

# GETTING THE LOVE YOU WANT: A COUPLES' THERAPY MANUAL

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## INTRODUCTION

By choosing to begin work with a therapist trained in Imago Relationship Therapy, you and your partner have taken the first step toward creating a relationship that is the expression of the vision you share of a loving, enriching, safe and passionate partnership.

Because your therapist wants you to reach your goals as quickly and effectively as possible, this manual has been made available to enhance the work you do as a couple during and between sessions. Its primary purpose is to reinforce the relationship skills you will be learning so that they become permanent resources for your relationship with your partner. It includes theoretical information, instruments for data collection, specialized worksheets for a variety of therapeutic procedures, concise diagrams and a journal for you to record your learnings and significant experiences of Imago Relationship Therapy.

In addition this manual will:

- ~ provide you with information about the aims and processes of Imago Relationship Therapy;
- ~ maximize the value and reinforce the work you do in your therapy sessions;
- ~ provide guidelines for the effective use of home assignments;
- ~ provide a place for you to record your progress in therapy; and
- ~ help you maintain your gains in the therapeutic process.

## INTRODUCTION

The manual is both a guide for working on your relationship between sessions and a preparation for your sessions. You will find that the work you do in the manual between sessions contributes to the value of each therapy session. In addition, by gathering this greatly needed information at home, you will reduce the amount of time it would have taken for you and your therapist to gather it during your sessions, thus saving you both time and expense.

Your therapist will assist you in the use of the manual, working in whatever order is best suited to your particular relationship, and may provide additional exercises if they seem useful to your unique situation. One of the first things your therapist may ask you to do is to read Getting the Love You Want: A Guide for Couples by Harville Hendrix, Ph.D., so that you will have a basic understanding of the theories of Imago psychology. You may also be asked to read an essay condensing some of the important ideas of the book and introducing the process of Imago Relationship Therapy. The essay is designed to describe how Imago Relationship Therapy can help improve your relationship.

This manual is divided into four sections:

**GROUNDWORK** includes preliminary exercises to help you assess your current relationship and a new approach to communication--the Couples Dialogue--is introduced. You and your partner are then asked to become aware of any exits in the relationship--areas where energy is being drained from the marriage--and to work together to close these exits. Next, you'll be asked to look at your goals for your relationship and to make an initial commitment to work toward those goals within your existing marriage.

**YOUR UNCONSCIOUS MARRIAGE/RELATIONSHIP** provides the information and exercises that allow you to begin to see the hidden aspects of your relationship that prevent you from achieving your goals.

**YOUR CONSCIOUS MARRIAGE/RELATIONSHIP** offers exercises intended to help you change the things that have been preventing you and your partner from having the loving, supportive relationship you are committed to creating.

**WORKSHEETS** are provided to assist you with gathering information and gaining clarity as you work with the many activities and exercises in Imago Therapy. Your therapist may assign Worksheets as between session work.

## INTRODUCTION

As you enter Imago Relationship Therapy using these materials, and others that your therapist may recommend, you and your partner will begin the process of change. In order to give this process the time and attention it deserves, you will need to agree to:

1. attend a minimum of twelve sessions with your partner;
2. participate fully in the sessions;
3. complete all the inter-session assignments; and
4. make no decision either to end or keep your relationship until the end of the twelve sessions.

At the end of the twelve sessions, your therapist will assist you in evaluating your relationship with your partner. By participating in the sessions and completing the assignments your therapist has given you between sessions, you will acquire the knowledge and skills to create a positive working relationship. Through a combination of learning, change, and assessment, you and your partner will know not only whether you want to make your relationship work, you will also know how you want to make it work. Your therapist will support you at this point as you decide the next step for your therapy and your relationship.

If you have the willingness to let your Imago Relationship Therapist guide you and your partner to explore the value of your relationship and help you to improve it, you are beginning a wonderful journey whose destination is a richer life for both of you.

# IMAGO RELATIONSHIP THERAPY CONTRACT

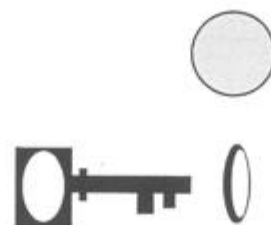
I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to:

- \_\_\_\_\_ attend a minimum of twelve sessions with my partner.
- \_\_\_\_\_ participate in the sessions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ complete all the inter-session assignments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ make no decision to either end or keep this relationship until the end of the twelve sessions.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# GROUNDWORK



## GROUNDWORK

In this section, you and your partner will do the groundwork necessary to begin building a conscious marriage/relationship.

Perhaps the most important element in a conscious marriage/relationship is communication. One of the most powerful tools for increasing effective communication is the **Couples Dialogue** (page 2). The value of this tool cannot be over emphasized and a description of this device that is unique to Imago Relationship Therapy opens your manual.

Next, in the section called **Your Relationship Vision** (page 4), you and your partner will explore your deepest hopes for your relationship and you will set some preliminary goals for yourselves that will help you to keep these visions in sight.

Finally, you will then learn about some of the dynamics that may be interfering with your ability to be truly committed to your relationship: behaviors and beliefs that prevent you or your partner from being present for each other. You will make a decision, called **The No-Exit Decision** (page 15), to commit yourself wholly to your relationship.

## THE COUPLES DIALOGUE

*Effective communication is essential to a good relationship.  
Good communication skills may not solve problems or resolve issues,  
but no problems can be solved or issues resolved without them.*

Defined as the verbal or non-verbal exchange of information, meaning and feelings between two persons, communication covers every possible way we can interact. We may communicate well or poorly, but we cannot not communicate.

One of the most effective forms of communication between persons in a committed love relationship is the *Couples Dialogue*. It consists of three processes: mirroring, validation and empathy.

**Mirroring** is the process of accurately reflecting back the "content" of a message from your partner. The most common form of mirroring is paraphrasing. A "paraphrase" is a statement in your own words of what the message your partner sent means to you. It indicates that you are willing to transcend your own thoughts and feelings for the moment and attempt to understand your partner from his/her point of view. Any response made prior to mirroring is often an "interpretation" and may contain a misunderstanding. Mirroring allows your partner to send his/her message again and permits you to paraphrase until you do understand.

**Validation** is a communication to the sending partner that the information being received and mirrored "makes sense." It indicates that you can see your partner's point of view and can accept its validity--it is "true" for the partner. Validation is a temporary suspension or transcendence of your point of view that allows your partner's experience to have its own reality. Typical validating phrases are: "I can see that..."; "You make sense to me because..."; "I can understand that ...." Such phrases convey to your partner that their subjective experience has its own logic and is a valid way of looking at things. To validate your partner's message does not mean that you agree with his/her point of view or that it reflects your subjective experience. It merely recognizes the fact that in any communication between two persons, there are always two points of view, and every report of any experience is an "interpretation" which is the "truth" for each person. It also recognizes that no "objective view" is possible. The process of mirroring and validation affirms the other person and increases trust and closeness.

**Empathy** recognizes the "self" in the other. It is the process of reflecting, imagining or participating in the feelings the sending partner is experiencing about the event or the situation being reported. This deep level of communication attempts to recognize, reach into and, on some level, experience the emotions of the sending partner. This **empathy** allows both partners to transcend their separateness, even if only for a moment, and to experience a genuine "meeting." Such an experience has remarkable healing power. Typical phrases for empathic communication include: "and I can imagine that you must feel...," "and when you experience that, I hear...," "I understand that you feel...," and "that makes sense to me," and at the deepest level, "I am experiencing your (feelings etc.)...."



## The Couples Dialogue (Continued)

A complete dialogue transaction may then sound as follows: "So, I understand you to be saying that if I don't look at you when you are talking to me, you think that I am uninterested in what you are saying. I can understand that. You make sense because when I don't look at you, I do appear uninterested. I can imagine that you would feel rejected and angry. That must be a terrible feeling."

**The reciprocal exchange of this process is the *Couples Dialogue*.**

**After a demonstration of the *Couples Dialogue*, your therapist will ask you to practice it in all conflicted transactions with your partner for the remainder of your therapy.**

## CHECK LIST FOR *COUPLES DIALOGUE*

There are three reasons why one might want to have a *Couples Dialogue*:

1. You want to be listened to and understood.
2. You are upset about something and want to discuss it.
3. You want to discuss a topic that you think might be "touchy".

### SENDER

1. *The one who wants to send a message must take the initiative and says, "I would like to have a Couples Dialogue. Is now okay?"*
2. *Sends message.*
3. *Continues sending message until completed.*
4. *Listen to summary and give accuracy check.*
5. *Listen to validation.*
6. *Listen. If RECEIVER did not get the feelings right or did not get all of the feelings, share with RECEIVER.*
7. *Once all three parts are completed, switch roles.*

### RECEIVER

1. *It is the RECEIVER's job to grant a Couples Dialogue ASAP...now if possible. [If not now, set an appointment so that the SENDER knows when s/he will be heard.] "I'm available now."*
2. *Mirrors: "If I heard you right" or "If I've got it right, you said..." (paraphrase the SENDER's message).*  
*Accuracy Check: "Did I mirror you accurately?" or "Did I get it?" If SENDER accepts, then say, "Is there more about that?"*
3. *When the SENDER has finished sending, the RECEIVER summarizes all of the SENDER's message with this lead-in: "Let me see if I got all of that...." Check for accuracy.*
4. *Validates: "You make sense, because...." and then state the logic of the SENDER's point of view.*
5. *Empathizes: A lead-in sentence might be: "I imagine you might be feeling..." or "I imagine you might have felt..." or "I can see you are feeling..." (if feelings are obvious).*  
*You must make some guesses as to what the SENDER is or was feeling. Feelings are stated in one word (i.e.: angry, confused, sad, upset, etc.). If your guess entails more than one word it is probably a thought ("you feel that you don't want to go with me." This is a thought, not a feeling). Also, one never knows for sure what another person is feeling. Therefore check out your guess by saying:*  
*"Is that what you are feeling?" or "Did I get it right?" If the SENDER shares with you other feelings, mirror back what you heard. Then inquire, "Is there more about that feeling?"*
6. *Then mirror what is said.*
7. *When the RECEIVER has gone through all three parts (mirror, validation, and empathy) then s/he says: "I would like to respond now." Then there is a switch and the RECEIVER now becomes the SENDER.*

## YOUR RELATIONSHIP VISION

The first step in the journey toward a conscious marriage/relationship is the creation of a new and shared vision of your relationship. A shared vision is essential to a successful relationship. It provides direction and can help you to focus your energy and efforts on a goal. Without a vision, your relationship can seem empty and your attempts to replenish it chaotic and aimless. A vision is a view of the whole that influences the relationship of the parts. A vision gives direction to each decision and shapes each action. Whenever there is an issue, the resolution is determined by whether or not it is consistent with the vision.

The relationship you have now is the creation of your separate desires and needs. It is the manifestation of your unconscious images about relationships. You and your partner are trying to bring your individual images into reality--and this frustrates both of you. These conflicting images have their roots in the needs and desires of childhood. They determine every thought, shape all actions, and stimulate each feeling.

To have a successful relationship, you must co-create a vision--a shared vision. A shared vision blends both of your dreams, desires, values, and needs. It is a joint creation. Your conscious dream becomes your new reality. You may not be able to have the relationship of your private dreams, but you can co-create a dream relationship.

## YOUR RELATIONSHIP VISION

1. Make an appointment with your partner to talk about your relationship vision. Using the **Couples Dialogue**, share with each other your vision of your relationship as you want it to be “someday.” Dream about your ideal relationship.

You will be thinking about all aspects of your ideal relationship: health, home, work, play, sex, children, friends, free time, quality of interactions, decision making, conflict resolution. Each one of these aspects should be addressed, plus any others that are specific to your vision.

2. Using the WORKSHEET that follows, write a series of short sentences that describe your vision:
  - ~ Write each sentence in the present tense.
  - ~ Make each sentence positive, descriptive, specific.
  - ~ Use a separate line for each sentence.
3. Rank these items in the left column according to their relative VALUE to you. Circle the two most valuable items. In the right column, rank all of the items according to their relative DIFFICULTY.
4. Using the **Couples Dialogue**, share your sentences with your partner. Note the items you have in common. Acknowledge the others and try to see if they have things in common.
5. Create your mutual relationship vision on the form entitled **OUR RELATIONSHIP VISION** (page 8). Refer to the sample provided as a guide.
  - A. Begin the list with the four items circled by you and your partner. List all the mutually agreed upon items from your worksheets. Draw a line under the last mutually agreed upon item. List all other items from each of your worksheets below the line.
  - B. Label the left and right columns with your names and individually rank each of the sentences with a value from 1-5, with 5 holding the highest value.
  - C. Each of you put a check by the two most difficult to achieve.

### REMEMBER

- \* Keep your sentences short, positive, and in the present tense.
- \* Use the **Couples Dialogue**.

WORKSHEET

YOUR RELATIONSHIP VISION		
Value		Difficulty

## OUR CONSCIOUS MARRIAGE/RELATIONSHIP

### Sample: Partner A and Partner B

Partner A		Partner B
1	1. We give each other surprises.	1
1	2. We have fun regularly.	1
1	3. We support each other.	1
1	4. We are comfortable alone or together.	1
2	5. We take care of our bodies.	4
4	6. We are truthful with each other.	4
✓ 5	7. We travel together well.	2
3	8. We are sexually and emotionally faithful.	5
2	9. We have a satisfying and beautiful sex life.	2 ✓
2	10. We touch each other's bodies often.	2
✓ 3	11. We are growing together spiritually.	2
4	12. We parent our children well.	3
2	13. We express appreciation and praise each other.	4
2	14. We have secure and happy children.	4
5	15. We share major family decisions.	4
2	16. We make each other's deepest needs a priority.	2
3	17. We care for our relationship each day.	2
3	18. We experience passion with each other.	2
3	19. We communicate our feelings openly.	5 ✓
2	20. We contain each other's anger.	2
2	21. We have daily private time.	2
3	22. We feel safe with each other.	4
4	23. We are financially secure.	2
2	24. We exchange ideas and thoughts.	2
4	25. We are reliable for each other.	5
3	26. We resolve our differences/conflicts quickly and remain close.	4
2	27. We support each other's goals.	2
5	28. We listen to each other's feelings.	3

## Our Relationship Vision

Name

Name

## TRANSLATING YOUR RELATIONSHIP VISION INTO GOALS

*Your vision is your dream of the whole relationship as you want it to be. Goals are parts of the vision that must be implemented to bring your vision into reality. To dream is essential, but to dream without a plan is fruitless.*

The development of goals from your vision is the first step in your plan. This exercise will help you make the transition from vision to goals. Recent research on the function of goal-setting in achievement has revealed:

- High-level achievers have clear, quantifiable, and time-limited goals and engage consistently in goal-related behaviors.
- Mid-range achievers usually are very capable, but they have vague goals and engage infrequently in goal-related behavior.
- Low achievers have no goals and seldom, if ever, engage in effective behaviors.

The implications of this research for your relationship are enormous. If you are to achieve your relationship vision, you must become goal-oriented. This involves:

- clear goal definition
- the designing of goal-oriented behaviors
- visualizing your goals to imprint them in your mind
- behavioral enactment
- continuing review and refinement
- continuous commitment to the change process.

**A goal** is a specific statement of the type of relationship you both want: “We have a happy marriage” or “we enjoy increased intimate communication.”

**An objective** is a concrete and measurable behavior which you must engage in to reach your goal: “attend a workshop in communication” or “practice positive communication skills for twenty minutes a day.”

**A tactic or strategy** refers to **who** will do **what** and **when**. It is important that both the actor and action be specified and that it be time limited: “George will research and make reservations for dinner on Thursday.”



## Translating Your Relationship Vision into Goals (Continued)

To achieve your goals effectively, you must visualize the **sensory effect** of the desired goal. Sensory effect means what the goal will look, sound, feel, smell and taste like and what emotion you will experience when you reach the goal. Visualizing the sensory effect will incite your nervous system and increase your incentive and motivation to sustain the discipline necessary to reach your goal.

You should also write a statement of the desired consequences or payoff of achieving your goal.

Your therapist may ask you to write an on-going progress report and review it regularly so that you can correct unproductive tactics and revise your plan.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR GOAL SETTING

- Return to YOUR RELATIONSHIP VISION and select a vision statement shared by both of you that you would consider easy to achieve. (Later, as you develop skill with this process, you can tackle the harder ones.)
- Translate each vision statement into a specific objective and strategy (refer to the sample that follows).
- Repeat the process for each vision statement. It's a good idea to complete a goal page weekly until the process is complete.
- A second goal sheet is provided for your second goal. You may want to copy the blank goal sheet for the remaining items on your vision statement.
- When you complete a goal, put the Worksheet in a prominent place where you can see it frequently.

## MODEL GOAL SHEET

<b>Goal:</b> We have fun regularly	
<b>Objective:</b> To have high energy fun once a week.	
<b>Strategy or Tactics:</b> To practice belly laughing once a day, see a funny movie once a week, play a silly gam each Sunday.	<b>Time Frame:</b> 3 weeks
<b>Sensory Effect:</b>	
Taste _____ Sweetness _____	
Touch _____ Softness _____	
Smell _____ Perspiration _____	
Sound _____ Laughter _____	
Feel _____ Exitement and pleasure _____	
Emotions Expressed _____ Happiness and joy _____	
<b>Consequence or Payoff:</b> Feeling safe with each other	
<b>Progress Report:</b> Laughter each day 25 movies 20 games	
<b>Revision of Plan:</b> Play a silly game daily	

# GOAL SHEET

<b>Goal:</b>	
<b>Objective:</b>	
<b>Strategy or Tactics:</b>	<b>Time Frame:</b>
<b>Sensory Effect:</b>	
Taste _____	
Touch _____	
Smell _____	
Sound _____	
Feel _____	
Emotions Expressed _____	
<b>Consequence or Payoff:</b>	
<b>Progress Report:</b>	
<b>Revision of Plan:</b>	

# GOAL SHEET

<b>Goal:</b>	
<b>Objective:</b>	
<b>Strategy or Tactics:</b>	<b>Time Frame:</b>
<b>Sensory Effect:</b>	
Taste _____	
Touch _____	
Smell _____	
Sound _____	
Feel _____	
Emotions Expressed _____	
<b>Consequence or Payoff:</b>	
<b>Progress Report:</b>	
<b>Revision of Plan:</b>	

## THE NO-EXIT DECISION

With the completion of the preceding exercises, you have a vision of the relationship you want with your partner. Before you go forward, you must both make a decision: You must decide to recommit to your partner and to your relationship, and you must make a new commitment to a process that will change your relationship. This decision is called the “No-Exit Decision.”

