15 Questions to Increase Emotional Intimacy:

Journal for Self Discovery

By: Marci Payne, MA, LPC
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Relationship Coach
What is Emotional Intimacy?

Emotional intimacy describes a way of relating to another person that is personal, open, and cooperative. If you are emotionally intimate, you let someone know you well. And you are able to talk about a variety of topics with your significant other.

The opposite of being emotionally intimate is to avoid or keep to yourself. While I don't advise sharing every thought and feeling you have without a filter, avoiding important topics is one way people keep their distance. Having different interests or goals is not being emotionally different unless you use them to avoid your significant other.

Many people use avoidance to keep the peace even if it's superficial peace. **What if you could find a way to connect without feeling responsible for your partner's feelings and behavior?** Use this journal to brush up on your ability to connect by seeing yourself as emotionally separate. Meaning you create intimacy by allowing you and your partner to be responsible for your own happiness and actions.

How to Use This Journal:

Men, women, and couples who consult with me are seeking for someone else to tell them or their spouse how to be a better spouse. And most therapist’s will start off by having each person write down what they need more from the other person. While this is a tempting place to start, it doesn't help you **become more aware of how you are getting in the way of having the relationship that you want with your significant other.**

While you may be tempted to ask your spouse the questions in this journal, I encourage you to trust yourself. Imagine you are recording yourself, so you can become the best observer of yourself that you can be. Try not to over-focus on the feedback others give you. Instead really look at yourself in the mirror. You will find both positives and negatives if you are truly honest with yourself.

Use the questions in this journal to reflect on what it's like to be in a relationship with you. Self-awareness is the first step to making any kind of lasting change. I have never seen anyone stick to changes when someone else tells them to do it. Use this journal as a way to get clearer on how you currently connect with your loved one.

Self- reflection and gaining accurate awareness can be very calming. Once you increase your self-awareness about your part in emotional distance, it's time to shift from thinking to action. And I would love the opportunity to coach you on your journey to turning relationship challenges into opportunities for growth and intimacy.

Lastly, I urge you to not use this as a tool for convincing your spouse what he/she is doing wrong. **It is a tool for identifying what you need to do or say, so you can learn to be more intimate with your loved one.**
1. What is the best part of being in a relationship with you?
2. What is the hardest part about being in relationship with you?
3. Is it hard or easy to get to know you? Is it hard or easy to get close to you? Explain.
4. When is it easiest for you to be open with your significant other?
5. What thoughts or feelings get in the way of you opening up?
6. In your relationship, who initiates/does most of the talking? What are you really good at initiating? (talk, touch, time, etc)
7. What percentage of your thoughts and feelings do you tell your significant other? Explain whether it's changed over time.
8. What issues do you avoid or not talk about with your significant other?
9. In your relationship, are you the pursuer or the distancer? When you pursue (or distance), what does your partner do?
10. Who do you talk to about your relationship? Does the person stay neutral or take sides?
11. Is there anyone that knows you better than your significant other? Explain.
12. Is your spouse your best friend, lover, or both? Explain.
13. In summary, what did you learn about yourself during this time of self-reflection. In other words, what is it like to be in a relationship with you (the upside and downside)?
14. How can you turn this awareness into new ways of relating to your loved one? Explain how you will start to shift your part in the relationship patterns you have co-created.
15. Write your own definition of emotional intimacy:
About the Author:

Marci Payne is a married, mother of two children living in the Kansas City, Missouri area. She is also a Licensed Professional Counselor and Relationship Coach. She coaches men, women, and couples to turn life's challenges into opportunities for growth and intimacy.

Marci received her Masters in Clinical Psychology in 1997, and has been working as a counselor/coach since 1998. She also participates in post-graduate training in Bowen Family Systems Theory.

Marci writes for Liberating Choices where she helps people find the choices they never knew they had. She is working on adding new books and relationship guides. To receive the latest additions, subscribe to her newsletter.

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