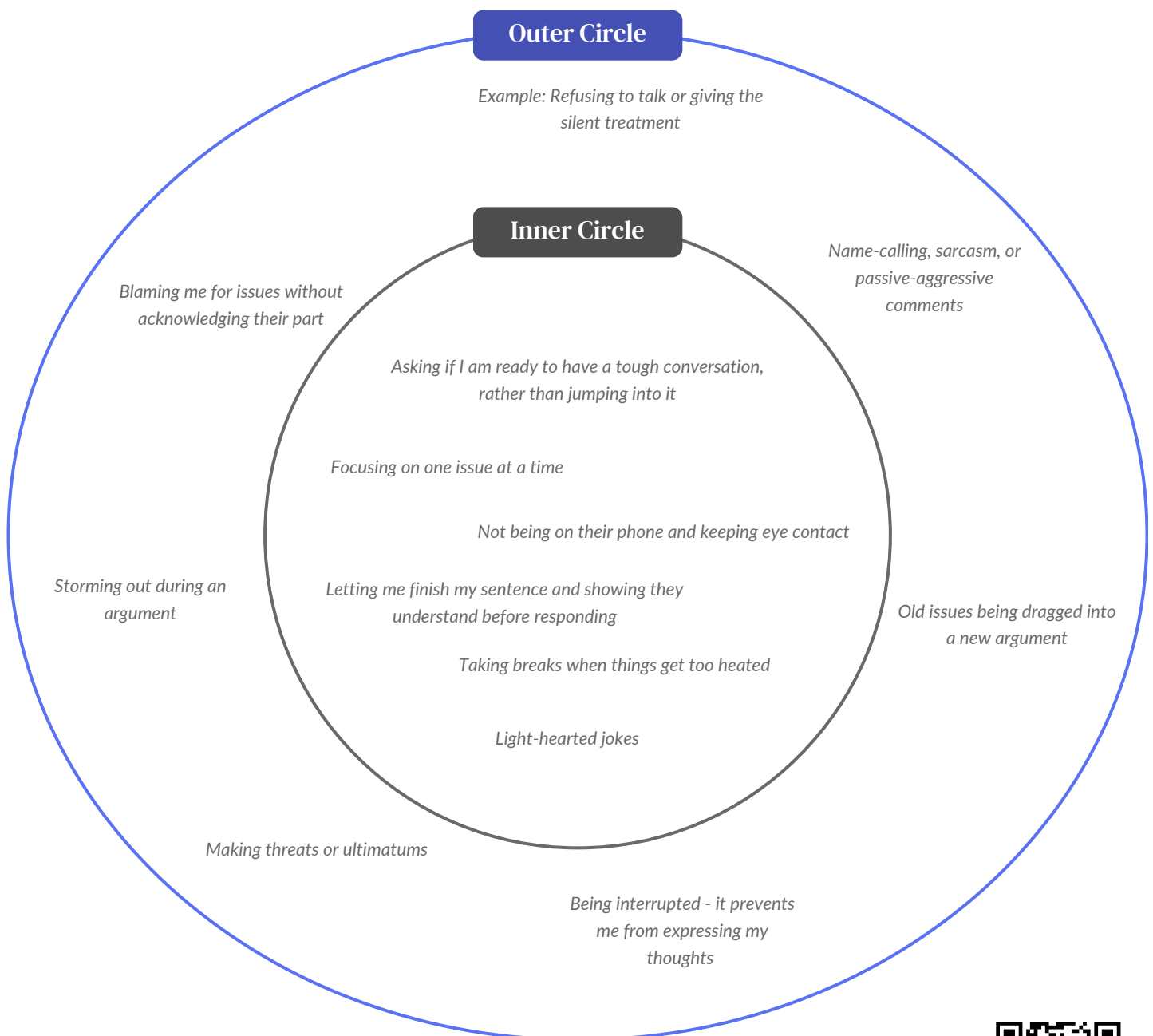


How to Set Healthy Boundaries Around Arguing

This worksheet is designed to help you understand and set healthy boundaries to manage arguments in your relationships. **By identifying your needs and limits, you can communicate more effectively, protect your well-being, and build stronger, healthier relationships.** Use this worksheet to explore your boundaries and develop strategies for maintaining them.

