

Map Our Conversation Cycle

Couples communication and boundaries | Couples | 15 to 20 minutes

Notice one repeated interaction and choose a different response.

Choose a recent, manageable disagreement that both people feel safe discussing. Each person completes their own map before comparing. The goal is to understand what happens between you while keeping each person responsible for their own behavior.

Describe one moment

Use an observable event: "When the conversation moved to money, I looked away."
Separate the event from your interpretation, such as "I thought I was about to be criticized."
You may have different memories of the same moment.

Follow your part of the sequence

Notice your body, the meaning you made, and what you did next. Ask your partner about the impact rather than deciding it for them. A protective intention does not erase hurtful behavior.

Choose one interruption

Try a small action within your control: name confusion, ask for one question at a time, or request a pause. If honesty could lead to threats or retaliation, stop the joint exercise and speak privately with your clinician.

The event and the meaning I made

My body signals and what I did next

The impact my partner described

One different response I want to practice