

## YOU, ME, US

(A COUPLE COMMUNICATION MEASURE)

This instrument is a measurement of some basic interactions that allows a couple to clarify aspects of behaviour that may be helping or hindering open communication between them.

It allows for an opening up of issues between the couple and can be used on a number of occasions so that the couple has some measure of how things might be changing for them over a period of time, or within a given circumstance.

Mark each of the following statements with a tick to indicate your understanding or experience of your partner.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. You are a good listener.				
2. You can be very self-contained so that I feel shut out.				
3. My partner (that's you!) sometimes talks too much.				
4. I would like you to talk more.				
5. I am always able to talk about my feelings with you.				
6. You sometimes interrupt me.				
7. You sometimes make jokes at my expense.				
8. I sometimes keep things from you that might annoy or worry you.				
9. You always seem to be able to tell how I am feeling.				
10. Sometimes we can speak without saying anything.				
11. I wish you would learn the art of conversation.				
12. You always know what to say to cheer me up or make me feel better.				

Take it in turns to discuss each of the statements and the assessment you have made. Are there ways in which your communication can be improved? What changes would you like to make?

## **TELLING IT LIKE IT IS....**

This instrument allows a couple to clarify and share the feelings brought about by a partner's behaviour . The couple should complete the form individually and then share this with each other, by themselves or with a facilitator if they prefer.

*There may be issues or situations between you that provoke strong feelings. Sometimes, these feelings have been around for a long time, sometimes they are very recent and brought about by a particular event. They may be happy feelings or ones that make you uneasy or sad.*

*Read through each of the sentences below, complete them and then discuss those you wish with your partner. Take it in turns to listen to each other without interrupting.*

**When you go out with your friends I feel.....**

**When you spend time with your family I feel.....**

**When you work long hours I feel.....**

**When we're having a row I feel.....**

**When you are angry or upset with me I feel.....**

**When you say "I love you" I feel.....**

**When I want to tell you that I love you I feel.....**

**When we talk about the future I feel.....**

**I find it hard to talk to you when I am feeling.....**

**I find it hard to tell you how I felt when.....**

Maybe some of these bring to mind other issues not listed but that you'd like to discuss. Plan how you will go about this.

## **IT'S NOT WHAT YOU SAY.....**

This instrument helps the couple to identify some of the ways they express their feelings without words and to enhance their understanding of these. They can work on this by themselves or with a facilitator.

*How do you know what your partner is feeling? Do you sometimes guess, and how accurate are you with these guesses? Your list will include both verbal and non-verbal signs, and you can draw symbols rather than write words if you prefer.*

*When you have completed the list, share your thoughts with your partner. Be prepared to be surprised by some of the interpretations of your behaviour! Spend a few minutes thinking about how you can make your feelings clearer and then share this with your partner.*

**How do I know when you are feeling:**

**Affectionate?**

**Angry?**

**Happy?**

**Embarrassed?**

**Relaxed?**

**Worried?**

**Excited?**

**Tired?**

**Guilty?**

**Sad?**

## A PROBLEM SHARED.....

This is an instrument that allows each partner to explore how problems are managed by the other. The process is that each completes the questionnaire and then shares the results with their partner, and/or with a facilitator.

*To whom do you turn when you need help or advice? Some problem areas which occur at some point in most people's lives are listed below. It may be that you prefer to sort out some of these troubling events on your own – if so, just note "by myself" by those. For the others, write in the names of the people you turn to.*

*When you have finished, share your lists. Which problems are relatively easy to talk about to your partner? Which are more difficult?*

	<b>By myself</b>	<b>Someone else</b>
Problems with my family.		
Problems with my partner's family		
Financial problems		
Emotional problems		
Health problems		
Problems with friends		
Problems with children		
Problems with my partner		
Home maintenance/house-keeping problems		
Any others?		

*It may be that one of you has put "partner" as the person with they talk over most problems – and the other not. Talk about how that feels for you.*