Couples: communication and repair | Example

Two Plans for Saturday: A Worked Example

Adult couples | 5 to 8 minutes | Handout

See a fictional couple turn a vague argument into a specific, revisable request.

This is a fictional example, not a client story. Dani and Morgan both want a less rushed weekend. Their disagreement is about planning time, and both can freely disagree or stop.

How to use this page

Read the sequence. Notice what each person learns, what remains unresolved, and why their small agreement is only a trial.

What happened

Dani made plans for Saturday without checking first. Morgan said, "I had hoped we would decide together. I feel left out when the plan is already set." Dani initially replied, "You never suggest anything." They noticed the conversation expanding and chose to pause.

A different second try

Later, Dani said, "I made the booking before asking. I can see why that landed badly. I was worried we would miss the chance." Morgan reflected that concern, then asked for an earlier check-in. Dani asked how to make that practical when work schedules change.

The trial agreement

They chose a ten-minute planning check on Thursday. Either could decline an activity; attending separately remained an option. They did not settle every disagreement about time together. On Sunday they would ask whether the check-in felt useful and change it if it added pressure.

1. What did this pair do that could be adapted, or would not fit your situation?

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PK06-02 | continued

Facilitator notes and adaptation

Do not offer this example as a promise of repair or as evidence that respectful wording makes abuse safe. Partners need separate support when there is fear or coercion.

About this resource

AI-assisted original draft for More Than Therapy. Version 1.0. Source and editorial checks: 27 October 2026. Independent clinical review pending; no human clinical reviewer is recorded. The references below inform concepts and do not validate or endorse this original page.

Conceptual references

PB01 | The Gottman Institute | Six Tips for the Six Skills of Conflict Management

https://www.gottman.com/blog/manage-conflict-the-six-skills/

PB02 | National Domestic Violence Hotline | Should I Go To Couples Therapy With My Abusive Partner?

https://www.thehotline.org/resources/should-i-go-to-couples-therapy-with-my-abusive-partner/

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