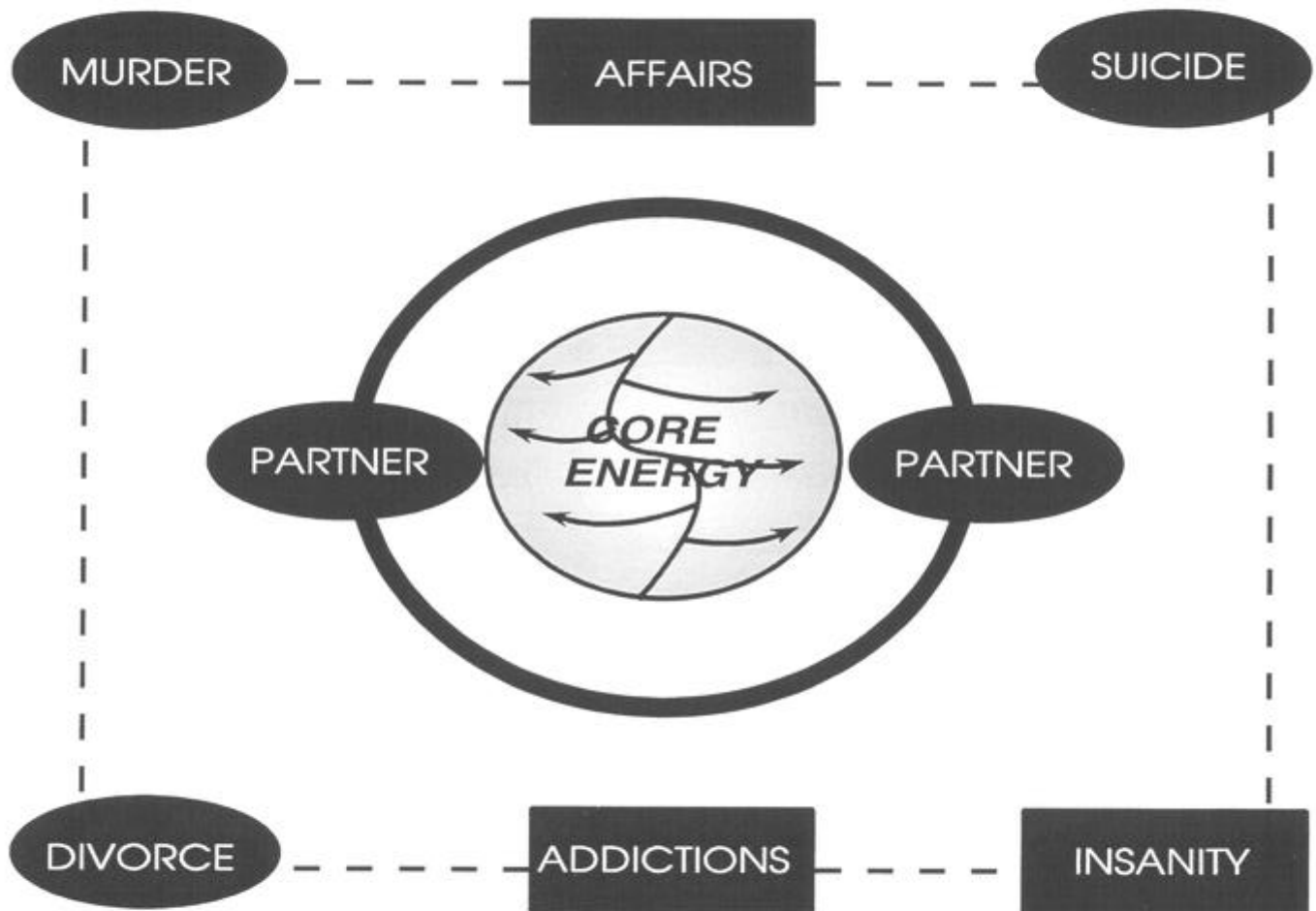
Essentially, making a no-exit decision means that you decide to commit to the goal of creating a positive, working relationship with your partner and to participate in the processes and procedures of achieving your goals.

Each of you will need all your energy to devote to the work of creating the relationship of your vision.

Even if you are not sure that you want to stay in this relationship, you are encouraged to make this decision. As we have seen, the problems you have in this relationship reflect the unresolved problems you have in yourself. You will tend to repeat these problems in any future relationship until and unless you resolve them in yourself.

## THE INVISIBLE DIVORCE

1. The diagram below represents your relationship boundaries. The open spaces in the lines represent possible "exits", i.e., ways you prevent intimacy by using energy to create conflict or to avoid involvement.
2. The three exits in the ellipses, if used, will terminate the relationship. The exits in the rectangles will greatly damage your relationship. Are any of these open for you? Circle which one(s).



3. List on the dotted rectangle any other exits you use such as watching TV, sports, children, etc. that take energy and time away from your partner.
4. The three terminal exits--divorce, suicide, murder--will end your relationship. Put an X on the exits you will close today.

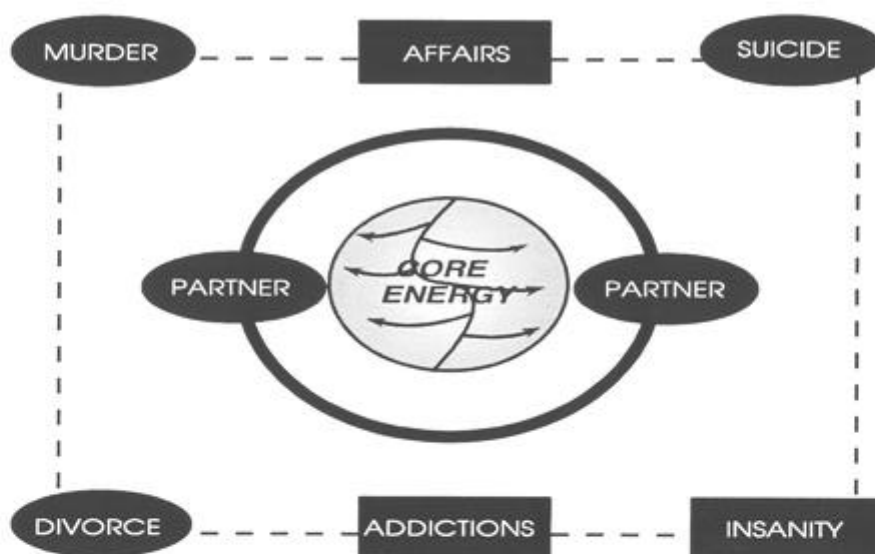
## The Invisible Divorce (Continued)

5. The three catastrophic exits--affairs, addictions, insanity--will greatly damage your relationship. If any of these exits are open, they must be closed immediately to prevent serious damage to your relationship. Put an **X** over the exits you will close immediately.
6. The remaining exits fall into two categories: intentional and functional. An intentional exit is a feeling expressed as a behavior with the clear motivation to avoid involvement with your partner, thus diminishing intimacy and growth. In other words, you experience the activity as more pleasurable than being with your partner.

A functional exit is a behavior that you enjoy, but your involvement in the activity clearly takes energy and time away from the relationship. The effect, although not the motivation, is decreased involvement with your partner, thus diminishing intimacy.

Indicate with a **circle** the exits that are intentional. **Underline** the functional exits.

7. On the diagram below, list the behaviors that you perceive your partner uses as exits. **Circle** the ones you think are intentional and **underline** the ones you think are functional.



Using the *Couples' Dialogue*, share your two charts with each other. Revise any judgments you have made about the ones that are intentional or functional until you have an agreement.

Now add any exits from your partner's list to your chart on page 16. Remember to **underline** the functional and **circle** the intentional exits.



## The Invisible Divorce (Continued)

8. Next, rank all the intentional exits according to “difficulty of closing them,” making the most difficult number 1. Then rank all the functional exits according to difficulty of closing them.
9. On page 19 you will find a chart with the terminal and catastrophic exits listed. Add to this list, in the appropriate sections, your intentional and functional exits in the order that you ranked them.
10. **REMEMBER:** An exit is a behavior that expresses a feeling you have about being with your partner. It is called “acting out.” For example: you may watch TV to avoid making love because you are angry or because you fear it will be a painful experience. Or, you may use over-working to avoid your fear that your partner will be critical of you or ask you to do things around the house you dislike. Or you may have considered or attempted suicide because your partner ignores you and it is a desperate attempt to get his/her attention.
11. Using the *Couples' Dialogue*, share with your partner the feelings which each behavior expresses.

Start with the terminal and catastrophic exits. Share your feelings in the dialogue process, ask for a behavior change and close these exits immediately.

Now go to the intentional exits. Starting with the easiest, share your feelings in the dialogue process and close these exits as soon as possible. Then go on to the next hardest and so on. Since each intentional exit is usually a legitimate or necessary activity, you will have to modify, but not eliminate it, to redirect excess energy into the relationship.

Now go to the functional exits. Do the same process, starting with the easiest. Although these exits are not motivated to avoid involvement, they diminish involvement and intimacy. You will have to modify, but not eliminate them, to increase involvement and intimacy.

12. **REMEMBER THE GRADUATED CHANGE PROCESS:** You cannot close all your exits at once. Start with the easiest and make a plan by which you will gradually close them until all the energy and time that is necessary for intimacy and growth is committed to it.

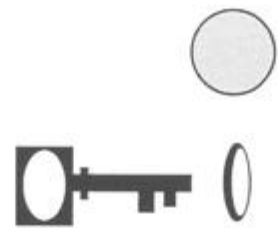
**NOTE:** The graduated change process does not apply to the terminal and catastrophic exits. They must be closed immediately. As long as they are open, your relationship is hemorrhaging and should be treated as a crisis.

## CLOSING THE EXITS

**Example:** I agree to keep you safe - No murder.  
 I agree to stay in the relationship - No divorce.  
 I agree to limit my TV viewing and spend an hour with you each evening.

Exit I Will Close	Date I Will Close It	
Murder		TERMINAL
Suicide		
Divorce		
Affairs		CATASTROPHIC
Insanity		
Addictions		
		INTENTIONAL
		FUNCTIONAL

**YOUR UNCONSCIOUS  
MARRIAGE/RELATIONSHIP**



## YOUR UNCONSCIOUS MARRIAGE/RELATIONSHIP

Once you have had a chance to complete the work in the section of this manual entitled **GROUNDWORK**, you and your partner will have begun to communicate in a new way using the **Couples Dialogue**. You will have also co-created an image of the relationship you would like to share and have made a decision to work with each other toward this goal at least for the length of your therapy and have closed the exits in your relationship that allow energy to leave the system.

Having taken these steps, you have begun to create a safe place in which to take a careful look at your current relationship.

Each of you came to this relationship with “unfinished business” from your childhood. Images in your unconscious have shaped your choice of partner and the quality of your current relationship. It is important to bring these unconscious motivations out into the open and to make them a conscious agenda--not only in therapy but in your relationship itself. You will learn how these unconscious motivations made you choose your partner, and you will learn how they continue to determine how you behave with your partner today.

The exercises of this section--**YOUR UNCONSCIOUS MARRIAGE/RELATIONSHIP**--will help you to understand how these unconscious motivations are at work in your relationship, and will give a deeper and more specific understanding of your past and your unconscious. Each exercise is designed to increase your awareness of the underlying motives of your behavior.

Before going on, you may want to review Part I of Getting the Love You Want: A Guide for Couples.

## THE IMAGO

The Imago, the image of the perfect “other”, begins forming in infancy and is fairly complete by childhood. We are not conscious of the Imago or how this image motivates our behavior in important relationships because it is unconscious. This is because the Imago is registered in the “old brain” and not in the part of the brain--the “new brain” or cerebral cortex--where conscious thinking occurs. Though we are not aware of the Imago, it is always at work. It is the Imago that selects your mate, and the Imago that determines how you will behave with your partner.

The exercises at the beginning of this section (**Profile of Childhood Caretakers**, pages 22-27) will allow you to explore your earliest years and to construct your Imago, which is crucial to the success of your work in therapy. Equally important is the work you will do to improve your understanding of the underlying image you have of your partner (**Partner Profile**, pages 28-33).

Once you begin to have a sense of your Imago, and have begun to understand that of your partner, you are ready to look at certain areas of your current relationship to discover the role these unconscious images may be playing. These may be sexual frustrations (**Sexual Frustrations List**, page 34) or general frustrations that come up over and over again when you disagree (**Core Scenes**, page 35).

You may find almost all communication with you partner disappointing or frustrating. This need not be. If you are thorough in your work (**Partner Messages**, pages 37-44) and **Partner Validation**, pages 45-48) at this stage, you will have brought the unconscious elements of your relationship to the surface. This creates the possibility of a conscious, loving relationship.

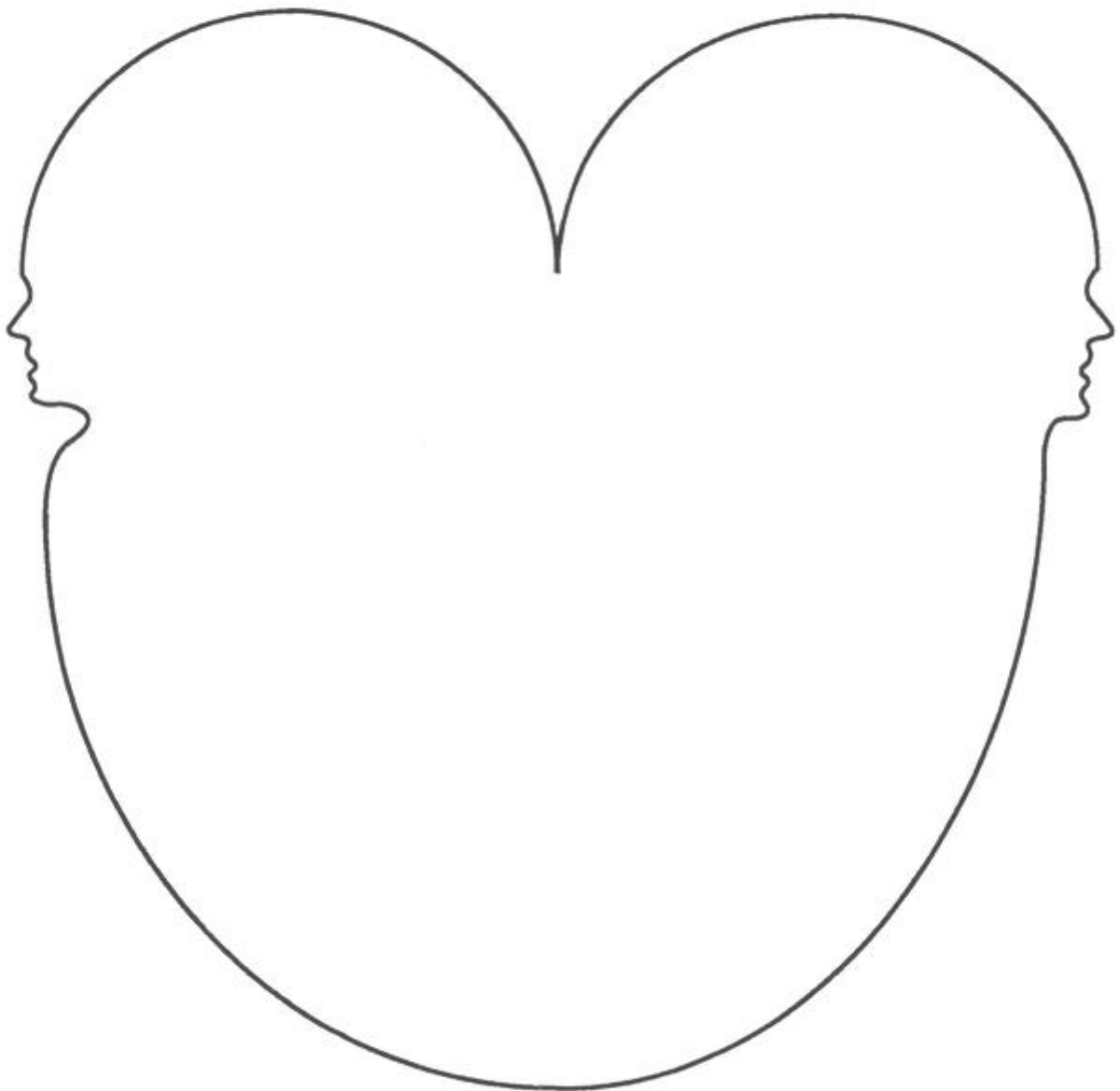
## IMAGO TRAIT LIST

Use this list *only* if you need some suggestions.

ACCESSIBLE	JEALOUS	GIVING	AVAILABLE
HONEST	BRASH	SHALLOW	CONFIDENT
CAUTIOUS	COURAGEOUS	ALERT	ANNOYED
AFRAID	CREATIVE	ROUGH	ARROGANT
ATTENTIVE	WOUNDING	FLEXIBLE	WARM
LOVING	INSENSITIVE	PLAYFUL	STABLE
SUPPORTIVE	ATTACKING	CRITICAL	DANGEROUS
CLOSED	SPIRITUAL	THRIFTY	TACTFUL
SAFE	DEPENDABLE	FIRM	GENTLE
FAIR	STINGY	DISHONEST	RELIABLE
ARROGANT	FRANK	SHY	INAPPROPRIATE
INFLEXIBLE	INVITING	TENSE	DEPRESSED
ENTHUSIASTIC	CONNECTED	IMMATURE	UNFORGIVING
RIGHTEOUS	OPEN	DISHONEST	SPONTANEOUS
CRAFTY	EXACT	KIND	PERSUASIVE
OBJECTIVE	INTRUSIVE	BOLD	TRUSTING
LOYAL	COLD	VIRTUOUS	ALTRUISTIC
TOLERANT	IMPATIENT	CREATIVE	GRATEFUL
UNINTERESTED	WISE	RESPONSIBLE	POLITE
SENSITIVE	MATURE	RESPECTFUL	SOOTHING
AMIABLE	AGREEABLE	ASSURED	BRAVE
BORING	BLATANT	BRUTAL	BRIGHT
BENEFICENT	CARING	SILLY	GRUMPY
HARSH	SNEAKY	TENDER	PRECISE
FRAGILE	SINCERE	HUMBLE	OPEN-MINDED

## PROFILE OF CHILDHOOD CARETAKERS

1. Divide the figure below according to the number of your childhood caretakers and other significant persons in your childhood.
2. List each person's traits as you recall them from childhood. Use adjectives such as "kind," "distant," "absent," "warm," "loving," "angry," "cold," etc. **If necessary**, consult the list of traits on page 21A to prompt your memory.



