

THE AFTERMATH OF FAILED BIDS

Instructions: These exercises are a guide for processing and evaluating what happened when one of you felt that the friendship in your relationship was not working well, when perhaps one of you felt alienated and lonely, while the other may have felt a great need for autonomy, independence, or being alone. These exercises are designed to increase understanding between the two of you. The idea here is that there is no absolute reality when two people miss each other in turning towards one another or turning away; there are only two subjective realities. These exercises are designed to help you get at these and to ease these situations in the future.

Start with your feelings. In Part 1, read down the list of positive and negative feelings and say out loud which feelings you had when there was a failed bid, while your partner just listens. Then trade roles. In Part 2, take turns answering the questions about subjective realities and ways to express your needs and wants. If there's time, go on to also discuss the questions in Parts 3 and 4.

PART 1- Positive and Negative Feelings

Each of you takes a turn describing what you were feeling during the disagreement. You may either choose from the list below or come up with your own description. Remember to keep your comments simple and keep to the format "I felt. ... :"; avoiding statements such as, "I felt like you"

POSITIVE FEELINGS: How did you feel this week?

1. During this week I felt calm.
2. During this week I felt loved.
3. During this week I felt appreciated.
4. During this week I felt respected.
5. During this week I felt happy.
6. During this week I felt powerful.
7. During this week I felt loving.
8. During this week I felt kind.
9. During this week I felt in control.
10. During this week I felt like we were making progress.
11. During this week I felt connected to my partner.
12. During this week I felt optimistic.
13. Other feelings (write in):

NEGATIVE FEELINGS: How did you feel this week?

1. I felt defensive.
2. My feelings got hurt.
3. I felt excluded.
4. I felt angry.
5. I felt sad.
6. I felt misunderstood.
7. I felt criticized.
8. I felt like my partner didn't even like me.
9. I was afraid.
10. I was worried.
11. I felt like I was right and my partner was wrong.
12. I felt out of control.
13. I felt righteously indignant.
14. I felt unfairly picked on.
15. I felt unappreciated.
16. I felt unattractive.
17. I feel neglected.
18. I felt disgusted.
19. I was disapproving.
20. I was morally outraged.
21. I felt taken for granted.
22. I felt like leaving.
23. I was overwhelmed with emotion.
24. I felt excluded.
25. I felt powerless.
26. I felt like I had no influence.
27. I felt like my opinions didn't even matter.
28. I had no feelings at all.
29. I had no idea what I was feeling.
30. I felt lonely.
31. I felt alienated.
32. Other feelings (write in)