



## Understanding Your Negative Cycle

Couples get caught in *negative cycles* of interaction. A *negative cycle* is a repeating pattern of negative behaviors, thoughts, and feelings that causes distress. You react to your partner's reactions and your partner reacts to your reactions. Understanding and untangling your *negative cycles* will stop the cycle. The exercise below will help you with this process.

When my partner and I are not getting along:

I often react by

My partner often reacts to me by

When my partner reacts this way, I often feel...

When I feel this way I, see myself as...

When I feel this way I long for or need...

When I react the way I do, I guess that my partner feels...

Describe your repeating negative cycle (include how you and your partner trigger each other's feelings, thoughts, and behaviors)...