3. Put a plus (+) sign next to each positive trait and a minus (-) sign next to each negative trait.

## POSITIVE CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

1. List specific positive experiences with each childhood caretaker.

Mother	Father	Other

Underline your best experience with each caretaker.

Circle the best of all your childhood experiences.

2. List your most positive feelings with each childhood caretaker. (Note: Feelings can be described by one word, such as "happy," "safe," "loved," etc.).

Mother	Father	Other

Circle the most intense of all your feelings.



## PROFILE OF CHILDHOOD CARETAKERS

### Childhood Frustrations

1. List all the negative behaviors, emotional hurts, and painful events you experienced with each childhood caretaker and other significant persons as you recall them from childhood.

Underline your worst experience with each person in your childhood.

Circle your worst childhood experience.

Mother	Father	Other

2. What negative feelings did you experience over and over again with each childhood caretaker? (Note: feelings can be stated by single words such as "angry", "hurt", "scared", etc.)

Circle your worst childhood feeling.

Mother	Father	Other

3. State your deepest unfulfilled desire with each caretaker.

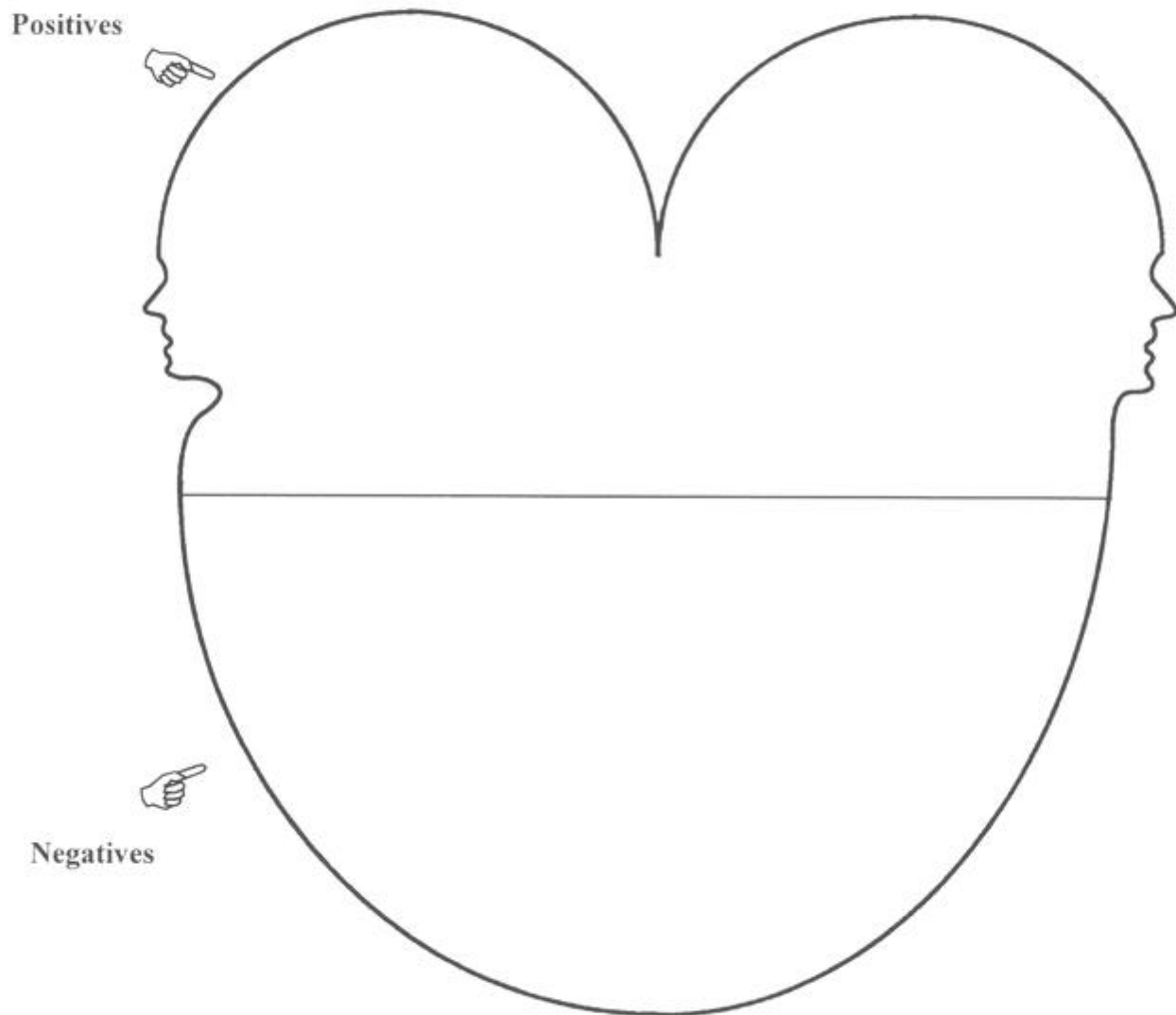
Mother	Father	Other

# PROFILE OF CHILDHOOD CARETAKERS

## Imago Construction

1. On the top section of the figure below, transfer all the items marked with a positive (+) sign from page 22.

On the bottom, transfer all the items marked with a negative (-) sign from page 22.



2. Underline the three best traits. Circle the three worst traits.

## PARENT-CHILD DIALOGUE

Decide who will be the **SENDER** and who will be the **RECEIVER**. The person who chooses to be the **SENDER** will take the "child" role. The **SENDER** may choose to talk "as a child" to either parent or may choose to fuse both parents or all caretakers into "one" and talk to all of them as if they were one person. The **RECEIVER** will take the role of the "as if" parent and prompt the **SENDER** as follows:

### RECEIVER

### SENDER

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. "I am your mother/father. What is it like living with me?"  | 1. <i>Describe hurt and pain in childhood with this/these parent/s.</i>                                     |
| 2. "If I got it right, living with me/us..." <i>mirror, and then ask "Is there more about that?" Continue to mirror and ask "is there more?" until the SENDER indicates "there is no more about that."</i> | 2. <i>Continue to talk about childhood hurts until "There is no more about that".</i>                       |
| 3. <i>Summarize.</i> "Let me see if I got it all...."  | 3. <i>Accuracy check.</i>   |
| 4. "What is your worst frustration and deepest hurt with me?"  | 4. "My deepest frustration and worst hurt with you is..." ( <i>describe the frustration and hurt</i> ).     |
| 5. <i>Mirror.</i> "If I got it right, your deepest frustration and worst hurt with me is..." <i>After mirroring, ask "is there more?" until the SENDER indicates "there is no more about that."</i>        | 5. <i>Accuracy check. Continue until all is said about that and indicate "there is no more about that".</i> |
| 6. "As your parent, what do you need from me the most that would heal all that?"   | 6. "What I need most from you is..." ( <i>describes deepest need in global terms</i> ).                     |
| 7. <i>Mirror.</i> "If I got it right, what you need most from me, as your parent, is..." <i>Then ask, "Is there more about that?"</i>  | 7. <i>Continues until all is said about that.</i>   |
| 8. "You deserve to have all that. I wish I could have given it to you."  | 8. "Thank you."   |

When exchange is completed (Steps 1-8), switch roles.

## PROFILE OF CHILDHOOD CARETAKERS

### Unfinished Business from Childhood - Information Synthesis

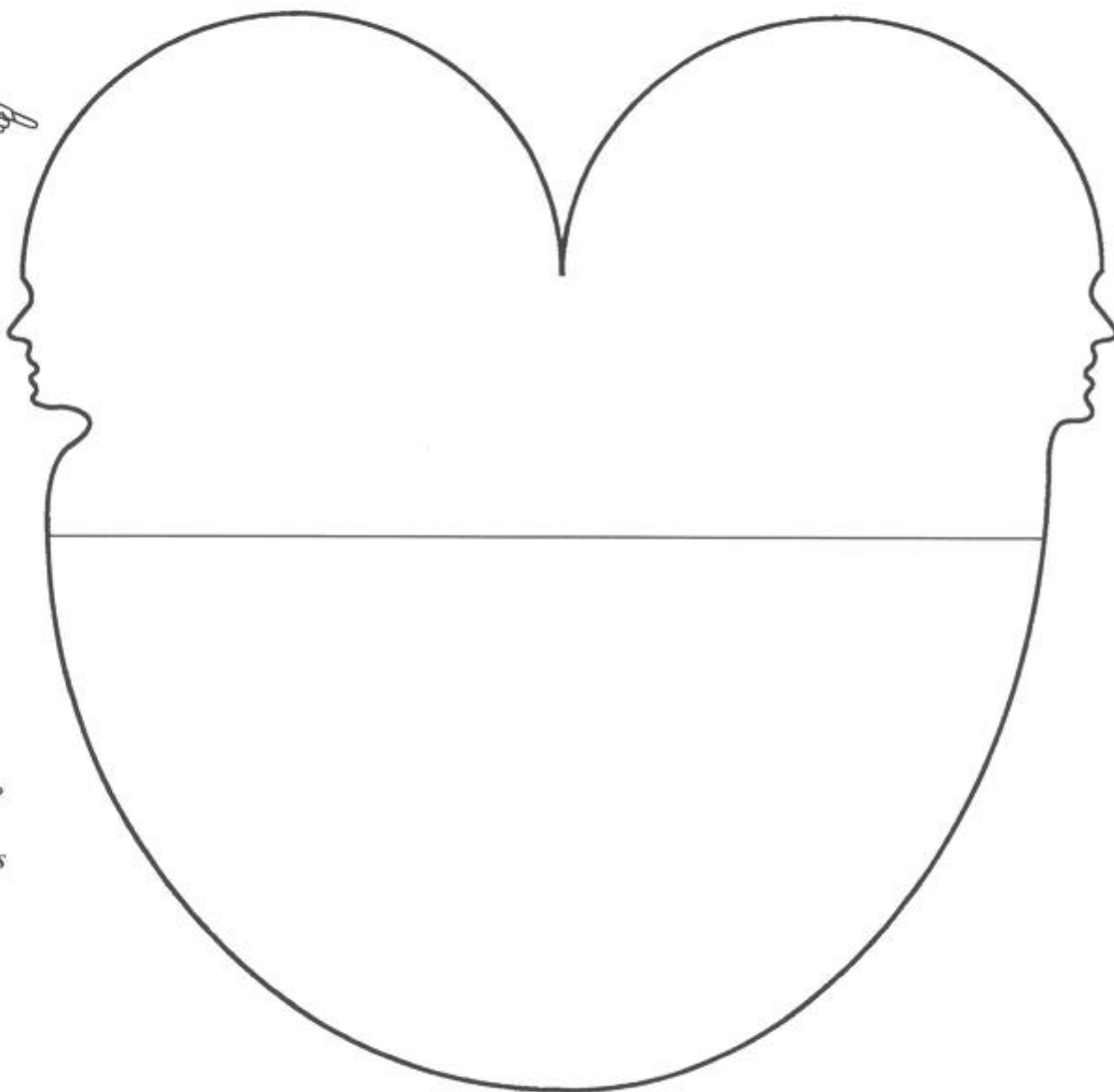
Below are six incomplete sentences. Complete each sentence using information from the previous three pages. The words in parentheses at the end of each sentence indicate the location of the information you need to complete the sentences.

1. My **unfinished business from childhood** was to get my caretakers who were sometimes (items circled on page 25)
2. with whom I often felt (item circled on page 24, #2)
3. because they frustrated me by (items underlined circled on page 24, #1)
4. to always be (items underlined on page 25)
5. so that I could get (items on page 24, #3)
6. and feel (items on page 23, #2)

## PARTNER PROFILE

1. In the figure below, list the positive and negative traits which describe your partner as you experience her/him. Use the list on page 21A as prompts if you need them. Underline the three best traits. Circle the three worst traits.

*Positives*



*Negatives*



2. Complete these sentences:
  - a. What I get from my partner that I enjoy most is...
  - b. What I want most from my partner and don't get is...

**PARTNER PROFILE**  
Frustrations with Current Partner

1. In Column A, list all the ways your partner frustrates you.
2. In Column B, record the feelings you have with each frustrating event. Use an affective word such as “angry”, “sad”, “scared”, “guilty”, etc.
3. In Column C, describe what you typically do in reaction to each frustration.
4. In Column D, identify what you think may be the hidden fear underlying each sequence of event -> feeling -> reactive behavior.

A. Frustrating Behaviors	B. Feelings	C. Reactive Behaviors	D. Hidden Fears
when you...you always...never...	I feel...	Then I react with...	To hide my fear of...
<i>e.g., are late and don't call</i>	... <i>angry</i>	... <i>sulking</i>	... <i>being abandoned</i>

## PARTNER PROFILE

Frustrations with Current Partner *(continued)*

A. Frustrating Behaviors	B. Feelings	C. Reactive Behaviors	D. Hidden Fears
when you...you always...never...	I feel...	Then I react with...	To hide my fear of...
<i>e.g., are late and don't call</i>	... <i>angry</i>	... <i>sulking</i>	... <i>being abandoned</i>

5. Circle:
- a. your three deepest frustrations
  - b. your one worst feeling
  - c. your three most intense reactive behaviors
  - d. your deepest fear

## PARTNER PROFILE

### Desires and Longings

*Behind each anger is a hurt, and behind each hurt is an unmet longing or need.  
This page will guide you in identifying your deepest longings.*

1. Study your list of Frustrating Behaviors on pages 29 and 30. Cluster and summarize those that are similar and list them in Column A.
2. In Column B, cluster your Feelings. In Column C, cluster your Reactive Behaviors. In Column D, cluster your Hidden Fears.
3. In Column E, list what you think might be the deep Desire underlying each frustration sequence. Make each sentence as short as possible and state it as an absolute.
4. Circle up to three items in each column that are the strongest or most intense for you.

A. Frustrating Patterns	B. Feelings	C. Reactive Patterns	D. Fears	E. Desires
<i>when you...</i>	<i>I feel...</i>	<i>and typically react by...</i>	<i>to hide my fear of...</i>	<i>What I really want is...</i>
e.g. are late and don't call	...angry	...sulking	abandonment	to feel safe

5. Complete the following sentences:
  - a. To overcome my fears (Column D), I need:
  - b. To get everything I want (Column E) I need a partner who ideally has only the following positive traits:
  - c. With such a person, I would feel the following positive feelings:



## PARTNER PROFILE

### My Unconscious Marriage/Relationship - Information Synthesis

Below are fourteen incomplete sentences. Complete each sentence using information from the previous three pages. The words in parentheses at the end of each sentence indicate the location of the information you need to complete the sentences.

1. In my **unconscious marriage/relationship** I have been trying to get a person who often is (items circled in Partner's Profile on p. 28)
2. with whom I frequently feel (items circled in Column B, p. 31)
3. because s/he frustrates me sometimes by (items circled in Column A, p. 31)
4. to always be (items underlined on page 25, page 28 and the idealization at the bottom of page 31, #5b)
5. and only give me (items circled in Column E of page 31)
6. and especially (items on p. 24, #3 and p. 28, #2a & b)

**Information Synthesis** (Continued)

7. so that I could always feel (items on page 23, #2 and page 31, #5c).
8. When s/he doesn't, I feel (items circled in Column B, page 31)
9. and typically try to protect myself by reacting with (items circled in Column C, page 31)
10. to hide my fear of (items circled in Column D, page 31).
11. When I react that way, I invite my partner to be (items on page 32, #1)
12. instead of (items on page 32, #4)
13. and that leaves me without (items on page 32, #5 and #6)
14. and without the feeling of (items on page 32, #7).

## SEXUAL FRUSTRATION LIST

1. In Column A, list all the ways your partner frustrates you sexually.
2. In Column B, record the feelings you have with each frustrating event. Use an affective word such as "angry", "sad", "scared", "guilty", etc.
3. In Column C, describe what you typically do in reaction to each sexual frustration.
4. In Column D, identify what you think may be the hidden fear underlying each sequence of event -> feeling -> reactive behavior.

A. Frustrating Behaviors	B. Feelings	C. Reactive Behaviors	D. Hidden Fears
when you...you always...never...	I feel...	Then I react with...	To hide my fear of...
e.g. "say you're too tired to make love"	...hurt, alone	...sulking, withdrawing from you	...being abandoned ...being undesirable

## CORE SCENE

### Negative

What is the most negative scene that happens **over and over again** between you and your partner?  
Please describe the scene as if you were writing the scene of a play including the setting, characters and lines. The important elements are: how does it begin and end?; who does what, when, where and how?  
NOTE: The repetitious nature of the relationship issue being portrayed is of greater relevance than the subject of the scene itself.

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Subject \_\_\_\_\_ Frequency \_\_\_\_\_

Other Negative Subjects \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## CORE SCENE

### Revised

Review the Negative CORE SCENE on the previous page. Focus on changes that your same-sex character (you) can make if you were to leave the opposite sex character's part unchanged, but which would bring about a positive outcome. Now, re-write the scene as a new play with the same characters and setting, but with new lines and have the scene turn out constructively.

Example: If before, a typical negative core scene was that your partner came home from work and immediately went into another room and turned on the t.v., leaving you to feel ignored and irritable, you can imagine a re-written scene where this character comes home and immediately receives a warm hug and a kiss from your same sex character, and an offer for a back rub as he or she watches t.v. How would the would-be t.v. watching character respond to this change in the partner? The action and dialogue in the re-written scene would be very different from the scene that would have occurred on the previous page.

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## YOUR PARTNER'S MESSAGES

You

1. In Column A, list the positive and negative messages your partner gives you verbally and non-verbally about YOU AS A PERSON.
2. In Column B, indicate how your partner's message influences your **behavior** and **feelings**.
3. Under the letter "F", estimate the **FREQUENCY** of occurrence in percents (e.g. 10% of the time) that your partner gives you each message.
4. Under the letter "I", indicate with whether the **IMPACT** of the message to you is positive or negative with either a plus sign (+) or a minus sign (-).

A. Messages	B. Influence	F	I
<b>Examples:</b> a. "You are a negative person" b. "You are a wonderful, loving person"	a. I feel defeated and want to leave b. I feel warm inside	30% 60%	- +

## YOUR PARTNER'S MESSAGES

### Your Mind

1. In Column A, list the positive and negative messages your partner gives you verbally and non-verbally about YOUR MIND.
2. In Column B, indicate how your partner's message influences your **behavior** and **feelings**.
3. Under the letter "F", estimate the **FREQUENCY** of occurrence in percents (e.g. 10% of the time) that your partner gives you each message.
4. Under the letter "I", indicate with whether the **IMPACT** of the message to you is positive or negative with either a plus sign (+) or a minus sign (-).

