



7 ways to emotionally connect with your partner

1. When you realize you're being reactive, say "I'm being reactive."

How simple this sounds, and yet how challenging to put into practice — mostly because of the shame we're on the edge of fully feeling as we become aware of our reactivity.

And once you've stated that you're being reactive, STOP, no matter how tempted you might be to continue your reactivity. Soften your belly, breathe more deeply, and wait until you're ready to say what you're feeling and nothing more.

2. Learn to express your remorse from your heart.

Don't settle for shallow or emotionally flat expressions. If you're not sorry, don't say you are — but if you've done something that's hurt another and you feel bad about this, and the words "I'm sorry" get stuck in your throat, say that you're having hard time saying it. Such a confession will usually soften you enough to allow your remorse a fitting voice.

3. If you're being defensive and know it, don't hesitate to say so.

Be your own whistleblower. Don't wait for the other to pressure you into owning up to your defensiveness. And don't slip into being defensive about being defensive!

4. Don't allow emotional disconnection to last any longer than necessary.

When you lose touch with the other, reestablish it as soon as possible. If you're staying emotionally disconnected to punish the other, confess that as

soon as possible, regardless of how uncomfortable that may be.

5. Never threaten to leave the relationship in order to get your own way or to make your partner beg you to stay.

If you feel like being manipulative, say so, rather than acting it out. Threats are negative promises, and are usually mood-dependent. If you really want to leave a relationship, such wanting will remain present no matter how good, bad, or indifferent you feel.

6. Instead of using sex to build connection, let sex be a fully embodied expression of already-present connection.

When you want to have sex when you are not very connected to the other, turn your attention to your emotional state and do what it takes to bring that into your heart.

7. Don't forget that the deeper you dive, the less you'll mind upsetting waves.

View your relationship as an ever-evolving adventure, potentially deepened by all that happens, however unpleasant. You may hurt more as you mature, but you'll mind less.