously, responsibly and effectively should bring the quality of your communication to a powerfully high level. If your relationship has a lot of baggage, you may choose to first seek the help of a couple's therapist to get back into harmony.

If you and/or your partner are not healthy (for example, clinically depressed, addicted, severely anxious, paranoid), first seek professional help before attempting to work on your relationship. As a wise man once told me, you can't have a relationship with a crazy person.

For each exercise, flip a coin to determine who will be Partner 1 and Partner 2.

>>Exercise: Hearing Your Partner

Goal

Hearing your partner in a way that removes your egotistic reactions, and fully embraces your partner's point-of-view—even if it seems completely foreign or untrue to you.

Instructions

Partner 1: Using the communication recipe in the *Hear It* chapter, communicate to Partner 2 something about which you would like to be heard.

Partner 2: Mirror back to Partner 1 according to the recipe.

Partner 1: Provide loving feedback as to the extent to which Partner 1 felt, heard and validated your point of view.

Switch roles and repeat.

Recommended Frequency

Once a day for three weeks, or at least 21 times within two months.

>>Exercise: Taking Responsibility for Your Energy

Goal

Taking responsibility for your part of the discontent your partner may be experiencing, realizing that much of your energy about this is related to past events that have nothing to do with your partner.

Instructions

Partner 1: Communicate a recurring upset you've had with your partner and clearly communicate the energy from the past that you bring to the upset. This is not about you communicating your upset to your partner. This is about you fully getting in touch with the past event or events that have you so charged about this.

Partner 2: Support your partner in experiencing the past event or events. Acknowledge your partner for being vulnerable and responsible.

Switch roles and repeat.

Recommended Frequency

Once a week for nine weeks, or at least nine times in three months.

>>Exercise: Delivering and Receiving Acknowledgment

Goal

Delivering and receiving acknowledgement in a way that is heartfelt and powerful. Making sure your expression of acknowledgement far exceeds the frequency of your complaining.

Instructions

Partner 1: Acknowledge your partner for one or more things in a way that is heartfelt.

Partner 2: Thank your partner, without conditions, insuring that the "thank you" is independent of anything you are experiencing other than being acknowledged.

Switch roles and repeat.

Recommended Frequency

Once a day for three weeks, or at least 21 times in one month.

>>Exercise: Experiencing and Expressing Gratitude

Goal

Engaging in the sacred practice of experiencing and expressing gratitude on a daily basis.

Instructions

Partner 1: Tell your partner five things about your partner for which you are grateful.

Partner 2: Thank your partner, without conditions or protestations.

Switch roles and repeat.

Recommended Frequency

Once a day for three weeks (at least 21 times in one month).

>>Exercise: Delivering Complaints

Goal

Delivering complaints about your partner in a manner that is nurturing of your partner's ego, loving, responsible and effective.

Instructions

Partner 1: Practice delivering a complaint to your partner following the recipe for complaining in the chapter *Complaining Responsibly*. Start with something relatively small, and over the nine weeks work your way up to the bigger complaints after you've had success with smaller ones.

Partner 2: Provide feedback to your partner. Did your partner use "I messages", if appropriate? Did your partner make the communication easy for you to hear? Did your partner come from a loving place in delivering the communication?

Repeat the process with the same complaint until Partner 1 can deliver the complaint in a way that is effective and loving for Partner 2.

Switch roles; have Partner 2 communicate a complaint and Partner 1 provides feedback.

Recommended Frequency

Once a week for nine weeks, or at least nine times in three months.

>>Exercise: Delivering Withheld Communications

Goal

Looking to see what needs to be communicated that you are withholding from your partner, and then communicating responsibly and powerfully.

Instructions

Partner 1: Communicate something you are withholding from your partner.

Partner 2: Really hear your partner and validate your partner's experience.

Switch roles and repeat.

Recommended Frequency

Once a week for nine weeks, or at least nine times in three months.

>>Exercise: Making and Accepting Requests

Goal

Making requests of your partner and being open to your partner's requests.
Making counteroffers to requests that you do not wish to accept.

Instructions

Partner 1: Make a request of your partner.

Partner 2: Accept, reject or counteroffer the request.

Switch roles and repeat.

Recommended Frequency

Once a week for nine weeks, or at least nine times in three months.

>>Exercise: Making and Keeping Promises

Goal

Making and keeping promises to your partner. Holding your partner accountable for his promises.

Instructions

Partner 1: Make a promise to your partner, if you have not already done so in the requests exercise. Make sure it meets each of the four criteria as stated in the chapter *Promises*.

Partner 2: If you feel you can count on your partner to keep his promise, accept it and lovingly hold your partner to account.

Switch roles and repeat.

Recommended Frequency

Once a week for nine weeks, or at least nine times in three months.

>>Exercise: Making Declarations

Goal

Making declarations to create a future for your relationship.

Instructions

Every other week, switch off which partner does this. Make a declaration to your partner — anything from “I love you” to some future state in which you can envision your relationship (for example, “In one year we’re going to be the most loving, passionate couple we know”). It’s now your responsibility to live into this declaration and bring it into existence.

Once a month for six months, a total of three times each.

>>Exercise: Being Responsible for Getting Acknowledged

Goal

Being responsible for getting yourself acknowledged, despite how awkward it initially feels to do so.

Instructions

Partner 1: Request that your partner acknowledge you for something specific: for example, “I’d like to be acknowledged for getting a raise last month.”

Partner 2: Acknowledge your partner.

Partner 1: Feedback to your partner as to whether you *feel* acknowledged. If you don’t feel acknowledged, communicate what was missing.

Partner 2: If at first you don’t succeed, continue to acknowledge your partner until you do.

Switch roles and repeat.

Recommended Frequency

Once a week for nine weeks, or at least nine times in three months.

>>Exercise: What Makes You Feel Safe, Loved and Cared About

Goal

Communicating what makes you feel safe and what makes you feel loved and cared about; and routinely reviewing your partner's list, and being responsible for your part in having your partner feel safe, loved and cared about.

Instructions

Each partner makes an initial list of what makes that partner feel safe, and another list of what makes that partner feel loved and cared about.

After each of you have made your lists, share them with each other. Review the lists to make sure you understand what your partner is communicating.

Each week, add at least one item to your list and share the entire list with each other.

Recommended Frequency

Once initially, and then each week for eight weeks, or at least eight updates in three months.

>>Exercise: Loving Communications

Goal

Offering loving written communications, notes, cards, poems and so on to your partner on a weekly, or more frequent, basis.

Instructions

Write a note to your partner. It may simply be an "I love you" left in your partner's lunch box, on your partner's pillow, in your partner's car, on your partner's voicemail.

Recommended Frequency

Once a day for three weeks or at least 21 times within two months.