A. Messages	B. Influence	F	I
<b>Examples:</b> a. "You are dumb. You can't figure out anything" b. "You think of so many things to do"	a. I feel embarrassed. My mind freezes b. I get lots of ideas and feel great	10% 20%	- +

## YOUR PARTNER'S MESSAGES

### Your Body

1. In Column A, list the positive and negative messages your partner gives you verbally and non-verbally about YOUR BODY.
2. In Column B, indicate how your partner's message influences your **behavior** and **feelings**.
3. Under the letter "F", estimate the FREQUENCY of occurrence in percents (e.g. 10% of the time) that your partner gives you each message.
4. Under the letter "I", indicate with whether the IMPACT of the message to you is positive or negative with either a plus sign (+) or a minus sign (-).

A. Messages	B. Influence	F	I
<b>Examples:</b> a. "Your body is beautiful" b. "Keep it covered"	a. I feel beautiful I fear a sexual approach b. I feel ashamed and angry I want to show it off	50% 50% 20% 10%	+ - - -





## YOUR PARTNER'S MESSAGES

### Your Behavior

1. In Column A, list the positive and negative messages your partner gives you verbally and non-verbally about YOUR BEHAVIOR.
2. In Column B, indicate how your partner's message influences your behavior and feelings.
3. Under the letter "F", estimate the FREQUENCY of occurrence in percents (e.g. 10% of the time) that your partner gives you each message.
4. Under the letter "I", indicate with whether the IMPACT of the message to you is positive or negative with either a plus sign (+) or a minus sign (-).

A. Messages	B. Influence	F	I
<b>Examples:</b> a. "Stand up for yourself!" b. "Behave at the party"	a. I feel demeaned I feel supported and understood b. I act as irritatingly as I can	60% 40% 30%	- + -

## YOUR PARTNER'S MESSAGES

### Your Partner's Partner

1. Review your Partner Messages Lists and identify items that produce conflict and resistance in you because they seem to ask you to be someone you are not and to do things you are unaccustomed to doing, i.e., you may feel these traits and behaviors are "not me."
2. In Column A, list all the Messages from Column A of the previous 5 pages which you would label "not me."
3. In Column B, write your view of who you would have to be and what you would have to do to satisfy your partner, i.e., describe "this other person" your partner seems to want.

A. "Not Me" Messages	B. Description

## YOUR PARTNER'S MESSAGES

### Self-Construction

1. Review Column A on the preceding page. Take each "not me" statement and convert it into a "this is me" statement to complete the statement: "I am..." with multiple endings. For example, a "not-me" message from partner could be: "You should dress more seductively." The "I am" statement: "I am a person who is more comfortable dressing simply and conservatively." The "I wish you would" statement: "I wish you would tell me I am beautiful no matter how I dress."
2. In Column A, record these "I am..." statements.
3. In Column B, complete the sentence "I wish you would..." as a description of a behavioral response to each item in Column A you would like from your partner.

A. "I am..."	B. "I wish you would..."

## YOUR PARTNER'S MESSAGES

### Not Me - Self Perception

1. Sometimes your partner's requests, positive strokes, messages, criticisms and complaints seem to demand that you be someone else or to act a certain way that you feel is not you.
2. In Column A, once again list your partner's communications to you that are both positive and negative that ask you to not be you.
3. In Column B, describe the not you your partner says you are.
4. In Column C, describe how you see yourself.

A. Partner Communication	B. "Not Me" Messages	C. Self-Perception
<p style="text-align: center;">Examples: "Stand up for yourself -- Ask for a raise"</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">"You are weak. Be aggressive."</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">"I'm putting careful thought into asking for a promotion"</p>

## PARTNER VALIDATION

1. Complete the following two pages according to their instructions: **Personal Love Language** and **Personal Traits**.
2. Exchange these two lists with your partner. Carefully study the ways your partner wants to be validated by you.
3. Complete the Partner Validation Commitment sheet by listing all the ways you will validate your partner.
4. Ask your partner to indicate the desired frequency (**DF**) and to record the dates he or she would like to be validated by you on the Partner Validation Commitment sheet.

**Be sure to acknowledge your partner when he or she validates you!**





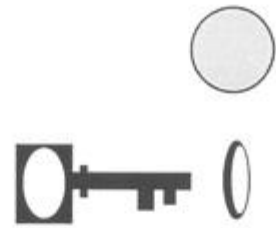


## PARTNER VALIDATION COMMITMENT

I, _____, agree to show my love to _____ by expressing the following validating behaviors:	DF	Date

**NOTE:** The partner receiving the behaviors should indicate the desired frequency and enter the date after receiving this behavior.

**YOUR CONSCIOUS  
MARRIAGE/RELATIONSHIP**



## YOUR CONSCIOUS MARRIAGE/RELATIONSHIP

Now that many of the unconscious features of your relationship have been brought into the open, you can begin to build **YOUR CONSCIOUS MARRIAGE/RELATIONSHIP**: a loving, working relationship full of the energy that is created by two people healing themselves and each other.

To assist you in gathering all the information you will need about yourself and your partner, complete the **Knowledge Inventories** (pages 50-58). The next section entitled **Recovering the Missing Self** (pages 59-68) includes a brief discussion on the three major components of the Missing Self: the Lost Self, Hidden Self and Denied Self, followed by a record of **Your Childhood Wound** and **Your Partner's Childhood Wound** (pages 60 & 61). Next, in an exercise entitled **Trait Amplification** (pages 65 & 66), you will deepen your awareness of the positive and negative traits you perceive in your partner. The **Character Structure Information Synthesis** (pages 67-68) and **Self Integration** instruments (pages 69-71) are the culmination of this section of the Manual.

These exercises will prepare you and your partner to **Re-structure Your Relationship** (page 72) by expanding the positive elements, and transforming frustrating elements into building blocks for a revitalized relationship.

You will also learn about **Re-romanticizing Your Relationship** (page 86) in order to increase the energy available to you in your lives individually and in your relationship. Throughout these exercises you will come to understand what it is that your partner really means and really wants, and your partner will learn this about you.

You will be introduced to another tool that increases the possibility of effective communication: the Container Exercise. Understanding the principles of **Containment** (page 82) and using this tool in communication with your partner will create the environment of safety that is crucial to the loving relationship you desire.

All the experiences provided by these exercises will require that you and your partner stretch yourselves into new behaviors--behaviors that up until now may have seemed too difficult or too demanding. But, in order to improve the quality of your relationship, you will both need to stretch yourselves in these new ways. When you stretch in order to heal the childhood wounds of your partner, you become healed as well.

When you have finished the work of this section, you will be ready to make a commitment to what has now become your conscious marriage/relationship. Once you have signed **Your Conscious Marriage/Relationship Contract** (page 107), you may want to frame and display this document in your home as a visible sign of the new direction your lives have taken.

## SELF/PARTNER KNOWLEDGE INVENTORY

### How well do you know your partner?

- A. Work alone and complete the sentences below to explore your current knowledge of yourself and your partner. Begin with your knowledge of surface and external details.

My eyes are (color) \_\_\_\_\_ . Your eyes are (color) \_\_\_\_\_ .  
I am \_\_\_\_\_ tall & weigh \_\_\_\_\_ lbs.. You are \_\_\_\_\_ tall & weigh \_\_\_\_\_ lbs.  
My waist size is \_\_\_\_\_ . Your waist size is \_\_\_\_\_ .  
My shoe size is \_\_\_\_\_ , glove size is \_\_\_\_\_ , ring size is \_\_\_\_\_ .  
Your shoe size is \_\_\_\_\_ , glove size is \_\_\_\_\_ , ring size is \_\_\_\_\_ .

**My favorites are:** food \_\_\_\_\_ ,

flower \_\_\_\_\_ , place \_\_\_\_\_ ,

color \_\_\_\_\_ , smell \_\_\_\_\_ ,

hobby \_\_\_\_\_ ,

pastime/recreation \_\_\_\_\_ ,

restaurant \_\_\_\_\_ , book \_\_\_\_\_ .

**Your favorites are:** food \_\_\_\_\_ ,

flower \_\_\_\_\_ , place \_\_\_\_\_ ,

color \_\_\_\_\_ , smell \_\_\_\_\_ ,

hobby \_\_\_\_\_ ,

pastime/recreation \_\_\_\_\_ ,

restaurant \_\_\_\_\_ , book \_\_\_\_\_ .

- B. Complete each sentence QUICKLY WITH YOUR FIRST THOUGHTS:

1. My goal in life is \_\_\_\_\_ .

You think my goal in life is \_\_\_\_\_ .

Your goal in life is \_\_\_\_\_ .

2. The thing that gives me the most satisfaction is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
You think I get the most satisfaction from \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
The thing that gives you the most satisfaction is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. My childhood was \_\_\_\_\_  
You think my childhood was \_\_\_\_\_  
Your childhood was \_\_\_\_\_
4. I think sex is \_\_\_\_\_  
You think I think sex is \_\_\_\_\_  
You think sex is \_\_\_\_\_
5. When we make love, I prefer \_\_\_\_\_  
When we make love, you think I prefer \_\_\_\_\_  
When we make love, you prefer \_\_\_\_\_
6. My deepest fear is \_\_\_\_\_  
You think my deepest fear is \_\_\_\_\_  
Your deepest fear is \_\_\_\_\_
7. My deepest need is \_\_\_\_\_  
You think my deepest need is \_\_\_\_\_  
Your deepest need is \_\_\_\_\_

8. My most frequent feeling is \_\_\_\_\_  
You think my most frequent feeling is \_\_\_\_\_  
Your most frequent feeling is \_\_\_\_\_
9. The thing I hate most is \_\_\_\_\_  
You think the thing I hate the most is \_\_\_\_\_  
The thing you hate most is \_\_\_\_\_
10. I worry most about \_\_\_\_\_  
You think I worry most about \_\_\_\_\_  
You worry most about \_\_\_\_\_
11. My goals for our marriage/relationship include \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
You think my goals for our marriage/relationship include \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Your goals for our marriage/relationship with you include \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. My reason for marrying/being in a relationship with you include \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
You think my reasons for marrying/being in relationship with you include \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Your reasons for marrying/being in relationship with me include \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
13. I think our marriage/relationship is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
You think I see our marriage/relationship as \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
You think our marriage/relationship is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

14. Three things I want you to change are:

- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_

Three things you think I want you to change are:

- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_

Three things I think you want to change are:

- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_

15. I fantasize about \_\_\_\_\_.

You think I fantasize about \_\_\_\_\_.

You fantasize about \_\_\_\_\_.

16. I feel anger when \_\_\_\_\_.

You think I feel anger when \_\_\_\_\_.

You feel anger when \_\_\_\_\_.

17. I think I am \_\_\_\_\_.

You think I think I am \_\_\_\_\_.

You think I am \_\_\_\_\_.

18. My highest value is \_\_\_\_\_.

You think my highest value is \_\_\_\_\_.

Your highest value is \_\_\_\_\_.

19. My most frequent pleasure is \_\_\_\_\_ .  
You think my most frequent pleasure is \_\_\_\_\_ .  
Your most frequent pleasure is \_\_\_\_\_ .
20. I am happiest when \_\_\_\_\_ .  
You think I am happiest when \_\_\_\_\_ .  
You are happiest when \_\_\_\_\_ .
21. To me, work is \_\_\_\_\_ .  
You think work, to me, is \_\_\_\_\_ .  
To you, work is \_\_\_\_\_ .
22. In general, I view life as \_\_\_\_\_ .  
You think I view life as \_\_\_\_\_ .  
In general, you view life as \_\_\_\_\_ .
23. To me, death is \_\_\_\_\_ .  
You think, to me, death is \_\_\_\_\_ .  
To you, death is \_\_\_\_\_ .
24. In general, I think my strengths are \_\_\_\_\_ .  
In general, you think my strengths are \_\_\_\_\_ .  
In general, I think your strengths are \_\_\_\_\_ .



25. My weaknesses are \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
My weaknesses, according to you, are \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
I see your weaknesses as \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
26. My view of money is \_\_\_\_\_  
You think my view of money is \_\_\_\_\_  
Your view of money is \_\_\_\_\_
27. To me, children are \_\_\_\_\_  
You think children, to me, are \_\_\_\_\_  
To you, children are \_\_\_\_\_
28. Your parents \_\_\_\_\_  
You think I think your parents \_\_\_\_\_  
You think your parents \_\_\_\_\_
29. I think you \_\_\_\_\_  
You think I think you \_\_\_\_\_  
You think you \_\_\_\_\_
30. My favorite vacation \_\_\_\_\_  
You think my favorite vacation \_\_\_\_\_  
Your favorite vacation \_\_\_\_\_
31. I have most fun \_\_\_\_\_  
You think I have most fun \_\_\_\_\_  
You have most fun \_\_\_\_\_

32. To me, fun \_\_\_\_\_  
You think, to me, fun \_\_\_\_\_  
To you, fun \_\_\_\_\_
33. My favorite sport is \_\_\_\_\_  
You think my favorite sport is \_\_\_\_\_  
Your favorite sport is \_\_\_\_\_
34. What disgusts me \_\_\_\_\_  
You think what disgusts me \_\_\_\_\_  
What disgusts you \_\_\_\_\_
35. I think retirement \_\_\_\_\_  
You think I think retirement \_\_\_\_\_  
You think retirement \_\_\_\_\_
36. I think holding \_\_\_\_\_  
You think I think holding \_\_\_\_\_  
You think holding \_\_\_\_\_
37. I think touching \_\_\_\_\_  
You think I think touching \_\_\_\_\_  
You think touching \_\_\_\_\_
38. For me, religion \_\_\_\_\_  
You think, for me religion \_\_\_\_\_  
For you, religion \_\_\_\_\_

39. To me, childrearing \_\_\_\_\_  
You think, for me childrearing \_\_\_\_\_  
To you, childrearing \_\_\_\_\_
40. I think God \_\_\_\_\_  
You think I think God \_\_\_\_\_  
You think God \_\_\_\_\_
41. When I get sick, I want \_\_\_\_\_  
When I get sick, you think I want \_\_\_\_\_  
When you get sick, you want \_\_\_\_\_
42. I think discipline \_\_\_\_\_  
You think I think discipline \_\_\_\_\_  
You think discipline \_\_\_\_\_
43. When I die, I \_\_\_\_\_  
You think I think when I die, I \_\_\_\_\_  
When I die, you \_\_\_\_\_
44. What hurts me most \_\_\_\_\_  
You think what hurts me most \_\_\_\_\_  
What hurts you most \_\_\_\_\_
45. My parents \_\_\_\_\_  
You think I think my parents \_\_\_\_\_  
To you, my parents \_\_\_\_\_

46. I like sex when \_\_\_\_\_  
You think I like sex when \_\_\_\_\_  
You like sex when \_\_\_\_\_
47. Politics are \_\_\_\_\_  
You think I think politics are \_\_\_\_\_  
You think politics are \_\_\_\_\_
48. Orgasms are \_\_\_\_\_  
You think I think orgasms are \_\_\_\_\_  
You think orgasms are \_\_\_\_\_
49. The worst thing in life \_\_\_\_\_  
You think I think the worst thing in life \_\_\_\_\_  
For you, the worst thing in life \_\_\_\_\_
50. The best thing in life \_\_\_\_\_  
You think I think the best thing in life \_\_\_\_\_  
For you, the best thing in life \_\_\_\_\_

C. Wait for your partner to complete this exercise. When you have both finished, use *Couples' Dialogue* to share the information contained in sentences 1-50.

You may find it interesting to take this information and write an essay. The essay would have five parts.

- 1) My experience, thoughts, perceptions
- 2) My view of your view of me
- 3) My view of you
- 4) Your view of me
- 5) Your perception of my view of you

## RECOVERING THE MISSING SELF

This section introduces the concept of the **Missing Self** and its three major components: the **Hidden Self**, the **Lost Self** and the **Denied Self**, and concludes with an Information Synthesis to paint a clear picture of the work required by you and your partner in your journey toward recovering the **Missing Self** in each of you and in achieving wholeness.

### Your Hidden Self

We all have traits and aspects of ourselves that we keep hidden from others, images that don't fit our public persona or that we think would embarrass us if others knew about them. Some of these traits may be acceptable to us, but we may feel they would be criticized or rejected by others. This is a picture of the Hidden Self.

Some of these hidden parts may be compensations for aspects of ourselves we had to repress as children. Others are aspects of our authentic selves that need to be integrated into our self-concept and our interpersonal relationships. Once we recognize that we share these hidden traits with our partners, they can assist us in dealing with them appropriately.

### Your Lost Self

Information regarding the Lost Self cannot be found in our conscious mind, yet its source can be traced to the repressed memories of childhood in which our parents gave us "don't" or "shouldn't" or "stop" messages about our bodies, thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, or about our "self." For example, our caretakers may have said: "don't touch yourself *there*," or "stop running," or "don't call attention to yourself," or "big boys don't cry," or "we don't do that in this family," or "you are sinful." In addition, we may have picked up unspoken messages such as "you are a bother," or "you're too smart for your own good," or "you should not exist." Other messages may have come from our childhood peer group, teachers and other important adults, even from television and movies.

The most telling messages we have received are those from our partners telling us what they want from us, how they wish we might be different or express some aspect of ourselves that we consider "not us." For instance, you may recall your partner saying, "I wish you would wear something a bit sexier to bed," or "why don't you think more before you open your mouth," or "you never take me dancing." Such messages are telltale clues to Lost Self functions which contain information about what is missing in us, and are indirect requests for us to express what we have repressed in order to become whole human beings and safe for our partners.

## **Your Denied Self**

The Denied Self is composed of character traits of ours that are unknown to us, but which are quite often seen and known by the significant people in our lives, especially our partners. Although the people who know us well see our positive qualities, we may be embarrassed or fearful of owning them. For instance, a woman may deny the fact that she has a sharp mind if her parents thought that “women should be seen and not heard.” Or a man may downplay having an artistic nature if his teenage friends thought it was wimpy. The most troublesome part of the Denied Self, however, is the negative qualities that we disown but that we are likely to project onto others. We may experience these aspects of ourselves in times of stress or crisis and thought, “that’s not like me.” We may have suddenly exploded with anger and then thought, “I don’t know what came over me.”

In your drive toward wholeness, you have gravitated toward a partner who did not have to repress the same functions you were asked to repress. As your relationship began to progress, however, you most likely began to criticize those “alive” parts in each other that are “dead” in you. In the process of becoming a whole, separate person, you will need to develop these repressed functions so as not to require your partner to “carry” your missing pieces. Your partner, no doubt, has been prodding you to develop those missing parts by criticizing you for not having them. It is certain you have already heard the complaints.







