

Our Avoidance Inventory

A Reflection Guide for Emotionally Safe but Disconnected Couples

Introduction

Some couples avoid conflict so well that they also avoid depth. This worksheet is designed to gently reveal the patterns of emotional avoidance in your relationship—not to criticize them, but to understand where they come from and how they affect closeness. When we understand our emotional autopilot, we can begin to choose intimacy over protection.

1. Topics I Tend to Avoid in Our Relationship

These are the conversations you hesitate to bring up. Think about emotional themes, recurring issues, or difficult memories.

2. What Avoidance Feels Like in My Body

Describe what happens in your body when a tough topic comes up—racing heart, tight chest, blank mind, urge to leave, etc.

3. Where I Learned to Avoid Emotions or Conflict

Reflect on your family, past relationships, or culture. What did you learn about expressing emotions or needs?

4. When I'm Avoiding You Emotionally, I Usually...

Check any that apply or write your own patterns below.

- ☐ Change the subject
- ☐ Make a joke
- ☐ Get busy with tasks
- ☐ Go quiet or shut down
- ☐ Say 'I'm fine'
- ☐ Avoid eye contact
- ☐ Leave the room or check out mentally

Additional patterns:

5. What I Need From You to Stay Present (Instead of Avoiding)

Examples might include: softer tone, no interrupting, reassurance, permission to pause and return, or simply time to think.
