

DEMOM DIALOGUE EXERCISE

When _____, I do not feel safely connected to you. (The clue starts with feeling disconnection) e.g. when I start talking and you seem like you would rather watch TV, when we fight about parenting, when we don't speak for days.

I tend to _____. I move this way in our dance to try to cope with difficult feelings and find a way to change our dance. Choose an action word, a verb, e.g. complain, nag, zone out, ignore you, run, move away, etc.

I do it in the hope that _____. State the hope that pulls you into the dance, e.g. we will avoid a conflict or I will persuade you to respond to me more.

As this pattern keeps going, I feel _____. Identify a feeling. The unusual ones that people can identify at this point are frustration, anger, numbness, emptiness, or confusion.

What I then say to myself about our relationship is

_____.
Summarize the most catastrophic conclusion you can image, e.g. you do not care about us, I am not important to you, I can never please you.

My understanding of the circular dance that makes it harder and harder for us to safely connect is that when I move in a way in the way I described about, you seem to then _____. Choose an action word, e.g., shut down, push me to respond, etc.

The more I _____, the more you _____. We are both trapped in pain and isolation.
Insert word that describe your own and your partner's moves in the dance.

Maybe we can warn each other when this dance begins. We can call it _____.

Seeing this dance is our first step out of the circle of disconnection.