# CHARACTER STRUCTURE AND RELATIONSHIP PATTERNS

## MINIMIZER

Character Traits: Minimizer constricts or diminishes affect. [Pseudo-independent, withholding, closed, excluding, self-centered, compulsive, impulsive, dominant]

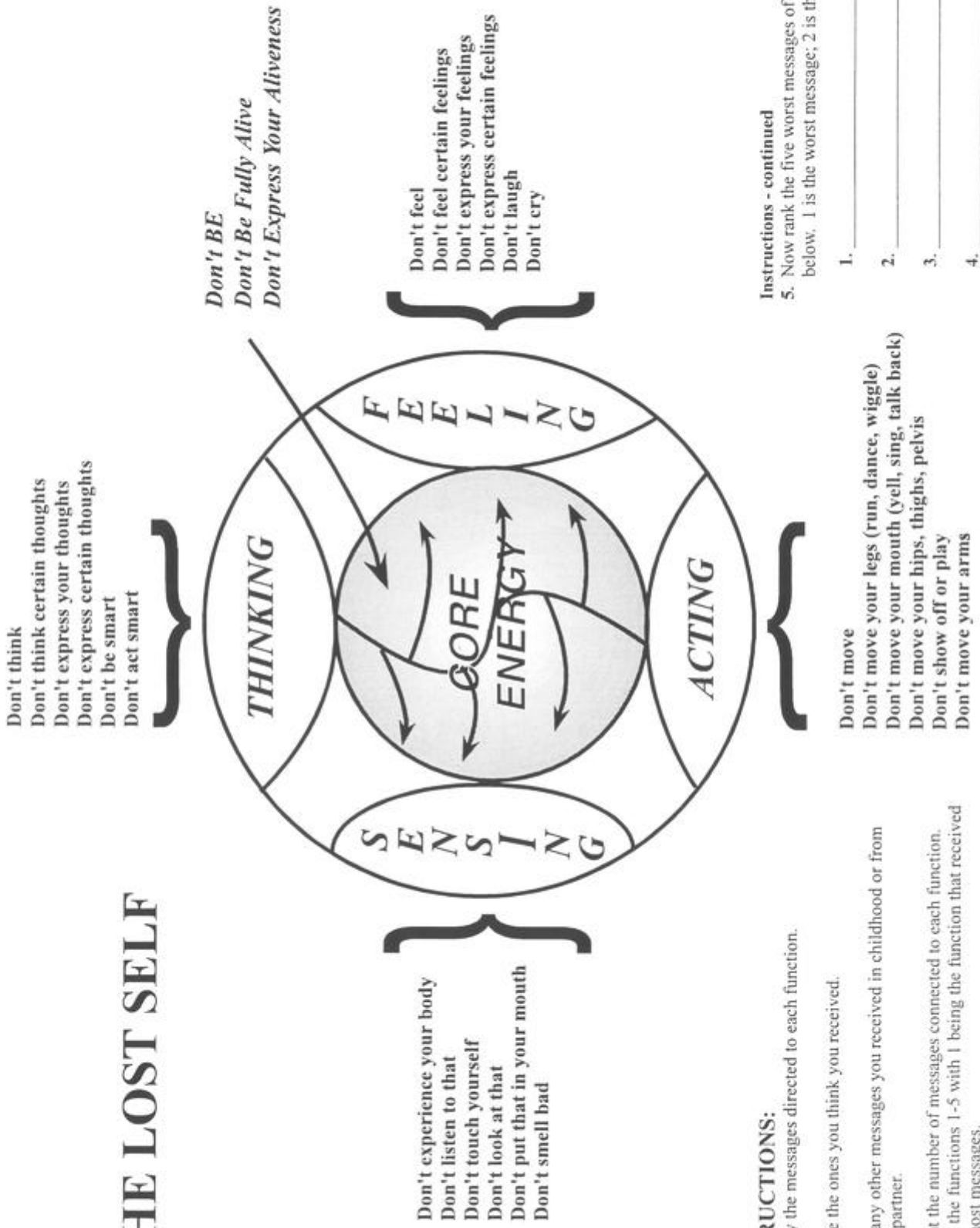
Character Structure	Avoider	Distancer	Compulsive Controller	Compulsive Competitor	Loner	Rebel
<b>Core Relationship Issue</b>	Partner's Demands	Partner's Pursuit/Smothering	Partner's Passivity/Vagueness	Partner's Manipulation	Partner's Invasiveness	Partner's Control/Conformity/ Demands
<b>Character Adaptation</b>	Detachment	Isolation	Rigid Controlling	Competitive	Withdrawal	Rebellion
<b>Worst Fear</b>	Loss of Self Contact With Others	Loss of Partner	Loss of Partner's Love	Loss of Partner Approval	Loss of Partner/Peer Approval	Loss of Personal Freedom/Self Approval
<b>Negative Feeling</b>	Fear-Suppressed Rage	Suppressed Rage	Shame & Rage	Guilty & Suppressed Anger	Suppressed Anger	Anger Acted Out
<b>Relationship Wound</b>	Unwanted/Rejection	Smothered	Used/Dominated	Punished/Guiltied	Ostracism/Disapproval	Over-Controlled/Distrusted
<b>Relationship to Partner</b>	Inconsistently Available & Cold, Detaches/Avoids	Neglectful, Distant, Withholds	Selectively Mirrors & Rigid/Dominating	Competes and Gives Limited Praise	Disapproves of Friends, Withdraws	Rebellious, Counter-Controlling
<b>Developmental Issues</b>	<b>Attachment</b>	<b>Differentiation/Exploration</b>	<b>Identity</b>	<b>Competence</b>	<b>Social Concern</b>	<b>Intimacy</b>
<b>Relationship to Partner</b>	Sometimes Warm, Inconsistently Available, Demanding	Overinvolved, Possessive, Smothers	Deflective/Invasive Vague	Puts Down Achievements, Withholds Praise	Over-Sollicitous Denies Needsness	Demands Conformity, Ignores Uniqueness
<b>Relationship Wound</b>	Abandonment	Neglect/Abandonment	Used, Ignored, Invisible	Competence Devalued	Used, Needs Ignored	Uniqueness Devalued
<b>Worst Fear</b>	Loss of Contact With Others/Loss of Self	Loss of Partner	Loss of Partner's Love Self-Assertion	Loss of Partner Approval	Loss of Partner, Peer Approval, Being Seen As Needy	Loss of Personal Freedom, Being Different/ Self-Approval
<b>Negative Feeling</b>	Fear-Rage	Rage	Shame	Helplessness, Spite	Resentment	Resentment
<b>Character Adaptation</b>	Clings	Ambivalent/Pursues	Passivity Self-Sacrificing	Manipulative	Gregarious/Invasive	Adapts/Conforms
<b>Core Relationship Issue</b>	Partner's Detachment	Partner's Neglect	Partner's Dominance, Rigidity	Partner's Competitiveness	Partner's Exclusion/Withdrawal	Partner's Rebelliousness
<b>Character Structure</b>	Clinger	Pursuer	Compliant Diffuser	Manipulator	Caretaker	Conformist

Character Traits: Maximizer expands or exaggerates affect. [Over-dependent, grasping, diffuse, over-inclusive, other centered, impulsive, explosive, submissive]

## MAXIMIZER

# THE MESSAGES OF REPRESSIVE SOCIALIZATION

## THE LOST SELF



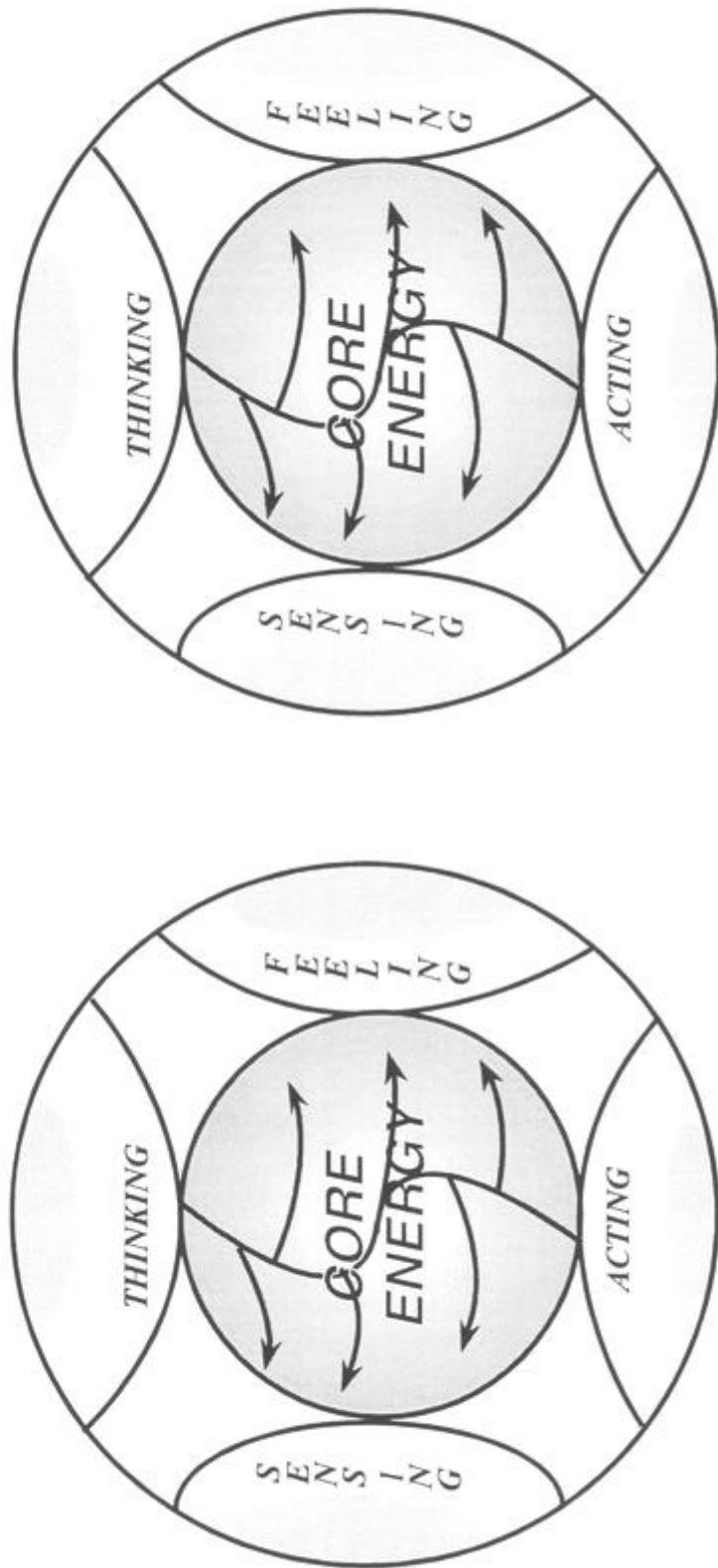
### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Study the messages directed to each function.
  2. Circle the ones you think you received.
  3. Add any other messages you received in childhood or from your partner.
  4. Count the number of messages connected to each function. Rank the functions 1-5 with 1 being the function that received the most messages.
- \_\_\_ Thinking \_\_\_ Feeling \_\_\_ Acting \_\_\_ Sensing \_\_\_ Being

### Instructions - continued

5. Now rank the five worst messages of all and write them below. 1 is the worst message; 2 is the next worst, etc.
1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. \_\_\_\_\_
  4. \_\_\_\_\_
  5. \_\_\_\_\_

## COMPLEMENTARY DIFFERENCES



## LOST SELF

### Optional Exercise:

1. Put your name above one of the circles. Put your partner's name above the other circle. Identify your repressed functions and indicate the degree of repression by shading. Do the same with your partner.
2. Draw an arrow from your repressed function to your partner's open functions.
3. Using *Couples Dialogue*, share with your partner.

## RECOVERING THE MISSING SELF

### Trait Amplification

*This exercise will increase your awareness of the image you have of your partner and will encourage you to be more and more specific about what you consider to be your partner's positive and negative traits.*

Refer to your **Imago Construction** on page 25 and your **Partner Profile** on page 28 of this Manual to complete the following exercise, as well as to your own memory and experience.

1. In Column A of the WORKSHEET that follows, list all of the positive traits you attributed to your partner on the top of page 28. Draw a line under the last item.
2. Under the line, add to this column all the positive traits you **wish** your partner had.
3. Next add all the positive traits you admire most in anyone of the **opposite sex** and those you most admire in **anyone**.
4. Recall any two positive traits attributed to you most often by your partner, friends, co-workers, family, children, etc. List them at the end of your list of positive traits in Column A.
5. In Column B, list all of the negative traits you attributed to your partner in the **Partner Profile** on the bottom half of the diagram on page 28. Draw a line under the last item.
6. Under the line, add traits you dislike or hate most about the **opposite sex** or dislike or hate the most in **anyone**.
7. Recall any two negative traits attributed to you most often by your partner, friends, co-workers, family, children, etc. List them at the end of your list of negative traits in Column B.
8. Underline the five traits in **each** column that are **not** descriptive of you.
9. Rank the five traits underlined in each column according to the following scale:
  - #1: LEAST descriptive of you
  - #2: LESS descriptive
  - #3: SOMEWHAT descriptive
  - #4: SOMEWHAT MORE descriptive
  - #5: MORE descriptive

**WORKSHEET**  
Traits Amplification List

COLUMN A		COLUMN B	
RANKING	POSITIVE TRAITS	RANKING	NEGATIVE TRAITS

## RECOVERING THE MISSING SELF

### Character Structure Information Synthesis

Please turn to the pages indicated in the parentheses at the end of the incomplete sentences below and use that information to complete the sentences.

1. In my childhood and in my relationship with my partner, I have experienced (transfer material from page 60):

**This is my *Childhood Wound*.**

2. In childhood, I was given the following messages (list the five messages you ranked as The Worst Messages on page 63, #5, **The Messages of Repressive Socialization**):

#1: \_\_\_\_\_

#2: \_\_\_\_\_

#3: \_\_\_\_\_

#4: \_\_\_\_\_

#5: \_\_\_\_\_

These messages seem to cluster around the areas of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (insert the two functions which Received the Most Messages on page 63, #4).

**This is my *Lost Self*.**

**RECOVERING THE MISSING SELF**  
**Character Structure Information Synthesis** (Continued)

3. Because of these emotional injuries, in order to protect myself, I unconsciously became (list only the traits ranked 1-5 in Column B from the Traits Amplification WORKSHEET on page 66):

#1: \_\_\_\_\_

#2: \_\_\_\_\_

#3: \_\_\_\_\_

#4: \_\_\_\_\_

#5: \_\_\_\_\_

**These traits describe some aspect of my *Denied Self*.**

4. In addition, sometimes, to get my needs met and to protect myself, I am (list only the traits ranked 1-5 in Column A from the Traits Amplification WORKSHEET on page 66):

#1: \_\_\_\_\_

#2: \_\_\_\_\_

#3: \_\_\_\_\_

#4: \_\_\_\_\_

#5: \_\_\_\_\_

**These traits describe some aspects of my *Potential Self*.**

5. From my study of the chart on page 62, I seem to be a Minimizer/Maximizer (circle one) and my dominant character structure is (circle one):

Avoider	Clinger
Distancer	Pursuer
Compulsive Controller	Compliant Diffuser
Compulsive Competitor	Manipulator
Loner	Caretaker
Rebel	Conformist

**This is a description of my *Character Defense*.**

## SELF-INTEGRATION: KNOWING YOURSELF

To achieve your vision you must begin the process of recovering your wholeness by:

- 1) integrating previously disowned self-traits into your new self-image, and
  - 2) changing your negative traits into the potential positive traits hidden in them.
- Paradoxically, self-integration is achieved by meeting your partner's needs.*

1. Review the lists of negative traits from the Trait Amplification WORKSHEET on page 66 under Column B in both your own and your partner's manuals.
2. In Column A below, first list any traits common to both of your lists above the line (these are traits which you each transferred from your **Imago Construction** (page 25) and **Partner Profile** (page 28)). Next add traits which are common to both of your lists below the line, followed by any remaining negative traits on either of your lists.
3. Mark with an **X** each of the negative traits you are willing to own.
4. With your partner's input, write in Column B below, beside each **X**-rated item in column A, a potential positive trait that would correct the negative trait and be responsive to your partner's needs.
5. Imagine a behavior that would concretely express each potential positive trait and write it in Column C below.

A. Negative Traits	B. Potential Traits	C. New Behaviors



**Self-Integration: Knowing Yourself (Continued)**

<b>A. Negative Traits</b>	<b>B. Potential Traits</b>	<b>C. New Behaviors</b>



## RE-STRUCTURING YOUR RELATIONSHIP

Now that you have brought the unconscious mate selection process into light, you have learned how the Imago selects your partner for you. By completing **Knowledge Inventories** (pages 50-58) and **Trait Amplification** (pages 65-66), you have deepened your awareness of your image of your partner. You have also made a formal **Record of the Childhood Wound** (page 67) that includes the important and unique details about both of your unconscious images of the opposite sex. All this information about who you both really are and what you both really want and need is the basis of the work you will now do to begin changing your behavior and improving the quality of your relationship.

It is strange but true that the very thing you need most is the very thing your partner finds most difficult to give, and vice versa. This is where “The Stretching Principle” comes into play. You and your partner must stretch into some new behaviors in order to make changes in your relationship. You both must learn about and respond to each other based on the *actual* information and requests of your partner--not what you imagine he or she is saying. The **Behavior Change Request Process**, which follows on page 73, sets forth the new guidelines for handling your relationship frustrations.

This open, honest response to exactly what your partner is communicating may be a challenge at first. Some of the behavior your partner requests may very well be something you find difficult to do. The important thing to remember when this comes up is that doing this difficult thing that may seem to be for your partner will actually help you.

Many couples have trouble communicating about **Power and Decision Issues** (page 81), and this exercise will allow both of you to formalize your understanding in these areas. Some couples find that communication, especially about power and decision issues, is almost impossible because of the anger that surfaces. The possibility of communication is restored when these couples practice **Containment** (page 82). This communication device allows couples to express their negative feelings in a way that is no longer destructive to the relationship.

## RESTRUCTURING FRUSTRATIONS

### The Behavior Change Request Process

1. All frustrations contain a hidden desire. This exercise is designed to help you convert your frustrations into the desires hidden in them and then to translate your desires into behavior change requests.
2. Turn to your list of **Frustrations with Your Current Partner** on pages 29 and 30. Select two frustrations. Transfer the first frustration and the items in Columns B through D into the four appropriate boxes on page 75. Translate each frustration into a primitive/global desire and state the desire in the box labeled GLOBAL DESIRE. Then state the current form of the desire in the box labeled PRESENT DESIRE.
3. Now convert the PRESENT DESIRE into three behavior change requests and list them in the blanks under BEHAVIOR CHANGE REQUESTS. State your requests in positive, specific and behavioral terms and make them measurable in terms of what behavior you want, how many times, with what intensity or frequency and for how long.

