

Practice One Conversation Together

Couples communication and boundaries | Clinicians | 50 minutes

Help a suitable couple practice one clear request and evaluate how the conversation felt.

Prerequisite: separate safety assessment supports conjoint work. Select a low-intensity concern, and agree that either person can stop. The observable outcome is one practiced exchange and a freely chosen next step, not resolution of the entire relationship issue.

Minutes 0 to 8

Check willingness, immediate needs, and the topic each partner wants to address. Establish a pause signal. If safety concerns emerge, replace the exercise with appropriate private assessment and follow-up.

Minutes 8 to 18

Use REL01 to map one interaction. Invite separate accounts and identify one action each person can control. Do not insist that each contribution is equal.

Minutes 18 to 30

Practice REL03. One partner speaks for two minutes; the other reflects and checks accuracy. Switch only by agreement. Ask what made listening easier or harder.

Minutes 30 to 40

Use REL02 to turn one concern into an observable request. Rehearse a yes, a no, and a negotiated alternative. Check whether the answer is voluntary.

Minutes 40 to 46

Choose a pause and return plan using REL04 if useful. Identify one practice opportunity, practical barrier, and alternative. Assign no shared homework if it could increase pressure or danger.

Minutes 46 to 50

Ask each person what they understood, what remains unresolved, and whether the plan feels workable. Confirm the next appointment or support pathway and document the agreed action.

The practiced request and voluntary next step