

SerenityWorkshops.com

Couple's Decision Support:

Should We Stay Together?

Couples Communication Tool

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Introduction

This sample Couples Communication Tool is for when you believe your marriage is in turmoil and each of you have searched for answers and are not sure you can make it work. You may have tried counseling in the past and are not sure you should continue or try again. You may have new major issues or still have strong emotions around betrayal, distrust and loss of connection and intimacy that continue to sabotage your relationship.

What is the Couples Communication Tool?

The Couples Communication Tool is an assessment tool that has 12 areas of communication, and is designed as a discussion tool to have an honest conversation with your spouse. The scale ranges from “Never” to “Always” for each category. You place your initials on the scale where you feel you are at on each category. Once you have placed your initials, you go back through the 12 areas of communication and put where you think **YOUR PARTNER** would place you on each scale.

Once each of you have completed the assessment, set aside time to walk through each of the areas of communication and discuss the results. Upon completion of the assessment session, each spouse should spend some time alone reviewing the assessment. Once you have had time to digest what was discussed, go back through each of the categories and list one thing you are willing to do to move the needle farther to the right.

Once you both have completed what you are willing to do, set another time to walk through and discuss the details of moving the needle to the right. Document in writing what you have both agreed to. Set a date one week out to review the agreement, check in on how you did and where each of you stands. You now can assess if you both are making progress on the commitment to work on your marriage. Continue to an agreed to timeframe to check in on progress of moving the needle to the right in each of the categories.

If you complete the attached sample Couples Communication Tool assessment of 4 categories and you feel you would like to continue to work on all 12 categories, please contact me for special offers. I am available to help you dissect the results and facilitate putting together a plan to move the needle to the right in all categories. If you are local to Southern California, please contact me for an on-site appointment at my office. If not convenient, an Online session is also available.

Before you take the sample assessment, it is important that you have an overview on rules for effective communication that you will want to employ to get the most out of your discussion. The Couples Communication Tool is designed to get a good indication of where you think you stand in each area as you communicate with your partner.

Rules for Effective Communication

Whenever you speak, be aware of your tone of voice and your choice of words. Choose words that are respectful and not sarcastic. No yelling or speaking over the other person.

Actively listen to your partner. Paraphrase back to your partner what they have said. By paraphrasing it indicated to your partner that they have been heard. It does not mean you agree with what is being said, only that you understand what they are saying. If you find yourself arguing, take a timeout before continuing.

No blocking. Everyone is allotted equal time to speak. Only one person speaks at a time. Stay in the present. Discuss only one item at a time.

No Judgement. Do not judge, put words in their mouth or jump to conclusions. Wait until your partner is finished. Paraphrase what they just said before you respond.

Speak in "I" statements: I want, I think, I feel, I need, I see, I hope... DO NOT use "You" statement: You always, You never. "You" statements are accusations, and are not received well. "I" statements are heard as requests.

No "Why" Questions. When you ask "Why" it causes the other person to feel they are being attacked or judged. Use "I" statements to get across how the action made you feel.

Sample Couples Communication Tool

The following sample Couples Communication Tool has 4 areas of communication and is designed as a discussion tool to have an honest conversation. Each participant should complete this scale by placing their initials on the continuum line for each item at the appropriate spot. The scale should be completed without discussion. Once you complete your answers go back through the same list and now insert your partner's initials where you feel **THEY** would place you on each factor.

Never-0 <-----+-----+-----+-----+----->10-Always
2 4 6 8

Once you have completed the assessment, set aside a two-hour period to walk through each of the 4 areas and discuss the results. When completed, be open to discussing if you are willing to invest in your marriage and do one thing in each area to move the needle further to the right.

ATTITUDE

I speak to my partner in a respectful way when we are talking.

Never-0 <-----+-----+-----+-----+----->10-Always

LISTENING

I listen to my partner's words and feelings without interrupting.

Never-0 <-----+-----+-----+-----+----->10-Always

HONESTY

I truthfully tell my partner my thoughts and feelings.

Never-0 <-----+-----+-----+-----+----->10-Always

TRUST

I have no concerns when I am not physically with my partner.

Never-0 <-----+-----+-----+-----+----->10-Always

After you have completed the sample 4 areas assessment, please contact me for a free 30-minute on-site or Online session so I can help you continue your assessment discussion, especially if you get stuck communicating during the sessions. I can be reached by email at DrCollins@DrElaineCollins.com or call me at 714-267-8523.

Now that you have completed the attached sample Couples Communication Tool assessment of 4 categories and you feel you would like to continue to work on all 12 categories, please contact me for special offers. I am available to help you dissect the results and facilitate putting together a plan to move the needle to the right in all 12 categories. If you are local to Southern California, please contact me for an on-site appointment at my office. If not convenient, online sessions are also available.

Also, check out other free downloads and programs at www.DrElaineCollins.com and www.SerenityWorkshops.com.