

### Part I - What's normal in relationships anyway?

How many of these common complaints describe the problems you face in your relationship?

| Relationship issue or complaint  | Tick (yes) |
|--|------------|
| We are becoming emotionally distant  |            |
| We are experiencing the "spill-over" of other stresses   |            |
| We keep getting stuck on one or more issues  |            |
| Our relationship is becoming passionless-the 'fire' is going out   |            |
| There are problems in our sex life   |            |
| When disagreements arise, unpleasant fights occur  |            |
| Differences are emerging between us in our basic values and goals, or in desired lifestyle   |            |
| Very difficult events (e.g. violence, drugs, an affair) have occurred within our relationship and the relationship is not dealing with this well |            |
| We are not working very well as a team right now   |            |
| We are having trouble handling issues of finances  |            |

Nearly everyone ticks at least one, most tick at least a few. ALL relationships have problems. It's part of being human.

### Part II - Is it me, you or us?

Below is a list of common goals that people have for their relationships. How easy or hard would it be for you to work towards these goals?

| Hopes for your relationship                              | Easy | Not sure | Hard |
|--|------|----------|------|
| I would like us to talk to each other more               |      |          |      |
| I would like to receive more appreciation for what I do  |      |          |      |
| I would like it if our lives were less chaotic           |      |          |      |
| I would like our lives to be less stressful              |      |          |      |
| I would like us to have more fun than we do              |      |          |      |
| I would like us to have more of a social life            |      |          |      |
| I would like us to talk over a major upcoming decision   |      |          |      |
| I would like my partner to listen to me when I am upset  |      |          |      |
| I would like to feel more supported in this relationship |      |          |      |
| I would like my partner to be more affectionate          |      |          |      |

### Part III - Is it me, you or us? Or is it the chronic illness?

Imagine tonight, after you both go to sleep, overnight a miracle takes place. When you wake up the chronic illness is removed from your life. You are not only cured but the illness has disappeared completely from your lives and you don't even remember having it. It's just gone.

Now imagine that you want to work on the issues in your relationship. How easy or hard would it be for you? Leave blank any item that does not represent an issue for you.

| Hopes for your relationship                              | Easy | Not sure | Hard |
|--|------|----------|------|
| I would like us to talk to each other more               |      |          |      |
| I would like to receive more appreciation for what I do  |      |          |      |
| I would like it if our lives were less chaotic           |      |          |      |
| I would like our lives to be less stressful              |      |          |      |
| I would like us to have more fun than we do              |      |          |      |
| I would like us to have more of a social life            |      |          |      |
| I would like us to talk over a major upcoming decision   |      |          |      |
| I would like my partner to listen to me when I am upset  |      |          |      |
| I would like to feel more supported in this relationship |      |          |      |
| I would like my partner to be more affectionate          |      |          |      |

### Where to from here?

Even if you knew that chronic illness was affecting your ability to work on relationship issues, how is chronic illness making it easier or harder for you?

That's how Reasonable Hope can help. It doesn't say 'give up', it says 'check your expectations against your reality'.

For further information and support:

### Contact us

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Adapted from the work of John Gottman.