PART 1: Visualize Your Boundaries

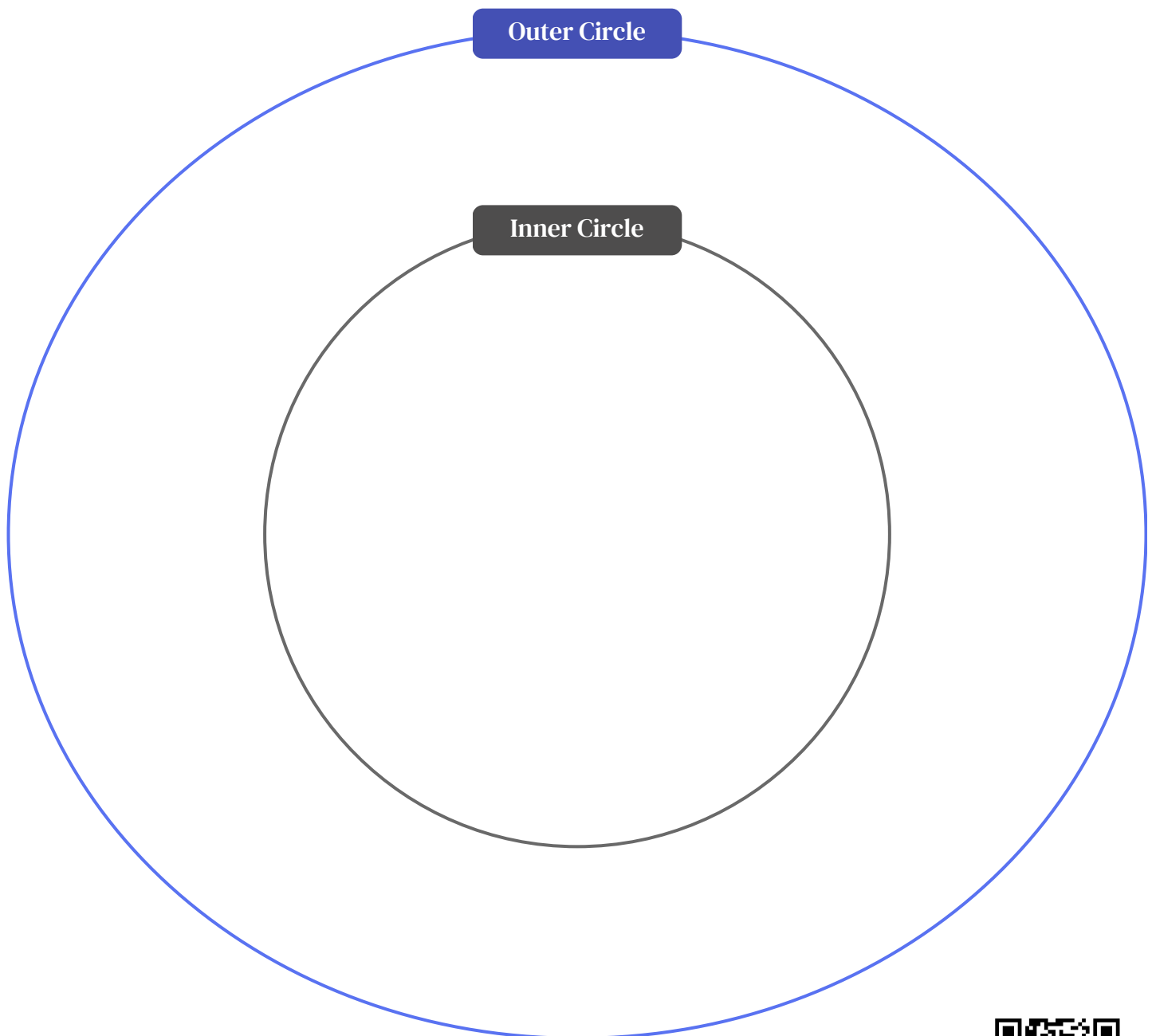
Inside the circle, write everything that makes you feel safe and respected during a disagreement. On the outside of the circle, down anything that makes you feel stressed, disrespected, or unsafe during a disagreement. These are behaviors or situations that push your boundaries and need further attention.



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When filling out your inner and outer circle, here are some questions to consider:

- What actions or behaviors from my partner help me feel calm and respected during arguments?
- What behaviors or actions from my partner currently cause me stress during arguments?
- What specific moments in our arguments make me feel supported and valued?
- What about our arguments leaves me feeling drained and exhausted?
- What environments or settings help me feel more at ease during difficult conversations?
- What environments or settings make me feel more stressed or unsafe during arguments?



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PART 2: How to Establish Your Communication Boundaries

Here are some basic rules and examples for communicating your boundaries effectively.

Use Confident Body Language

Stand or sit up straight, maintain eye contact, and use firm but calm gestures to convey confidence and assertiveness.

Be Clear & Set Consequences

Be specific about what behavior you want to change and clearly state what will happen if your boundary is not respected.

Keep Your Tone Calm and Respectful:

Speak calmly and assertively, avoiding raised voices or aggressive tones to maintain a respectful atmosphere.

Practice Active Listening:

Listen to the other person's response without interrupting and acknowledge their perspective while staying firm on your boundary.

Verbal Boundaries

- "I need you to speak to me in a calm, respectful tone."
- "I need you to avoid using sarcasm."
- "I need you to focus on the issue at hand and not make personal attacks."
- "I need you to clearly and honestly communicate without being evasive."

Emotional Boundaries

- "I want to feel that my feelings are acknowledged and validated."
- "I want you to apologize if you hurt my feelings during the argument."
- "I need you to avoid using my vulnerabilities against me."
- "I want to take breaks when I start feeling overly emotional."

Time Boundaries

- "I want to take a 10-minute break if it gets too heated."
- "I want to agree on a specific time to discuss conflicts, so I can mentally prepare."
- "I want to limit discussions to 30 minutes."
- "I need to postpone arguments if they start late at night, to ensure we both get enough sleep."



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PART 3: Develop Strategies for Maintaining Boundaries (Example Page)

Use the following prompts to create a plan for reinforcing your boundaries consistently and effectively.

Situation:

Example: Whenever we argue, Steve often gets really loud and brings up stuff from the past, which makes me feel like I'm being attacked and overwhelmed.

Boundary I will set:

I need us to keep our voices down and stick to the current issue we're discussing.

Any potential challenges:

Steve might think I'm trying to avoid the argument or might ignore my request and keep arguing.

How I will handle these challenges:

If Steve starts raising his voice, I'll calmly say, "Remember, we agreed to keep our voices down. I need us to talk calmly so I can stay engaged in the conversation." If Steve keeps ignoring my request and gets even louder, I'll say, "I need a 10-minute break to calm down, and then we can continue." I'll go to another room or step outside to give myself time to relax. After we've both calmed down, I'll check in with him and say, "I noticed we had some trouble sticking to our agreed boundaries. Can we talk about how to improve this for next time?"



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Situation:

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Any potential challenges:

How I will handle these challenges:

