Couples Communication

The Workbook

Exercises, worksheets and agreements to complete together as you work through the 23-module Love Flix course.

Names: _____ & _____

Started on: ____ / ____ / _____

LOVEFLIX

How to use this workbook

This workbook goes with the Couples Communication course. Each worksheet matches a module. Print the whole thing or just the pages you need, and keep it somewhere you can both reach it. Write in it. Cross things out. Come back to it. A workbook that stays clean has not done its job.

A few ground rules for filling it in together: one of you writes while the other talks, then swap. What is written here stays between you. Nothing in it can be used in an argument later.

Contents

1. Our Pattern Map (Module 1)
2. Our Communication Styles (Module 2)
3. Attachment, Schemas and Triggers (Modules 3 to 5)
4. Empathic Listening practice log (Module 6)
5. The Four-Part Statement (Module 7)
6. Our Early-Warning System and Pause (Module 8)
7. Stop, Think, Go tally (Module 9)
8. Repair and Apology worksheet (Modules 10 and 11)
9. Our Fair Fighting Agreement (Module 13)
10. Boundaries worksheet (Module 14)
11. Needs Beneath Strategies (Module 15)
12. Decision worksheet (Module 16)
13. Appreciation Week (Module 17)
14. The Hard Conversations (Modules 18 and 19)
15. Digital agreements and hard seasons (Modules 20 and 21)
16. Trust conversation (Module 22)
17. Our Communication Plan (Module 23)

1. Our Pattern Map

Module 1. Each of you answers separately, then swap and read without commenting.

Partner A

The argument we keep having is:

What I usually do when it starts:

What I wish happened instead:

Partner B

The argument we keep having is:

What I usually do when it starts:

What I wish happened instead:

2. Our Communication Styles

Module 2. Under stress, which style do you each lean towards?

- ☐ Pursuer: wants to resolve it now, follows the conversation, anxious when things are left open
- ☐ Withdrawer: needs time to think, goes quiet or leaves when it heats up
- ☐ Fixer: jumps to solutions, uncomfortable sitting with a problem
- ☐ Peacekeeper: smooths over, agrees quickly, avoids conflict

Partner A: my style _____ I think my partner is _____

Partner B: my style _____ I think my partner is _____

When things get difficult, our loop usually looks like:

3. Attachment, Schemas and Triggers

Modules 3 to 5. Fill this in together. It feeds directly into your Communication Plan.

Partner A

My attachment style under stress (secure / anxious / avoidant / disorganised):

My two strongest schemas and where they came from:

My biggest triggers:

When I am triggered, what I do is:

What actually helps me is:

Partner B

My attachment style under stress:

My two strongest schemas and where they came from:

My biggest triggers:

When I am triggered, what I do is:

What actually helps me is:

4. Empathic Listening Practice Log

Module 6. The ten-minute listener: one speaks, one listens using only attend, reflect, name the feeling, "tell me more". Then swap. Record each round.

Round 1 Date: _____ / _____

Speaker: _____ Topic:

Did the speaker feel understood? What made the difference?

The blocker the listener most wanted to use (rehearsing / defending / fixing / matching / minimising):

Round 2 Date: _____ / _____

Speaker: _____ Topic:

Did the speaker feel understood? What made the difference?

The blocker the listener most wanted to use (rehearsing / defending / fixing / matching / minimising):

Round 3 Date: _____ / _____

Speaker: _____ Topic:

Did the speaker feel understood? What made the difference?

The blocker the listener most wanted to use (rehearsing / defending / fixing / matching / minimising):

Round 4 Date: ____ / ____

Speaker: _____ Topic:

Did the speaker feel understood? What made the difference?

The blocker the listener most wanted to use (rehearsing / defending / fixing / matching / minimising):

---

5. The Four-Part Statement

Module 7. Rewrite three real complaints. Read the rewritten version aloud; the listener only says what they heard.

Complaint 1

How I would normally say it:

When... (the specific moment)

I felt... (an emotion, not a judgement)

Because I need...

Would you be willing to...

Complaint 2

How I would normally say it:

When... (the specific moment)

I felt... (an emotion, not a judgement)

Because I need...

Would you be willing to...

Complaint 3

How I would normally say it:

When... (the specific moment)

I felt... (an emotion, not a judgement)

Because I need...

Would you be willing to...

6. Our Early-Warning System and Pause

Module 8. Agree this in calm. Whoever calls the pause, the other honours it; whoever calls it, restarts.

Partner A

My three physical signs of flooding:

Partner B

My three physical signs of flooding:

Our pause

Our pause signal (word, phrase or gesture):

Our standard return time: _____ minutes

What each of us will do during the pause to actually calm down:

7. Stop, Think, Go Tally

Module 9. Aim for ten each this week, on anything. Record three in detail.

Partner A tally: [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] Partner B tally: [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

Moment 1

What I would have said:

What I actually felt underneath:

What I said or did instead:

Moment 2

What I would have said:

What I actually felt underneath:

What I said or did instead:

Moment 3

What I would have said:

What I actually felt underneath:

What I said or did instead:

---

8. Repair and Apology

Modules 10 and 11.

Repair inventory

Partner A: two repair attempts from my partner I appreciated, and one I brushed off:

Partner B: two repair attempts from my partner I appreciated, and one I brushed off:

The unfinished apology (each partner)

What I did, specifically:

The impact it had on you:

I take responsibility for:

What will be different:

Is there anything else you need from me on this?

9. Our Fair Fighting Agreement

Module 13. Read aloud, edit until it sounds like you, add your own, then both sign. Review every three months.

We disagree because we are two different people sharing one life, not because something is wrong with us. We make this agreement so that when we disagree, we come out of it closer. We are on the same side, even when it does not feel like it.

