

Conflict Repair Worksheet

What separates couples who do well from couples who do not is much less about how often they argue than about what happens in the twenty-four hours afterwards. Most relationships do not fail on the row; they fail on the accumulation of rows that were never closed, each one adding a small amount of caution to the next conversation.

Who this is for: You resolve arguments by waiting until they stop mattering, and you have noticed the list of subjects you both avoid getting longer.

The exercises

1. Separate the rupture from the subject

Two different things that always get repaired as one.

What the argument was ostensibly about:

What actually hurt — the moment, not the topic:

For them, what do I think the rupture was?

Which of the two have we historically tried to fix?

2. The four-part repair

Name, own, impact, ask. In that order, no extras.

Name: "When I ____ last night."

Own: "That was ____." (No if, no but, no what-you-did-first.)

Impact: "I think it landed as ____."

Ask: "What would help now?"

3. What to leave out

The four additions that undo a repair.

Which of the four do I habitually add?

What is it doing for me?

The version of my repair with it removed:

What I will do with the discomfort of leaving it out:

4. Receiving one

Harder than giving one, and rarely taught.

What I usually do when I am offered a repair:

What I will say instead, in one sentence:

If it is genuinely insufficient, how I will say so without rejecting it:

What makes receiving hard for me specifically?

5. Repair or truce?

A test you can apply a week later.

Can we refer to it without the temperature changing?

Did the subject get taken up separately?

What is now on the list of things we do not raise?

How long is that list, honestly?

This worksheet is free to print, photocopy and share, including with clients. It is self-reflection material, not a diagnosis, an assessment or a substitute for professional support. If a relationship involves fear, control or coercion, or if working through this raises more than feels manageable, please speak to a doctor, a therapist or a domestic abuse service.