

***The Cycle* Is Our Common Enemy! We Repeat Negative Interactional Loops and Patterns**

Put a check mark next to the things that you and your partner do:

Partner #1	Partner #2	Partner #1	Partner #2
The things my partner does that trigger me are:		When my partner does these things, right away I feel:	
Yells or screams at me	Yells or screams at me	Despairing	Despairing
Starts speaking louder	Starts speaking louder	Hopeless	Hopeless
Lies to me	Lies to me	Better protect myself	Better protect myself
Puts me down	Puts me down	Hurt/injured	Hurt/injured
Condescending	Condescending	Not heard	Not heard
Contemptuous	Contemptuous	Not important to him/her	Not important to him/her
Interrupts me	Interrupts me	Resentful	Resentful
Blames me	Blames me	In pain	In pain
Points out my faults	Points out my faults	Despondent	Despondent
Looks very angry	Looks very angry	My partner's behavior plus these feelings make me do these things to my partner:	
Makes demands	Makes demands	Yell at him/her	Yell at him/her
Justifies self	Justifies self	Speak louder	Speak louder
Makes excuses	Makes excuses	Put her/him down	Put her/him down
Explains instead of listening	Explains instead of listening	Become condescending	Become condescending
Begs	Begs	Interrupt	Interrupt
Withdraws	Withdraws	Blame	Blame
Refuses to talk	Refuses to talk	Point out his/her faults	Point out his/her faults
Tells others bad things about me	Tells others bad things about me	Look very angry	Look very angry
Gets logical	Gets logical	Demand/command	Demand/command
Calls me illogical	Calls me illogical	Justify my behavior	Justify my behavior
Doesn't support me against others	Doesn't support me against others	Make excuses	Make excuses
Ignores when I talk	Ignores when I talk	Explain instead of listening	Explain instead of listening
Complains about me	Complains about me	Beg	Beg
Tries to manipulate	Tries to manipulate	Withdraw	Withdraw
Promises but doesn't keep it	Promises but doesn't keep it	Refuse to talk	Refuse to talk
Complies and later resists	Complies and later resists	Tell others bad things about him/her	Tell others bad things about him/her
Uses Alcohol/drugs/porn/gambling/shopping/over-eating/or similar	Uses Alcohol/drugs/porn/gambling/shopping/over-eating/or similar	Get logical	Get logical
When my partner does these things, right away I feel:		Call him/her illogical	Call him/her illogical
Mad/angry	Mad/angry	Don't support him/her against others	Don't support him/her against others
Alone/abandoned	Alone/abandoned	Try to manipulate him/her	Try to manipulate him/her
Justified in my anger	Justified in my anger	Criticize him/her	Criticize him/her
Frustrated	Frustrated	Ignore when she/he talks	Ignore when she/he talks
Irritated/annoyed	Irritated/annoyed	Promise and don't keep it	Promise and don't keep it
Anxious	Anxious	Comply but don't follow	Comply but don't follow
Scared	Scared	Complain about him/her	Complain about him/her
Terrified	Terrified	Use Alcohol/drugs/porn/gambling/s hopping/over-eating/or similar	Use Alcohol/drugs/porn/gambling/s hopping/over-eating/or similar
sad	sad	My reactions then seem to make her/him feel and act:	
disappointed	disappointed	Better-calmer-nicer-loved	Better-calmer-nicer-loved
I have to figure out myself	I have to figure out myself	Kinder-more open-	Kinder-more open-
Deprived	Deprived	Worse- sadder- scared- lonelier	Worse- sadder- scared- lonelier
Ignored	Ignored	More withdrawn-more closed	More withdrawn-more closed

When all this happens, the thoughts and fears I have about us, about myself, about my partner are:

Deep down, the softer feelings I don't share are:

Deep down, the longings and needs I have that I don't share are:

Then we are just stuck in these repeating loops. It just doesn't feel safe to share my feelings and needs. Maybe we could see these repeating interactions as what keeps us from talking and resolving things, from talking in ways that bring understanding, comfort and a sense of intimacy. Maybe we could tell each other when we see ourselves getting stuck and team up against this loop of strong emotions and behaviors so that we can create a space for safety, curiosity about each other , and compassion.