**DO NOT USE ANY NEGATIVES SUCH AS “STOP” OR “QUIT” OR “DO NOT” OR ANY ABSOLUTES SUCH AS “ALWAYS” OR “NEVER.”**

Study the sample answers in parentheses.

4. Once you have completed the written exercise, exchange your charts with your partner.
5. Study your partner’s behavior change requests and rate them E (easy), H (hard) or X-rated (not possible at this time, but maybe later). Place those marked E on the EASY list on page 77. Place those marked H on the HARD list on page 78. Place those marked X on the X-RATED list on page 79.
6. Using the **Behavior Change Request Dialogue** on page 80 as a model, practice sharing your frustrations with your partner.
7. The purpose of this exercise is to assist you in practicing the **Behavior Change Request Exercise** and the **Behavior Change Request Dialogue**.
8. From now on, you will be using this procedure to process all of the frustrations that arise with your partner. In the WORKSHEETS section of this manual, you will find a blank form which you may copy to use in processing all of your frustrations.
9. Remember to use the “Appointment Only” rule to share your frustrations with your partner.

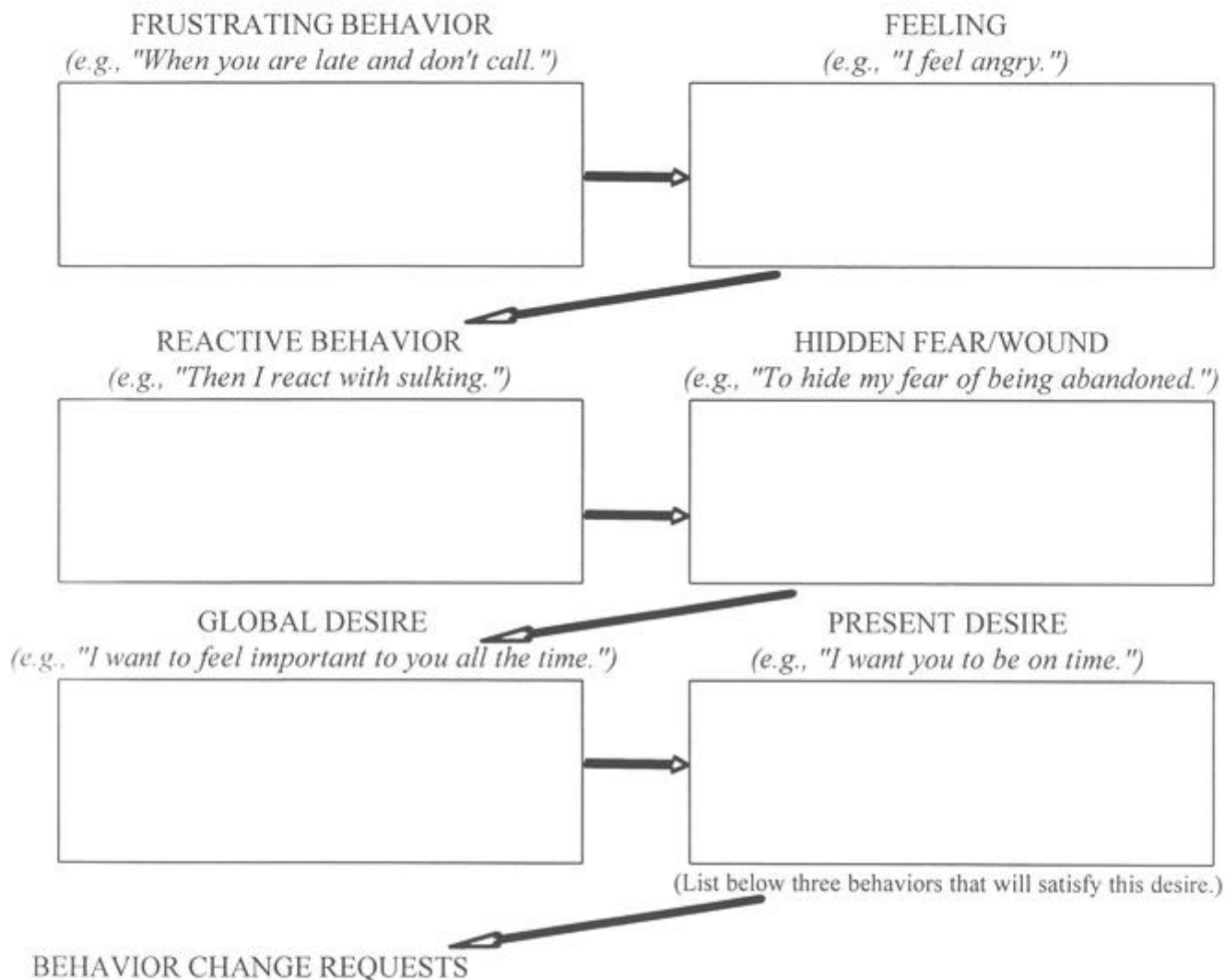
## RESTRUCTURING FRUSTRATIONS

### The Behavior Change Request Exercise

#### Notes:

- These behavioral exchanges are statements, in adult form, of frustrations rooted in childhood. The fulfillment of these requests, for you by your partner and for your partner by you, can satisfy those deep desires.
- Begin to fulfill your partner's behavior change requests right away, without waiting for your partner to fulfill any of yours. You are under no obligation to make changes, but each change you make will help you become whole and will heal your partner's wounds.
- Acknowledge with appreciation any behavior change your partner gives you.
- Do not keep score on who is doing the most!
- Fulfilling behavior change requests works best when you **risk first** and consider each item as a "gift" to your partner.
- **THIS EXERCISE IS IMPORTANT...AND VERY DIFFICULT!**
- You may feel much inner resistance to responding to your partner's deepest needs, because such behaviors are not natural to you. If they were, you would be doing them already.
- Each time you grant a request, thereby meeting one of your partner's deepest needs, you not only are helping the healing process in your partner, but you are also moving toward a profound change in yourself. The benefits to you will far exceed the difficulty of stretching because you will change parts of yourself that have prevented you from knowing some of your deepest needs and getting them met.

## TRANSLATION OF A FRUSTRATION TO A BEHAVIOR CHANGE REQUEST

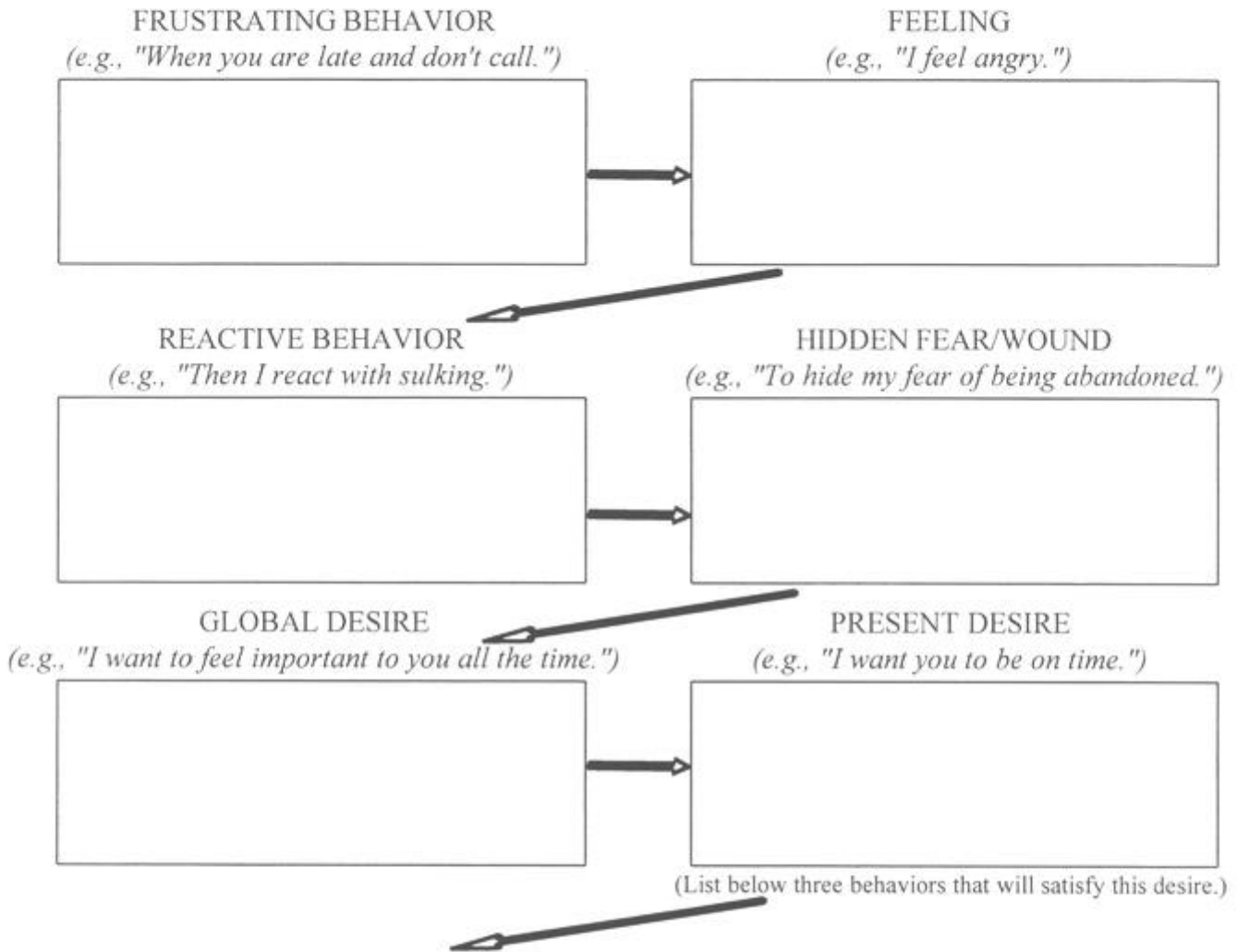


e.g.  For the next three months, when you know you will be more than 30 minutes late, please give me a call at least 30 minutes before the time of our appointment to tell me about the change.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Partner puts X in circle of request not grantable at this time (place on "X-Rated" BCR list). Partner rates the requests not X'ed as either easy (E) or hard (H) and transfer the **easy** ones to "Easy" BCR list and the **hard** ones to "Hard" BCR list.

## TRANSLATION OF A FRUSTRATION TO A BEHAVIOR CHANGE REQUEST



### BEHAVIOR CHANGE REQUESTS

e.g.  For the next three months, when you know you will be more than 30 minutes late, please give me a call at least 30 minutes before the time of our appointment to tell me about the change.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_









## RESTRUCTURING FRUSTRATIONS

### The Behavior Change Request Dialogue

#### SENDER

#### RECEIVER

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Request an appointment. "I would like an appointment to express a frustration and make a Behavior Change Request."</i></li> <li>2. <i>State the frustration in one short sentence, i.e.: "When you don't look at me when I talk, I get frustrated."</i></li> <li>3. <i>Describe the frustration fully. Tell about the frustration, hurt and/or fear: "I feel frustrated when..." (describe frustrating behavior); "that hurts me..." and/or "makes me afraid that..."</i></li> <li>4. <i>State the childhood wound: "It reminds me of...when I was a child and makes me feel..."</i></li> <li>5. <i>State your desire in general terms, i.e.: "I want you to listen to me when I am talking."</i></li> <li>6. <i>State a Behavior Change Request including how it would help you and make you feel, i.e.: "Whenever I am talking to you, I want you to stop what you are doing, look me in the face, and mirror back what I have said. I would like you to do this three times per week for the next month. This will help me know that I am visible and important to you and will make me feel relaxed and happy."</i></li> <li>7. <i>Give another option or options, if necessary.</i></li> <li>8. <i>Say: "Thank you. That will reduce my fear of _____ (childhood wound) and make me feel..."</i></li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Grant an appointment ASAP. Now, if possible.</i></li> <li>2. <i>Mirror. Then say: "I am ready to hear your frustration fully."</i></li> <li>3. <i>Mirror, validate and express empathy, asking "Is there more about that?" until there is no more. Then say: "Does this frustration remind you of anything in your childhood?"</i></li> <li>4. <i>Summarize, validate and express empathy. Then say: "What is it that you desire of me?"</i></li> <li>5. <i>Ask, "Is there more about that?" When SENDER is finished, mirror, validate, and express empathy. Then say: "What could I specifically do that would help meet your desire?"</i></li> <li>6. <i>Mirror Behavior Change Request. Rank as EASY, HARD, or X-RATED. Grant the request as a gift or ask for another option if the request is impossible for you now. List request on your EASY, HARD, or X-Rated list.</i></li> <li>7. <i>Grant the request or make a counter-proposal that is acceptable to your partner that you can put on either your EASY or HARD LIST. The counter-proposal must be related to your partner's frustration or the desires. Say: "I will gift you with...(describe what you will do.)"</i></li> <li>8. <i>Say: "You are welcome! Giving you that will help me change my resistance to _____ and grow ..."</i></li> </ol> |
|---|---|

## POWER AND DECISION ISSUES

Below is a list of common issues. Customize the list by adding relevant items and deleting those that do not come up in your relationship.

Working alone: Indicate in **Column A** who now **actually** makes decisions regarding the issue mentioned by writing an **S** for Self, **P** for Partner, or **S/P** for both of you. In **Column D**, indicate **desired change** you would like to take place regarding who makes decisions. Working together: Go over your lists with each other and negotiate any desired changes stated under **Column D**. Indicate these **Negotiated Changes** in **Column N**.

	A	D	N
1. Where you live			
2. What job/career man pursues			
3. How many hours man works			
4. Whether woman works			
5. What job/career woman pursues			
6. How many hours woman works			
7. Whether to have children and if so how many			
8. How to discipline children			
9. Frequency/quality of social contacts			
10. Frequency/quality of in-law/relative visits			
11. When and how often to have sex			
12. How to have sex			
13. How to spend/invest money			
14. How/when to pursue personal interests/hobbies			
15. When/where to go on vacation			
16. How to spend vacations and other leisure time			
17. Medical care for family			
18. Who designates household chores			
19. Time spent alone			
20. Time spent together			
21. Whether/when/how to pursue religious interests			
22. Where/how to spend holidays			

## CONTAINMENT: RESOLVING ANGER

*In a conscious marriage/relationship all spontaneous expressions of anger and rage are replaced with containment. This means that conscious partners express their negative feelings to each other "by appointment only."*

*Containment is a structured process of allowing the expression of long-buried childhood resentment, anger and rage in a safe environment in a way that leads to mutual healing and growth.*

### CONTAINMENT

**There are three forms of containment:**

#### ***The Mini-Container:***

The **mini-container** is a one-way transaction used when one partner is mildly frustrated or angry. In a short (1 to 3 minute) transaction the frustrated partner discharges negative feeling before they build up. The receiving partner mirrors, validates and empathizes, and does not respond with their own experience. A request for behavior change may or may not be made, depending upon the needs of the expressive partner.

#### ***The Container Day:***

**Container days** are a mutual decision to use mini-containers to deal with minor frustrations for twenty-four hours on alternating days for ninety days. On the first day, one partner agrees to listen to all expressions of frustrations and to respond only with mirroring, validation, and empathy. On the next day, they switch, and the partner who "contained" on the preceding day expresses all his/her frustrations and is responded to with mirroring, validation and empathy. This alternation is continued for three months with Sundays off. (Partner A Express: Monday, Wednesday and Friday; Partner B Express: Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.) The goal is to radically reduce or eliminate reactivity.

#### ***The Container Exercise:***

This is a seven-step process that allows the safe expression of childhood resentment and rage. It replaces all spontaneous fights and is used when frustration and anger are so intense that their expression requires more than one to three minutes. This exercise may be used to replace spontaneous fighting. If it is used on a container day because negative feelings are so intense, an additional appointment is necessary so that the receiving partner may make adequate time available (usually 30-45 minutes). The steps are described on the next page.

## CONTAINMENT: RESOLVING NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

*Before you use this exercise, you should make three protective agreements:*

- \* No Tissue Damage    \* No Property Damage*
- \* No Leaving the Process until all 7 Steps are Completed*

Partner A = Sender		Partner B = Receiver	
<b>1</b>	<b>Ask For An Appointment</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Agree To A Time ASAP</b>
<b>2</b>	Identify The "Trigger" To Your Frustration State The Frustration In One Sentence	<b>2</b>	Paraphrase Your Partner's Frustration Put On Your "Psychic Armor"
<b>3</b>	<b>Explode Feelings</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Listen With Empathy</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Implosion</b> (Anger Turns To Sadness And Tears)	<b>4</b>	<b>Provide Physical Holding, Care And Empathy</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Separation And Rest</b> (Optional)	<b>5</b>	<b>Separation and Rest</b> (Optional)
<b>6</b>	<b>Ask For Three Behavior Changes Related To The Trigger</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Commit To At Least One Change Or Offer An Alternative</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Initiate High-Energy Play</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Participate Actively In Play</b>

## CONTAINMENT: RESOLVING ANGER

### Instructions

1. Discuss the containment process with you partner and your therapist until you both understand it.
2. Share your thoughts and feelings about practicing the steps.
3. Practice the Containment Exercise:
  - a. Make the three protective agreements:  
  
**“I agree not to inflict any tissue damage,”**  
  
**“I agree not to damage any property”**  
  
and  
  
**“I agree not to leave the process until all seven steps are completed.”**
  - b. For your first practice, pick a specific minor behavior your partner engages in which frustrates you. Save more potent issues until you have thoroughly learned the process.
  - c. Alternate so that each partner has an opportunity to experience containment.
  - d. Be sure you have completed all seven steps in the process.
4. After having practiced the exercise, discuss your experience of containment with your partner and therapist.

### **Working with your partner between sessions**

Before your next therapy session, record any thought and feelings that seem important to you on the **WORKSHEET** that follows.











## CARING BEHAVIORS

### Dialogue

*This exercise is designed to help you and your partner develop and communicate your Love Language with one another.*

Use Couples Dialogue and:

1. Share page **88** with your partner and ask if s/he will **continue** these behaviors in a systematic way.
2. Share page **89** with your partner and ask if s/he will **reinstate** these behaviors on a regular basis.
3. Share page **90** and ask your partner which of these behaviors s/he could consider doing on a regular basis **without resistance**. Whichever behaviors on pages **88-90** you or your partner feel you cannot commit to doing now can be discussed with your therapist.

