



The A.R.E. Questionnaire

Hold Me Tight

Read each statement and choose *True* or *False*. To score the questionnaire, give one point for each *true* answer. You can complete this questionnaire and reflect on your relationship on your own; or you and a partner can each complete it and then discuss your answers together in the way described after the questionnaire.

From your viewpoint, is your partner accessible to you?

1. I can get my partner's attention easily.
2. My partner is easy to connect with emotionally.
3. My partner shows me that I come first with him/her.
4. I am not feeling lonely or shut out in this relationship.
5. I can share my feelings with my partner. He/she will listen.

From your viewpoint, is your partner responsive to you?

1. If I need connection and comfort, he/she will be there for me.
2. My partner responds to signals that I need him/her to come close.
3. I find I can lean on my partner when I am anxious or unsure.
4. Even when we fight or disagree, I know that I am important to my partner, and we will find a way to come together.
5. If I need reassurance about how important I am to my partner, I can get it.

Are you positively emotionally engaged with each other?

1. I feel very comfortable being close to and trusting my partner.
2. I can confide in my partner about almost anything.
3. I feel confident, even when we are apart, that we are connected to each other.
4. I know that my partner cares about my joys, hurts, and fears.
5. I feel safe enough to take emotional risks with my partner.

SCORE

Add up your *true* answers. Scoring 7 or above indicates that you and your partner are well on your way to a secure bond. If you score below 7, this is a time to focus on building conversations that strengthen the bond with your lover.

Understanding the bond between you and your partner, and sharing how you see it, is the first step to being able to create the connection you both want and need. Does your partner's perception of how accessible, responsive, and engaged you are fit with your view of yourself and how safe your relationship is? Try to remember that your partner is talking about how safe and connected he or she feels right now in your relationship, not about whether you are a perfect or imperfect partner. You can take turns talking about the question/answer that seemed most positive and important for you. It is best to keep this to five minutes each.

Now, if you feel comfortable, try to explore the question/answer that seemed to bring up the most difficult emotions for you. Try to do this in the spirit of helping your partner tune in to your feelings . He/she will not be able to do this if you get caught up in being negative, so try to avoid criticism or blame. Again, it is best to keep this talk to five minutes each.