

## The Relationship Inventory

Successful relationships involve a significant amount of give and take. A problem arises when one partner starts to believe that he is doing more than receiving in return. Rather than bring it up directly into the open where it can be dealt with, couples usually allow their feelings to smolder until frustration builds into resentment. At that point, partners become critical and accusatory or shut down and then pull away from their mate.

The best way to avoid having your intimate relationship deteriorate into bickering and hostility is to become clear with each other about what you're giving and receiving from each other. You can accomplish this by taking a relationship inventory.

Using the chart below, write down what you can rely on your partner for, what you can't rely on your partner for, what your partner can rely on you for and what your partner can't rely on you for in various areas important to a relationship.

For example, in the emotional support category, you might fill out, "What I can rely on my partner for is to listen and help me figure out a solution to my problems. What I can't rely on my partner for is to emotionally understand what I am going through and be compassionate. What my partner can count on me for is to listen and sympathize. What my partner can't count on me for is to act sympathetically if she pouts, blames, acts sullen or becomes hostile."

After you have completed the relationship inventory, give a blank inventory chart to your partner to complete, and then exchange results. Use this as a communication tool. Talk with each other about whether each other's responses are accurate to the other, are acceptable to each other and what changes each of you would like the other to make in order to make your relationship happier.

### Relationship Inventory

	What I can rely on my partner for	What I can't rely on my partner for	What my partner can rely on me for	What my partner can't rely on me for
Emotional support				
Financial support				
Cooperation				
Attitude				

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