Before a difficult conversation

- [ ] 1. We ask for it, and agree a time. No ambushes.
- [ ] 2. We choose the moment: not tired, hungry, drunk, rushing, or in front of others.
- [ ] 3. We deal with one thing at a time; other issues get written down for later.
- [ ] 4. We talk in person, never by text.

During

- [ ] 5. We start soft: "I feel" and a specific moment, not "you always".
- [ ] 6. We let each other finish. No interrupting, no phones.
- [ ] 7. We listen before answering: reflect back until the other says "yes, that's it".
- [ ] 8. We attack the problem, not the person. No name-calling, sarcasm, mocking or contempt. These are our red lines.
- [ ] 9. The past stays in the past. Nothing confided is used as ammunition.
- [ ] 10. We do not threaten the relationship in anger.
- [ ] 11. We stay honest: hurt is said as hurt, fear as fear.
- [ ] 12. We do not recruit friends, family or the children.

When it gets too heated

- [ ] 13. Either of us can use our pause signal: _____. The other respects it immediately.
- [ ] 14. A pause is not a walk-out. We say when we will be back (standard: _____ minutes) and the person who called it restarts.
- [ ] 15. During the pause we actually calm down. No rehearsing, no messaging.
- [ ] 16. We use Stop, Think, Go before speaking from anger.

After

- [ ] 17. We end with something: a decision, a next step, or "I love you and we will come back to this".

- [ ] 18. We repair within 24 hours. Whoever crossed a line owns it, without "but". The other accepts it.
- [ ] 19. No punishing afterwards: no silent treatment, no withholding, no score-keeping.
- [ ] 20. We name what we learned.

When we break it

We will. When one of us breaks a rule, the other can name it calmly by number, without it becoming a new argument. Breaking the agreement is not the failure; refusing to acknowledge it is.

Our own additions

What each of us most needs when we disagree

Signed

We will review this agreement on ____ / ____ / _____

Signed: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Signed: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

10. Boundaries Worksheet

Module 14. A boundary is about what you will do, not what your partner must do. Test: can you follow through without punishing them?

Partner A

Where I have been saying yes when I mean no:

I need...

To look after that, I will...

What would make it easier for my partner to support this:

Partner B

Where I have been saying yes when I mean no:

I need...

To look after that, I will...

What would make it easier for my partner to support this:

11. Needs Beneath Strategies

Module 15. Pick a recurring disagreement. Ask "what would that give me?" three times.

Partner A

My usual position (the strategy):

What would that give me? (1)

And what would that give me? (2)

And that? (3) = the need:

Partner B

My usual position (the strategy):

What would that give me? (1)

And what would that give me? (2)

And that? (3) = the need:

Five ways both needs could be met at once

The one we will try this week:

12. Decision Worksheet

Module 16. For decisions that are ours, and especially the irreversible ones.

The question, in one sentence:

Is it reversible? Yes / No Who has more at stake?

Partner A wants... because (needs and fears):

Partner B wants... because (needs and fears):

What we agree on:

Options (at least five, no judging):

For the option we are leaning to: who gains what, who loses what, can they live with it?

Decided: For how long: Review date:

13. Appreciation Week

Module 17. Each day, one specific appreciation each: what they did, what it meant to you, what it says about them. Also note one bid you turned towards and one you missed.

Mon

A appreciated:

B appreciated:

Bid turned towards / bid missed:

Tue

A appreciated:

B appreciated:

Bid turned towards / bid missed:

Wed

A appreciated:

B appreciated:

Bid turned towards / bid missed:

Thu

A appreciated:

B appreciated:

Bid turned towards / bid missed:

Fri

A appreciated:

B appreciated:

Bid turned towards / bid missed:

Sat

A appreciated:

B appreciated:

Bid turned towards / bid missed:

Sun

A appreciated:

B appreciated:

Bid turned towards / bid missed:

14. The Hard Conversations

Modules 18 and 19. Prepare separately, then talk using the structured format.

Intimacy

When do I feel most desired / most close?

Something I have wanted to ask for, or stop, and have not said:

One small thing I would like more of this week:

Money

What money was like in my house growing up:

What money in the bank feels like / what spending feels like:

Family

What I need from you when we are with my family:

Boundaries we want as a couple, and how we hold them together:

15. Digital Agreements and Hard Seasons

Modules 20 and 21.

Our digital agreements

- [ ] Phone-free zones: _____
- [ ] Our "look up" signal: _____
- [ ] No difficult conversations by text. Ever.
- [ ] Reasonable reply time in the working day: _____
- [ ] Privacy arrangement (same for both): _____
- [ ] Screens down from: _____ pm

Our hard-season agreement

The season, and roughly how long:

The one ritual we will protect no matter what:

What we are each letting go of for now:

How each of us signals "I am at my limit today":

Who else we can lean on:

16. The Trust Conversation

Module 22. May take several sittings. The hurt partner speaks first.

What I need in order to feel safe, as concretely as possible:

What I can commit to:

What I honestly cannot commit to:

We will review this on ____ / ____ / _____

17. Our Communication Plan

Module 23. One page. Write it together. Both sign it. Put it where you will both see it. Revisit in three months.

Our roots

A: attachment style, main schemas, what helps when triggered:

B: attachment style, main schemas, what helps when triggered:

Our loop

Our early warnings

Our pause

Signal: Return time:

Our Fair Fighting Agreement

Kept with this plan (worksheet 9).

Our repair moves

Our weekly check-in

Day and time:

What went well between us this week? What was hard? Is there anything you need from me? What are we looking forward to?

Our appreciation habit

Signed

Signed: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Signed: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____
