

**What's Wrong With My Partner/ Our Relationship? And What Happens When I Dwell On It?**  
(From ACT With Love, Ch 1)

The purpose of this worksheet is to get clear about the most common judgments and criticisms you make about your partner – and the effect it has on you and your relationship when you get caught up in them, dwell on them, buy into them. Over the next few days, take note of all the thoughts you have about what is wrong with your relationship or your partner. Each day, take a few minutes to jot some of these thoughts down, and reflect on what happens to your mood, your attitude, and your relationship when you get all caught up in these thoughts?

Thoughts about what's wrong with my partner/ our relationship	How does my mood change when I get caught up in/ dwell on these thoughts?	When I buy into or dwell on these thoughts, what effect does it have on my relationship?

**Identify the DRAIN In Your Relationship** (From ACT With Love, Ch 2)

**D** – Disconnection, **R** – Reactivity, **A** – Avoidance, **I** – Inside your mind, **N** – Neglecting values

**Disconnection:** How do I disconnect from my partner? (E.g. do I get bored, irritable, stop listening? Do I go cold and distant? Do I close off/shut down? Am I distracted rather than present?)

How does my partner disconnect from me?

**Reactivity:** How do I react impulsively or automatically, without stopping to consider what I am doing? (E.g. do I yell, snap, swear, storm off, say hurtful things, criticize, blame, accuse, sneer, jeer?)

How does my partner react impulsively or automatically?

**Avoidance:** How do I try to avoid or get rid of my painful feelings that are related to the issues in this relationship? (E.g. do I use drugs, alcohol, food, cigarettes? Do I withdraw or stay away from my partner? Do I try to distract myself with TV, computers, books, going out? Do I avoid talking to my partner about the issue?)

How does my partner seem to avoid or get rid of his painful feelings?

**Inside Your Mind:** How do I get trapped inside my mind? (E.g. do I worry about the future, dwell on the past, relive old hurts, rehash old arguments, stew over everything that's wrong with my partner? Do I get caught up in judgment, blame, criticism? Do I get caught up in thoughts of rejection, betrayal, abandonment, or being controlled?)

How does my partner seem to get trapped inside his mind?

**Neglecting Values:** What core values do I neglect, forget about, or act inconsistently with, when I am disconnected, reactive, avoidant, or inside my mind? (E.g. do I lose touch with values such as being loving, kind, caring, generous, compassionate, supportive, fun-loving, easygoing, sensual, affectionate?)

What core values does my partner seem to neglect, forget about, or act inconsistently with?

## **If you're unwilling to work at your relationship**

If you're not willing to work on your relationship, then you're effectively choosing to prolong your difficulties or make them worse. If this is where you're at right now, then take a few days to keep a daily record. At the end of each day, fill in the chart.

Notice the effect of "giving up" on your health and vitality.

Notice what this choice to "give up" is costing you—in terms of emotional pain, wasted time, wasted money, wasted energy, and further damage to your relationship.

Notice any actions you take that seem to improve your relationship or enhance your own well-being and vitality.