*Do not insist! Put an X by the behaviors your partner cannot do now without resistance.*

4. In the column labeled “**V**”, number the items on all three lists (pages **88-90**) in order of greatest importance to you. Omit those items marked with an X. Make number 1 the most important, then number 2, and so on.
5. Ask for your partner’s manual. Select the behaviors your partner ranked 1, 2, and 3, and starting with number 1 on your partner’s lists:
  - Do those three behaviors immediately, no matter how you feel.
  - Acknowledge your partner appreciatively for the behaviors s/he gives you.
6. On the following page entitled **Love Language Priority List** (page **92**) list all the loving behaviors which your partner can do without resistance from pages **88-90** in their order of importance to you. Write clear, positive and descriptive sentences of highly repeatable behaviors. It will greatly assist your partner if you state exactly what you want, when you want it and how often.

Exchange **Love Language Priority Lists** with your partner and enter your names in the blanks.

Put your partner’s list where you can see it daily and memorize it!

As a gift, give your partner the three most valued items from the list daily or weekly as seems possible and appropriate.

When your partner GIFTS you, acknowledge the gift verbally and record the date in your journal.



## POSITIVE FLOODING

1. Decide who will be the sending partner and who the receiver.
2. As the sender, ask your partner to sit in a chair. While walking in a circle around your partner, keep eye contact and say all the positive things you can think of about your partner's physical characteristics, character traits, behaviors you value, etc. Flood your partner by starting with your voice at its regular pitch and then raising it an octave. At the end of the flooding, you should be shouting positive global expressions of caring to your partner like, "You are the most thoughtful husband in the world," or, " You are the most wonderful wife in the universe!" at a level of intensity equal to your expressions of rage or anger.
3. Ask your partner to do the same for you.
4. Now, list below all aspects of yourself which you want your partner to flood. Include what you wanted to hear in your childhood and what you want to hear in the marriage/relationship of your dreams.

Physical Characteristics	Character Traits	Behaviors	Global Affirmations

5. Take your partner's list and repeat the flooding exercise, using the items your partner wants appreciated. Remember to raise your voice as you amplify the list.
6. Ask your partner to do the same for you.
7. Do this exercise weekly, making sure to include the traits you value in your partner and the traits your partner wants valued.

# SURPRISES

## Instructions

1. On the next page, you will find the heading **SURPRISES FOR \_\_\_\_\_**. Write your partner's name in the blank space.
2. Make a list of the things you could do for your partner which would be a delightful surprise if received from you unexpectedly. The list must come from your memory of previous surprise events or expressed wishes from your partner. It should not be a comprised of surprises you only *think* your partner would like.
3. Keep this list of surprises for your partner private at all times.
4. Update it as you recall or discover new items to add to it.
5. Select one item each week and surprise your partner with it.
6. Record the date of each surprise given.
7. Record and date any surprises you receive from your partner on page 96.









## FUN ACTIVITIES

### Instructions

Engaging in high-energy mutual pleasuring activities provides a lot more to your relationship than simple fun. It contributes to your emotional bonding, mental and physical health, and increases the amount of positive energy available in your relationship!

1. Study your list of Fun Activities. Note items that are face-to-face experiences and those that are physically vigorous, emotionally intense, and involve body contact. (Examples: talking, laughing, playing tennis, dancing, wrestling, taking showers together, massage, sex, etc.)
2. Share your list with your partner using Couples Dialogue. Compare content, value and perceived frequency. Check off the items included on both of your lists.
3. Using the WORKSHEET that follows, first write down the shared activities, followed by both sets of desired fun activities--activities which you and your partner believe will bring you pleasure.
4. Working individually once again, rank once again the value of each item for yourself under the letter V. Under the letters PV, rank each item as you perceive your partner would value it.
5. Under the letter F, rank your own desired frequency of occurrence. Under the letters PF, rank your perception of your partner's desired frequency of occurrence.
6. Under the letter I, indicate who currently takes the initiative for each item (using the letters "S" for self and "P" for your partner). Under the letters CI, indicate any change you would like to see made regarding who takes the initiative.
7. Using Couples Dialogue once again, mutually negotiate the value to both of you of the items and rankings on both of your WORKSHEET lists. Share your perceptions of the current and desired value and the frequency of occurrence of each fun activity, and come to a decision together regarding who will take the initiative in participating in those fun activities that hold the highest priority for both of you as a couple.
8. On the sheet entitled **Pleasuring Program**, which follows the WORKSHEET, write each fun activity in order of its mutually agreed upon value, as well as the name of the initiator for the activity.
9. Put the Pleasuring Program sheet in a prominent place.
10. Record the dates you participate in each fun activity and the initiator's initials.













## **SEX**

### **Sexual Love Language**

1. Study the items on pages entitled **Current Sexual Satisfaction**s, **Past Sexual Satisfaction**s, and **Sexual Fantasies**.
2. List all items on the WORKSHEET that follows, except those that you have marked with an X.
3. Under V, rank each item according to its value to you.
4. Transfer all items from page 105 to the page entitled **Sexual Love Language** on page 106 in their order of value with the most important at the top.
5. Under DF, indicate your desired frequency of occurrence for each activity.
6. Exchange lists with your partner for use as a resource for sexual gifting.
7. Once you have received your partner's list, put your name in the first blank space at the top of the sheet and your partner's in the second blank space.
8. Study and memorize your partner's list.
9. Gift your partner according to the desired frequency requested on your partner's list.
10. Note the dates when a loving sexual gift is given.
11. **TAKE THE FIRST RISK!!**





## Commitment to a Conscious Marriage/Relationship

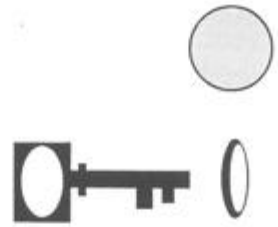
To \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ I agree to heal your childhood wounds.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I agree to use the *Couples Dialogue* regularly and especially in all conflicted transactions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I agree to nurture you whenever you feel emotionally hurt.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I agree to give you five caring behaviors each day.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I agree to give you a surprise at least once a month.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I agree to initiate high energy fun with you at least once each day.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I agree to replace all criticisms with behavior change requests.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I agree to gradually close all my exits.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I agree to express all anger by appointment only.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I agree to alternating container days with you for at least three months.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I agree to keep you physically and emotionally safe in our relationship.

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

# WORKSHEETS



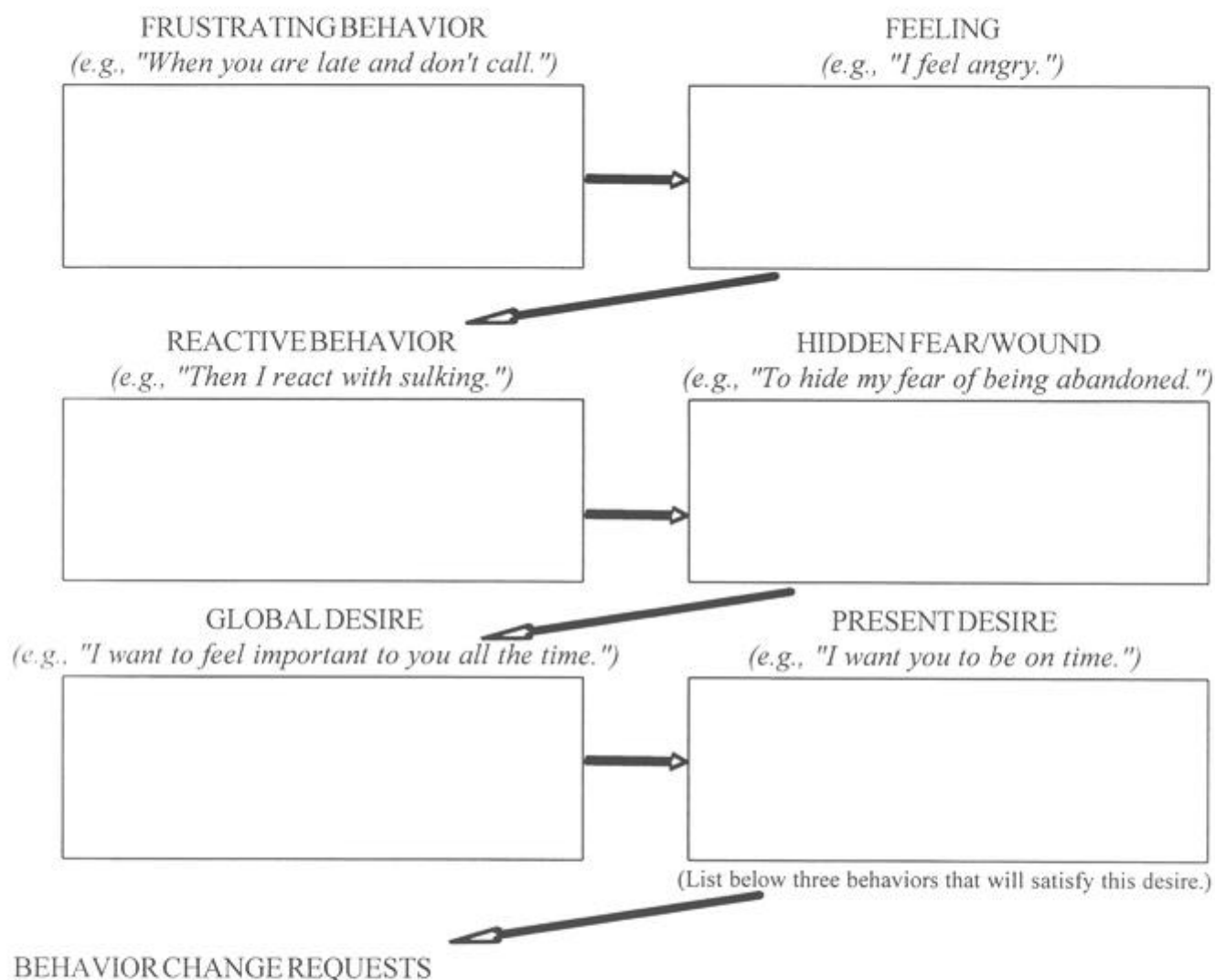
# WORKSHEET

## Goals

<b>Goal:</b>	
<b>Objective:</b>	
<b>Strategy or Tactics:</b>	<b>Time Frame:</b>
<b>Sensory Effect:</b>	
Taste _____	
Touch _____	
Smell _____	
Sound _____	
Feel _____	
Emotions Expressed _____	
<b>Consequence or Payoff:</b>	
<b>Progress Report:</b>	
<b>Revision of Plan:</b>	

# WORKSHEET

## Translation of a Frustration to a Behavior Change Request



e.g.  For the next three months, when you know you will be more than 30 minutes late, please give me a call at least 30 minutes before the time of our appointment to tell me about the change.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Partner puts **X** in circle of request not grantable at this time (place on "X-Rated" BCR list). Partner rates the requests not X'ed as either easy (E) or hard (H) and transfer the **easy** ones to "Easy" BCR list and the **hard** ones to "Hard" BCR list.

# WORKSHEET

## Translation of a Frustration to a Behavior Change Request

FRUSTRATING BEHAVIOR  
(e.g., "When you are late and don't call.")

FEELING  
(e.g., "I feel angry.")



REACTIVE BEHAVIOR  
(e.g., "Then I react with sulking.")

HIDDEN FEAR/WOUND  
(e.g., "To hide my fear of being abandoned.")



GLOBAL DESIRE  
(e.g., "I want to feel important to you all the time.")

PRESENT DESIRE  
(e.g., "I want you to be on time.")



(List below three behaviors that will satisfy this desire.)



### BEHAVIOR CHANGE REQUESTS

e.g.  For the next three months, when you know you will be more than 30 minutes late, please give me a call at least 30 minutes before the time of our appointment to tell me about the change.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_









## WORKSHEET

### *The Commandments of a Conscious Marriage / Relationship*

*Heal each other's childhood wounds*

*Call each other back to original wholeness*

*Visualize our Dream Relationship daily*

*Keep each other emotionally and physically safe at all times*

*Keep all exits to our relationship closed*

*End all behaviors that avoid intimacy*

*Give each other caring behaviors daily*

*Give each other surprises monthly*

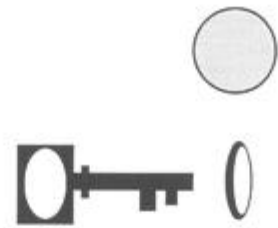
*Enjoy high energy pleasure together daily*

