

Couples: communication and repair | Explore

From Friction to a Clear Request

Adult couples | 8 to 10 minutes | Worksheet

Prepare one concrete request without assuming your partner's intentions.

Use this page on your own first. Choose a small, recent disagreement. Write only what you want to share, and keep a private version if that is more comfortable.

How to use this page

Complete the three response areas. You can stop after preparing the request; sharing it is optional and depends on safety and mutual willingness.

Separate the event from its meaning

Start with something observable, such as a changed plan or an unfinished task. Then notice the meaning you gave it. "I waited without an update" and "I do not matter" are different kinds of statements. Both may be important, but your partner cannot confirm your inner meaning for you.

Name the need and the invitation

Consider whether you need information, rest, practical help, closeness, or more choice. Ask for an action the other person could understand. Leave space for a different proposal. A request allows an honest no; an agreement needs both people's consent.

PK06-03 | continued

Plan for a pause

Decide what you will do if either person becomes unable to listen.
Preparing a request does not oblige you to tolerate insults or pressure.
Seek private support if making a request could place you at risk.

1. The observable event, and the meaning I gave it**2. The need I want understood, and one specific request****3. How I will invite a response or pause the conversation**

PK06-03 | continued**Facilitator notes and adaptation**

Help partners distinguish needs from demands while validating unfair workload, discrimination, access needs, and other real circumstances. Check safety separately.

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/>