



RATE & RELATE RELATIONSHIP CHECK-IN QUESTIONS

This exercise helps you slow the negative cycles, understand what's working, and have productive conversations about **becoming better partners**.

Use these relationship habits as inspiration—not as a rigid checklist. These habits are drawn from relationship research and reflect behaviors that support long-term connection, trust, and emotional safety. You can also add your own items based on what matters most in your relationship right now (for example: sharing chores, bedtime routines, self-care, emotional presence, or anything you're actively working on together).

1. RATE (Rate Yourself)

Choose one habit at a time (from the list or your own).

Rate yourself, not your partner, on a scale of 1–10.

- 1 = barely present or missing; negatively impacts the relationship
- 10 = consistently practiced; strongly supports the relationship

This is a personal check-in—not a scorecard.

2. RELATE (Reflect & Discuss)

Use your ratings to have a productive, non-defensive conversation. Consider questions like:

- What would one small improvement look like this week?
- When this habit slips, what happens to our connection?
- What thoughts or feelings come up as I reflect on this?

3. Choose one small habit to focus on this week.

Small wins create momentum.

Momentum creates change.

Change reshapes the relationship.

You can do Rate & Relate daily, weekly, or whenever it feels useful. This process helps partners stay intentional, track what matters, and talk about growth in a way that strengthens the relationship.

Why This Works: This exercise moves you out of blame, confusion, and reactivity... into clarity, teamwork, and emotional responsibility. What we pay attention to tends to improve, and what we measure often becomes easier to change.

RELATIONSHIP HABITS FOR SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS

COMMUNICATION

1. Summarize before responding
2. Take turns speaking and listening
3. Avoid interrupting, minimizing, or fixing
4. Check for understanding
5. Empathize with feelings
6. Consider your partner's view as valid as your own
7. Do not keep score of chores or sacrifices
8. Validate your partner's feelings
9. Express emotions, not blame or shame
10. Speak respectfully without sarcasm or contempt
11. Be clear rather than critical or passive-aggressive
12. Use "I feel..." statements instead of "you"
13. Name needs, rather than complaints
14. Ask directly; avoid mind-reading
15. Say what you want rather than what you don't
16. Be specific about what you request

REPAIR

1. Stop & self-regulate when emotions are high
2. Use breathing or grounding before replying
3. Take a time-out when things get heated
4. Keep arguments about one thing at a time
5. Assume the best
6. Trust your partner's intentions are good
7. Reassure each other during stress
8. Avoid catastrophizing or assuming negative intent
9. Focus on fondness
10. Share gratitude for efforts and strengths
11. Forgive quickly and release resentments
12. Cultivate psychological safety with positive regard
13. Empower the team with positive energy
14. Take responsibility for your part in conflict
15. Keep a 5:1 ratio of positives to negative
16. Focus on shared purpose and vision

CONNECTION

1. Share warm, affectionate salutations daily
2. Greet each other & reunite with presence
3. Hug for 20 seconds for bonding chemicals
4. Give undivided attention; put devices away
5. Say yes to bids for connection
6. Show enthusiasm for each other's interests
7. Laugh often and appreciate humor
8. Engage in pleasurable activities together
9. Nurture the friendship
10. Ask at least one open-ended question daily
11. Learn new things about your partner often
12. Practice small acts of kindness and generosity
13. Cherish your differences
14. Express gratitude and appreciation every day
15. Spontaneously touch, smile or make eye contact
16. Celebrate each other's successes