*End all criticism*

*Ask directly for what we want*

*Express all negative feelings appropriately*

# DIAGRAMS



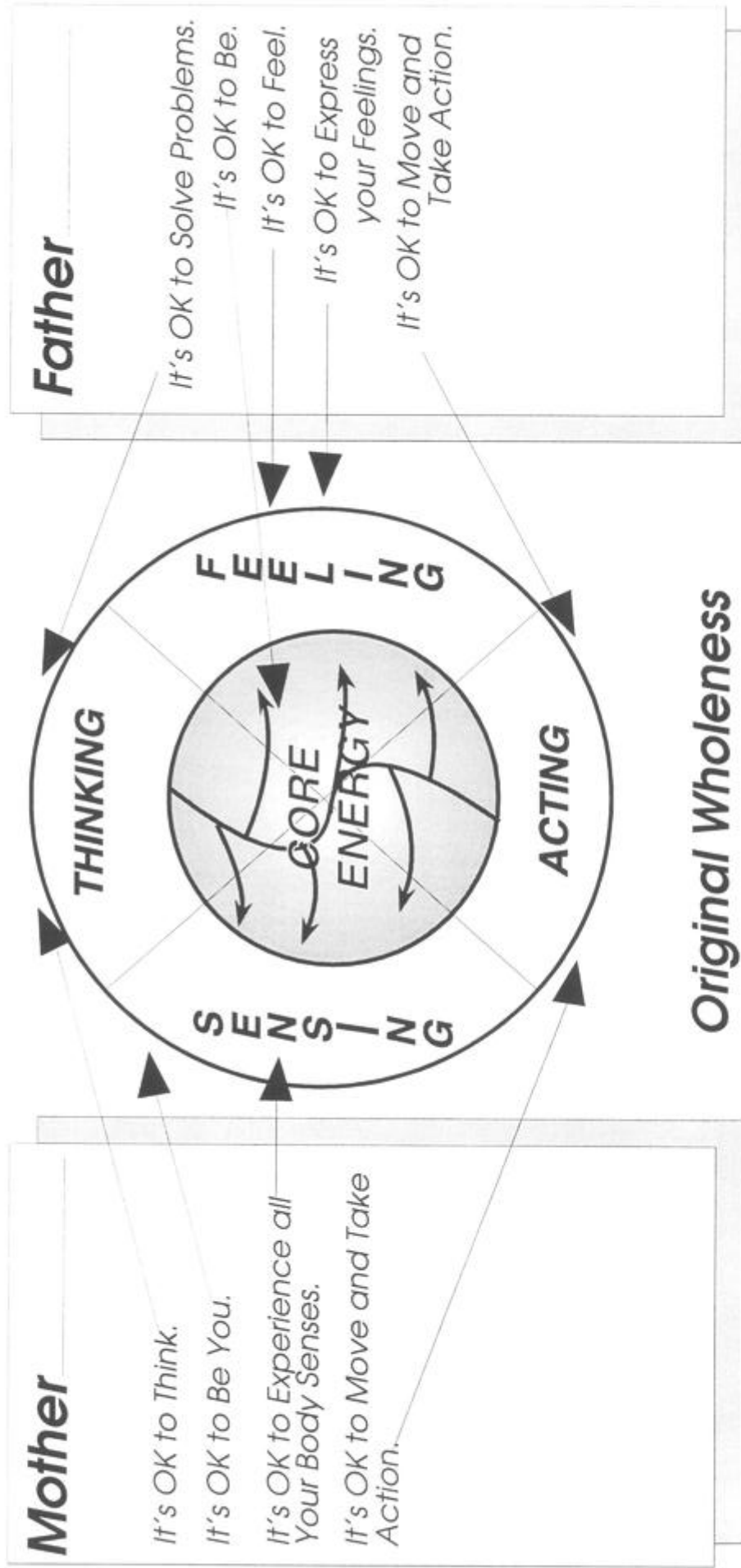




**DIAGRAM 3:**

**The Birth of the Social Self**

*Appropriate Social Messages*





# DIAGRAM 4:

# Childhood Wounds & Character Adaptations

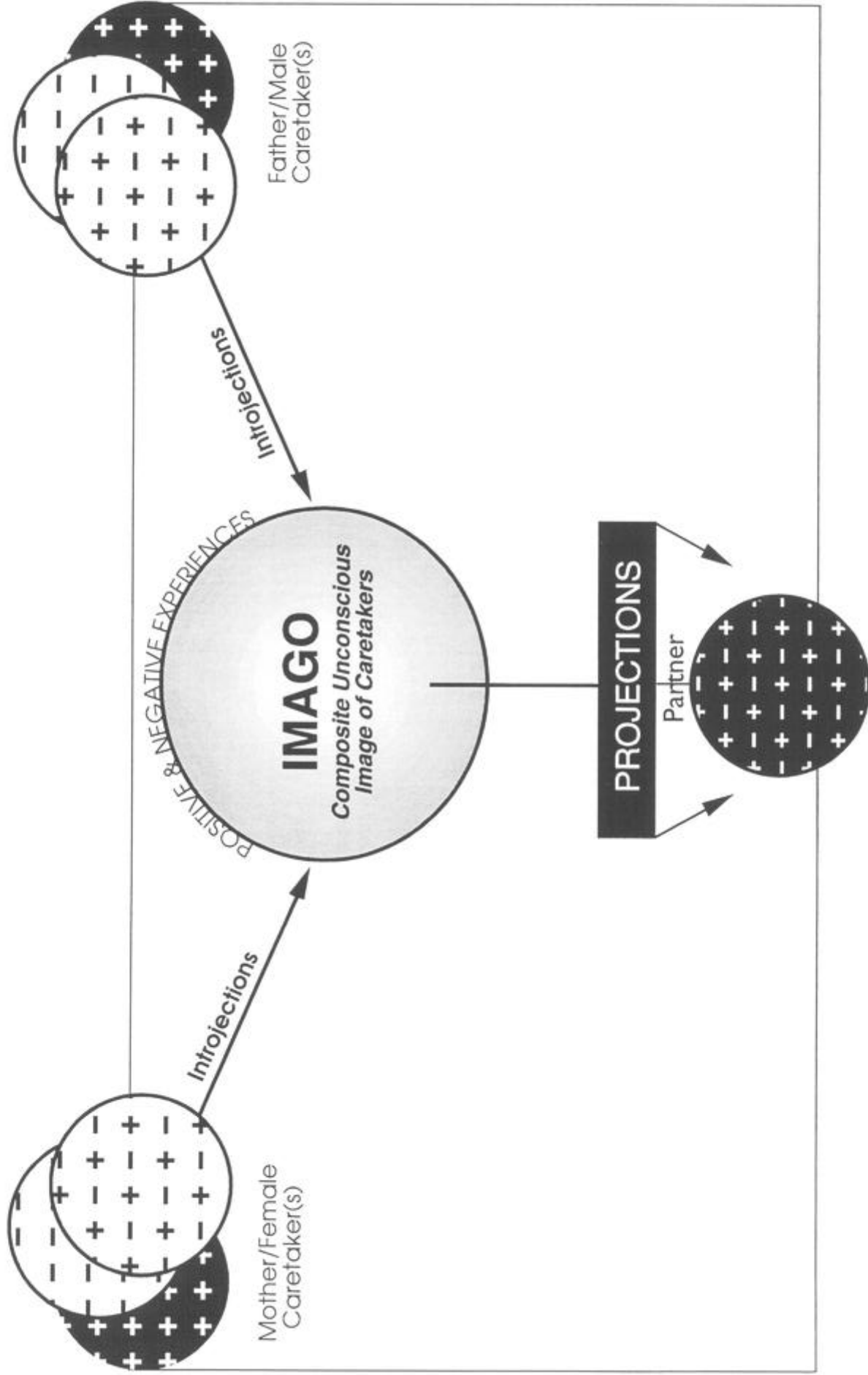
Minimizer ←

<i>Childhood Adaptation</i>	DETACHMENT	ISOLATION	RIGIDITY	COMPETITIVE	WITHDRAWAL	REBELLION
<i>Childhood Fear</i>	Loss of Self Being Annihilated	Loss of Parent Being Absorbed	Loss of Parental Love Being Used	Loss of Parental Approval Being Inferior	Loss of Parent/Peer Approval Being Disliked	Loss of Self/Approval Being Like Others
<i>Childhood Wound</i>	Unwanted	Smothered	Dominated	Punished Guilted	Peer Ostracism Parental Disapproval	Distrusted
<i>Deficient Parenting</i>	Inconsistently Available & Cold	Overprotective & Possessive	Selective Mirroring	Selective Praise Demands for Excellence	Disapproves Peers Rigid Social Control	Rejects Emotional & Sexual Maturation
<i>DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES</i>	ATTACHMENT	EXPLORATION	IDENTITY	COMPETENCE	CONCERN	INTIMACY
<i>Deficient Parenting</i>	Inconsistently Available & Warm	Neglectful & Underprotective	Defective & Invasive	Ignores Achievements Offers No Instructions	Under-Involved No Social Guidance	Praises Conformity Ignores Emotional & Sexual Maturation
<i>Childhood Wound</i>	Abandonment	Neglect	Invisibility	Achievements Devalued	Needs Ignored	Uniqueness Suppressed
<i>Childhood Fear</i>	Loss of Self Being Abandoned	Loss of Parent Being Separated	Loss of Parental Love Being Shamed	Loss of Parental Approval Being Helpless	Loss of Parent/Peer Approval Being Needy	Loss of Self Approval Being Different
<i>Childhood Adaptation</i>	CLINGING	PURSUIT	DIFFUSENESS	MANIPULATIVE	GREGARIOUS	CONFORMITY

→ Maximizer

## DIAGRAM 5:

# The Imago and Partner Selection



This image is unconscious during childhood and emerges in the mate selection process.

Mate selection is the process of seeking and finding a partner on whom you project your imago traits.

In the romantic love phase, you project the positives which you have disowned and you deny the negatives.

## DIAGRAM 6:

# Sources of the Power Struggle

### A. MINIMIZER

Character Traits: Minimizer constricts or diminishes affect. [Pseudo-independent, withholding, closed, excluding, self-centered, compulsive, impulsive, dominant]

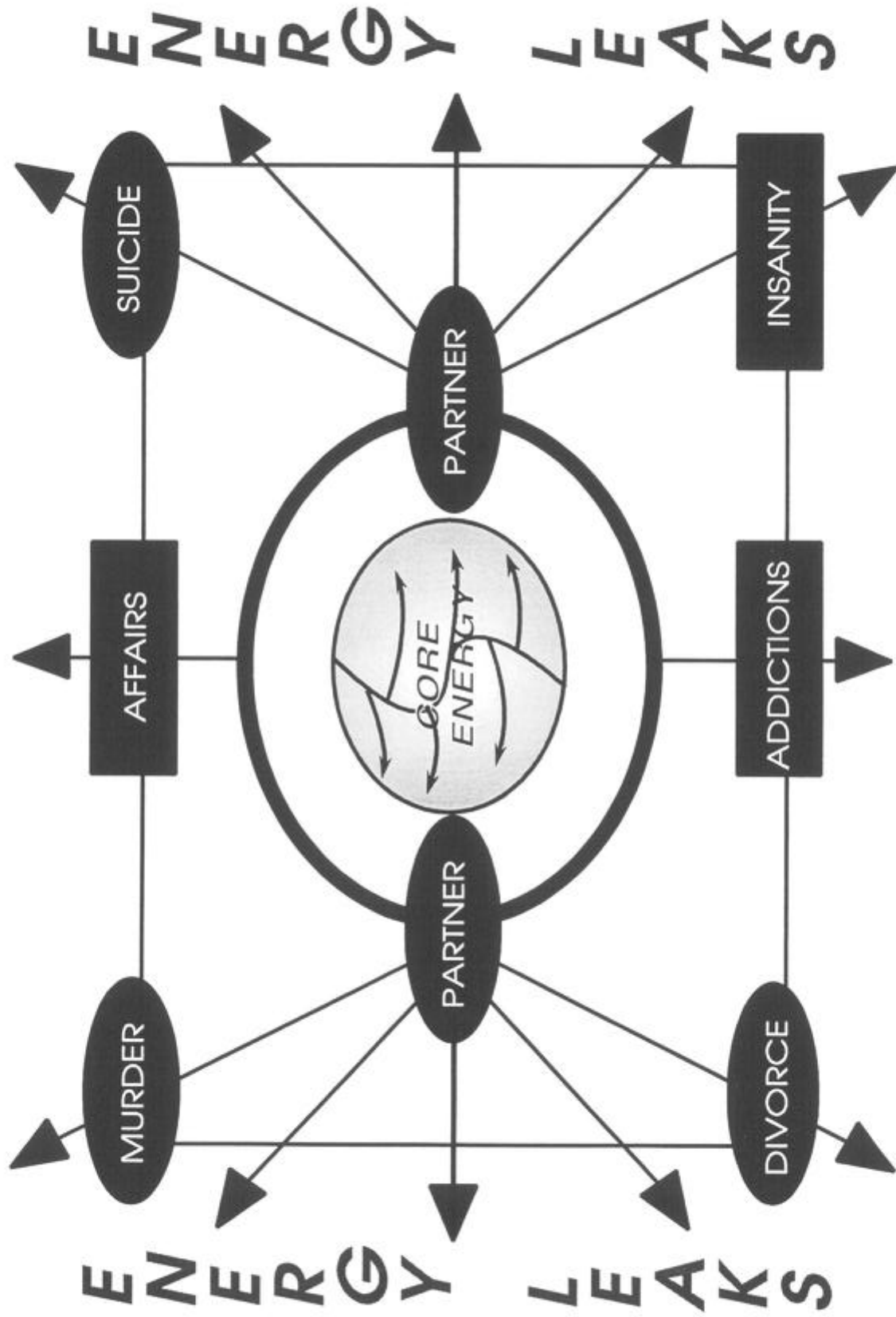
Character Structure	Avoider	Distancer	Compulsive Controller	Compulsive Competitor	Loner	Rebel
Core Relationship Issue	Partner's Demands	Partner's Pursuit/Smothering	Partner's Passivity/Vagueness	Partner's Manipulation	Partner's Invasiveness	Partner's Control/Conformity/Demands
Relationship Wound	Unwanted/Rejection	Smothered	Used/Dominated	Punished/Guilty	Ostracism/Disapproval	Over-Controlled/Distrusted
Relationship to Partner	Inconsistently Available & Cold, Detaches/Avoids	Neglectful, Distant, Withholds	Selectively Mirrors & Rigid/Dominating	Competes and Gives Limited Praise	Disapproves of Friends, Withdraws	Rebellious, Counter-Controlling
Developmental Issues	Attachment	Differentiation/Exploration	Identity	Competence	Social Concern	Intimacy
Relationship to Partner	Sometimes Warm, Inconsistently Available, Demanding	Overinvolved, Possessive, Smothers	Deflective/Invasive Vague	Puts Down Achievements, Withholds Praise	Over-Sollicitious Denies Neediness	Demands Conformity, Ignores Uniqueness
Relationship Wound	Abandonment	Neglect/Abandonment	Used, Ignored, Invisible	Competence Devalued	Used, Needs Ignored	Uniqueness Devalued
Core Relationship Issue	Partner's Detachment	Partner's Neglect	Partner's Dominance, Rigidity	Partner's Competitiveness	Partner's Exclusion/Withdrawal	Partner's Rebelliousness
Character Structure	Clinger	Pursuer	Compliant Diffuser	Manipulator	Caretaker	Conformist

Character Traits: Maximizer expands or exaggerates affect. [Over-dependent, grasping, diffuse, over-inclusive, other centered, impulsive, explosive, submissive]

### B. MAXIMIZER

**DIAGRAM 7:**

## The Invisible Divorce



An exit is any feeling you express behaviorally that avoids your partner and diminishes intimacy.

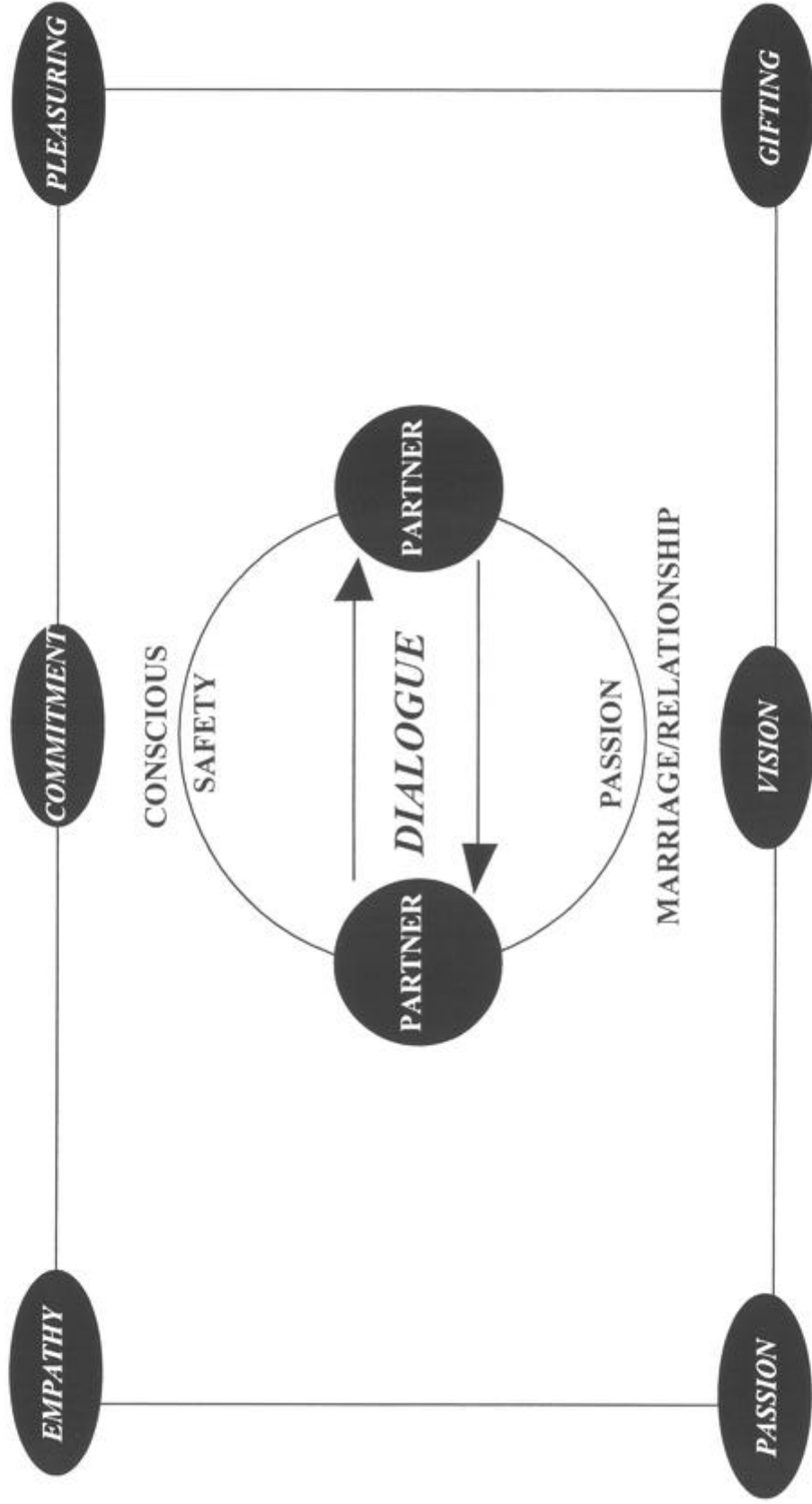
An exit is being used when there is conscious and/or unconscious avoidance of the partner.

In order for the energy to be used for growth, you must stop the behavior and express the feelings with words.

Instructions: Identify your exits and using the Couples Dialogue, share them with your partner. See pages 16-19 in the "Groundwork Section".

# DIAGRAM 8:

## The No - Exit Decision



- All Exits Are Closed.
- All Relationship Energy Is Kept In The Relationship And Intentionally Used For The Transformational Processes.



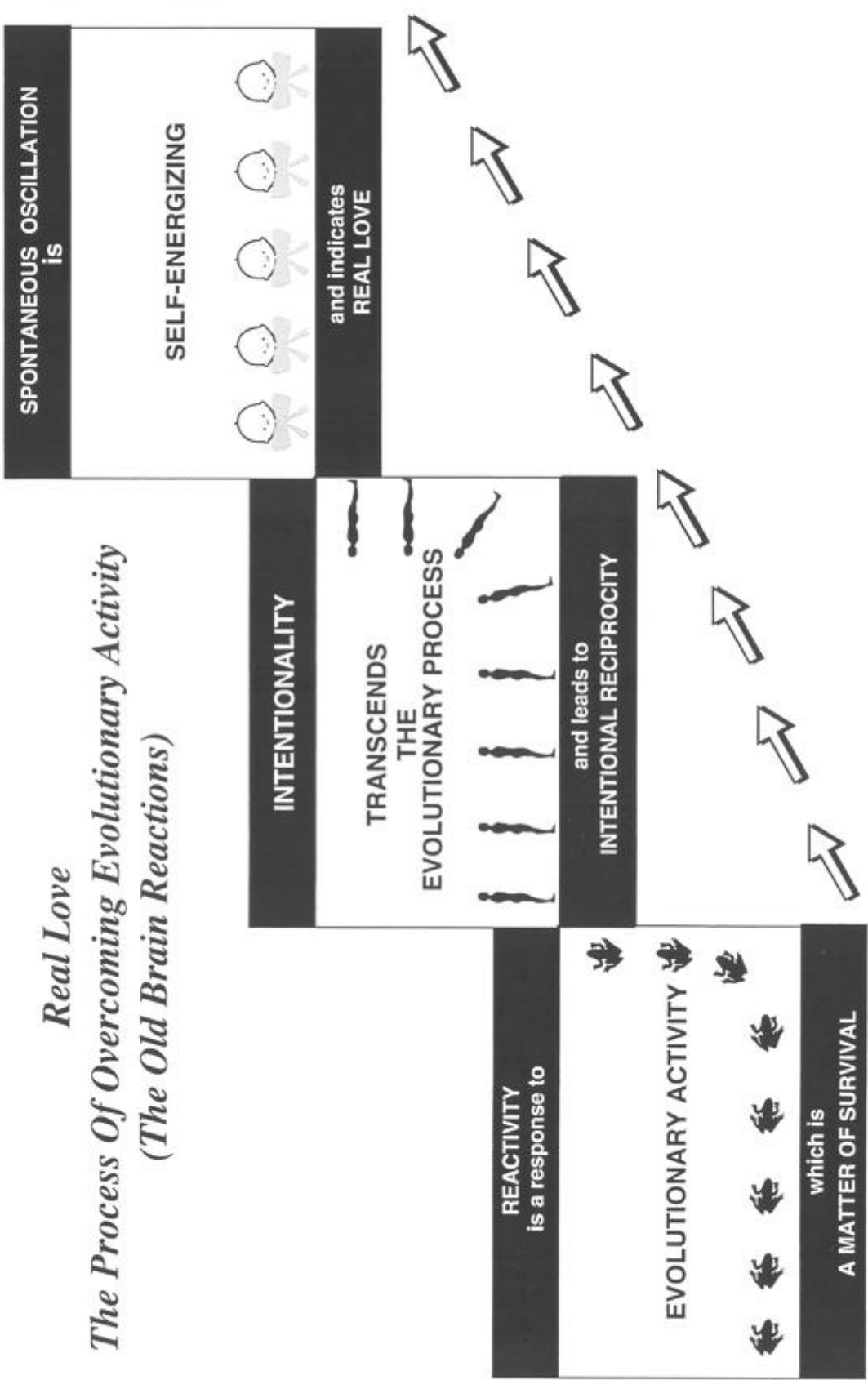
# DIAGRAM 9: The Transformation Process

Recommit	Re-Image	Re-Romanticize	Restructure Frustrations	Resolve Rage	Re-Vision
<p>to:</p> <p>Partner Relationship Change Process</p>	<p>Self Partner Love Relationship</p>	<p>Positive Flooding Caring Behaviors Surprises Fun</p>	<p>Behavior Change Requests Target Behaviors</p>	<p>Container- Transaction Container Days Container Exercise</p>	<p>Dream- Relationship Goals Strategies Love</p>

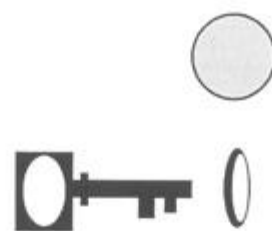
**DIAGRAM 10:**

**The Concept of Intentionality**

*Real Love*  
*The Process Of Overcoming Evolutionary Activity*  
*(The Old Brain Reactions)*



# JOURNAL







*"Love truth,  
but pardon error."  
- Voltaire*

A series of horizontal lines providing a ruled area for writing, consisting of 20 lines.































