



**FOR COUPLES:**

**The Pattern You Already Know:  
A Reflective Assessment  
for the Year Ahead**

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## A couples reality-check tool

This is not about fixing your partner.

It's not about winning an argument.

It's about identifying the pattern you both already recognize – even if you avoid naming it.

Each partner completes this individually first. Do not compare answers until instructed.

### PART 1: Name the Pattern

No backstory. No explanations. Just name it.

1. What is the same issue you and your partner keep coming back to? (Even when the argument looks different.)

2. Finish the sentence honestly: “We always end up arguing about \_\_\_\_\_.”

3. What do you already know this fight is really about?

The pattern we keep repeating is:

### PART 2: How the Pattern Plays Out

Answer for yourself only.

When this pattern shows up, I usually:   Get defensive

- ☐ Shut down
- ☐ Get controlling
- ☐ Get emotional / escalate
- ☐ Avoid the conversation
- ☐ Blame my partner
- ☐ Try to “win” the argument

What I do that keeps the pattern going:

### PART 3: What I Blame My Partner For

Be honest. This matters. I blame my partner for:

Now answer this:  
How do I do something similar – even if it looks different?

#### **PART 4: What I Avoid Owning**

This is the hard part.  
I avoid taking responsibility for:

- ☐ My tone
- ☐ My reactions
- ☐ My defensiveness
- ☐ My withdrawal
- ☐ My control
- ☐ My lack of follow-through
- ☐ My unwillingness to change

The part I don't want to look at is:

#### **PART 5: Body Check (No Overthinking)**

Notice what happens in your body during conflict.  
When this pattern shows up, my body:

- ☐ Tenses
- ☐ Shuts down
- ☐ Gets angry
- ☐ Speeds up
- ☐ Goes numb

Where I feel it:  
(If your body reacts, the pattern is real.)

#### **PART 6: Accountability (Individual)**

Finish these sentences honestly.  
The part of this pattern that belongs to me is:

I have avoided dealing with it by:

If I don't change my part, this pattern will stay the same.

- ☐ True
- ☐ Also true

## **PART 7: Couple Reflection (Do Together)**

Discuss only after both have completed the tool.

1. What do we agree the pattern is – without blaming?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How do we both contribute to keeping it alive?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What happens to connection, safety, or trust when this pattern shows up?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What would change if each of us worked on our part, not the other person?

The pattern we are willing to work on is: Important  
This tool does not fix the pattern. It exposes it.

Patterns don't change through insight alone – they change through accountability and consistent work.

Bring this into session.