



COUPLES' ASSIGNMENT WORKSHEET

Name _____ Date _____

YOUR ASSIGNMENT

This assignment is designed to help you look at your life in some new ways, as well as help me get to know quite a bit about you. This way, when you arrive for your appointment, I'll have a good sense of your background, how you see yourself, what some important life experiences have been, and what you hope to accomplish in our work together. *This saves you time and money.*

Please complete the following questions and fax or email them back to me prior to our meeting. You'll want to set aside some time to complete the questions when you can be focused and avoid interruptions and distractions. Answer each question with the first uncensored thought that comes to mind. If a question stirs up a strong image, a surprising feeling, or a forgotten memory, make a note of that. Assume that each of these questions and your reactions are important.

I look forward to working with you.

FAMILY INFORMATION

1. What messages – explicit or implicit – did you learn from your family? Examples: *Don't trust anyone. Expressing feelings is dangerous. Relationships don't last. How to use depression, alcohol, work to distance people. Family is most important. Honesty is rewarded.* (It's useful for me to understand both positive and negative messages.)

2. As a result of what you learned, what have you practiced or become good at? Examples: *Leaving relationships before I get left. Giving in to avoid conflict. Bottling up my feelings instead of talking about them. Always there for my sister when she needs me.*

3. As a result of what you practiced, what have you become, and what have you missed out on? Examples: *a self-sufficient loner- I've missed out on intimacy.*

4. What role did you play in your family of origin? Examples: *the smart one, the funny one, the peacemaker, the troublemaker, daddy's little girl, etc.*

5. How has that role shaped your personality – for better and for worse? Example: *Being “good” taught me to recognize others’ needs but not my own.*

6. While you were growing up, were any of your family members chemically dependent (including alcohol), and/or diagnosed with depression, anxiety or other mental illness? If “yes” who and what?

7. What about today? Are you or any members of your family of origin or your immediate family chemically dependent? If “yes”, again, who and what is the dependency?

8. Have there been any other addictive behaviors, either in your family of origin or in your immediate family? Examples: *gambling, spending, eating disorder, sexual addiction*

9. Growing up, how could you tell your mom/dad was angry or disapproved of you?

Mom: _____

Dad: _____

10. How could you tell when your mom/dad was feeling loving or tenderness toward you?

Mom: _____

Dad: _____

11. How did your parents express negative and positive feelings towards each other?

Mom: _____

Dad: _____

12. How would you describe your relationships with siblings growing up?

OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

1. What kind of work do you do now, and what in particular is good about it?

2. What would you need to have, be, or do, to make your work more satisfying?

3. What work have you done in the past that was more satisfying (if anything?)

4. What long-term work/career goals do you have? Do you have a plan for achieving them?

PERSONAL LIFE

1. List 3 activities you love, how often you do them, and what in particular you love about them.

Activity

How often you do it

What you love about it

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

2. How do you show your love to your partner? (notes, calls, hugs, food, etc.)

3. On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the greatest level of satisfaction, how satisfied are you with your sexual relationship with your partner? _____ Is your satisfaction determined most by the frequency of sexual activity, or by the type of activity? _____

How comfortable are you discussing your sexual desires with your partner (1-10)? _____ Is there anything that would make it more comfortable for you to discuss? _____

How do you show negative emotions? (pout, withdraw, sarcasm, etc.)

4. When was the last time you said you were sorry?

5. Who are your “cheerleaders” and what unique gifts do you get from each of them? Examples: *Chris: patience, food, unconditional love. Laurie: structure, good advice, clarity*

6. Who do you laugh with? How often?

7. Who do you cry with? How often?

8. What do you do to regain a sense of balance and perspective? How often? With whom? Examples: *play music, take a long walk, play golf, call a friend.*

9. Please complete this statement: “The person who knows me best would describe me as _____

10. Have you ever been physically or sexually abused? (If yes, when and by whom?)

HEALTH INFORMATION

1. Describe your general state of mental, physical and spiritual health.

2. As you may know, many medications, alone or interacting together, can impact not only physical health, but emotional health as well. Please list any medications that you are currently taking, and for what purpose (include prescription as well as over-the-counter and herbal supplements and homeopathic remedies).

3. Are you currently feeling suicidal? _____

4. Have you ever felt suicidal? Have you ever attempted suicide? (If yes to either, explain with dates, treatment, hospitalizations as applicable)

5. Please list any previous experiences with therapy and describe your reactions, both positive and negative.

6. Are you currently seeing any other mental health professional or doctor? Explain.

7. Describe your current use of alcohol or other mood-altering substances, i.e. how much, under what circumstances, how often.

RELATIONSHIPS

1. Describe a typical pattern from childhood that characterizes your parents' relationship to each other. Example: *Mom was always distressed and dad was the rescuer; They called each other "mom" and "dad" instead of by name; When dad first came home from work they would talk together while he changed into more comfortable clothes.*

2. Describe a typical pattern from your adult life that characterizes your way of relating to a partner.
Example: *I pick people who are initially attracted but ultimately are threatened by my strengths. They end up criticizing me and I end up resenting them... I believe in "choosing my battles wisely" but often end up not letting go of things and feel resentful. I then get disproportionately angry about something else.*

3. How do you think your parents' relationship has influenced your own behavior with a partner?

GOALS

1. Imagine that tonight after you go to sleep a miracle occurs. You wake up in the morning and your life is "perfect." What's the first thing you notice that tells you things are radically different?

2. How would this change improve your life?

3. What is your specific relationship goal? Describe it in positive, behavioral terms. (For example, instead of "I'd like Pat to stop giving me the silent treatment" you might say, "I'd like Pat to tell me right away when there's something wrong, and I'd like to listen without feeling defensive.")

4. What are your strengths? What are your partner's strengths?

Mine: _____

Partner's: _____

5. Write down one personal therapy goal you'd like to work on.

6. How committed are you to doing whatever it takes to achieve your goal? Describe this by using a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 = not very committed, and 10 = very. What, if anything, would increase your level of commitment? What, if anything, would diminish your commitment?

7. Are you willing to devote focused time between sessions to work on your goal? _____

Thanks for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.