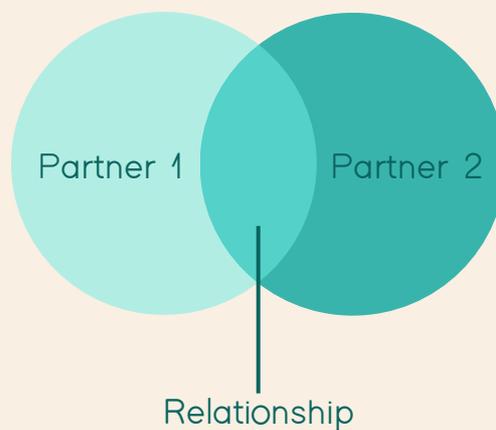


Couples Check-In: Relationship Circles

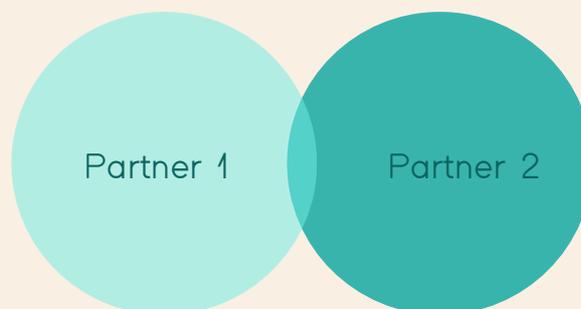


Here is a worksheet to help you get talking with your partner. It's designed to help you look at your relationship from an observers point of view, for you to consider how you are both experiencing your partnership, and any changes that might be beneficial.

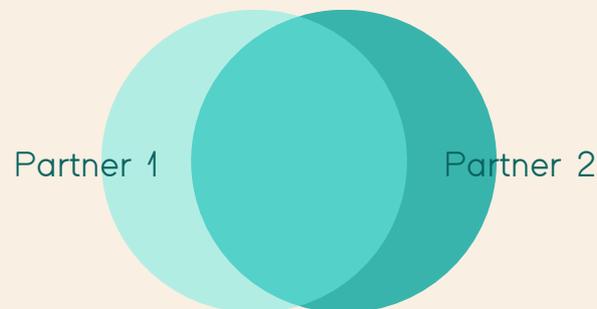
It's based on a classic Venn diagram, where each person in the partnership is represented by one circle. The relationship is represented by the overlap in the middle.



Every couple is different and will have a unique blueprint for making their partnership work. The circles are moveable, reflecting different stages or circumstances in their relationship. For example, if a couple have been through a period of significant conflict and there's not much of a partnership left, their relationship model might look like this, whether there is an increasing sense of managing life independently from one another, and there is only a thin thread of togetherness:



Or, conversely, when a partnership is consumed by a something significant (fertility treatment or experience of baby loss or miscarriage can be very common here), a partnership might feel a bit like this, where there is significant overlap space for the relationship fuelled by a big life event, with little sense of independent self, because of the energy that the midspace requires:



There's no right or wrong for how a partnership model should look here; what's significant is about how the partnership is experienced by each person in it, and how they see their sense of personhood as part of this (it matters that the identity of each partner is not dependent on the relationship itself).

Task 1:

This first step is to be completed individually.

1. Map out your own relationship circles, independently from one another, considering your experiences of your partnership.
2. Jot down:
 - a. In the relationship overlap, what it's like for you to be in the partnership? What do you experience in it currently; what's dominant? Does it feel safe to be there emotionally? What do you bring to this space? What could you offer more or less of? How safe is fear? If you were to make any changes, what might they be? How are you experiencing what your partner brings to your relationship?
 - b. In your own 'crescent moon' side: How are you nurturing yourself as an individual? What are the things that make you 'you', as a unique individual? What are you holding right now? Is there anything that might be worth sharing into the partnership overlap, to support your relationship?
 - c. In your partners 'crescent moon' side, what do you see in them as a unique individual? What are they nurturing or might they be holding?

Task 2:

The second step is to be completed together.

1. Share with each other what you have written down; your observations about your partnership as you both uniquely experience it, and how you are as individuals.
2. Discuss any, or all of the following (use these questions as discussion prompts):
 - a. What are your main observations about each others circles, noting similarities and differences?
 - b. What do you understand that you bring to your relationship?
 - c. What do you understand that your partner brings to your relationship?
 - d. How are you experiencing your partnership together?
 - e. How is this significant to this season that you are in?
 - f. If you were to make some changes together, what they would be, and how?
(Remembering these circles are moveable and adaptable)
 - g. Make a date to revisit your partnership model. What changes can you see?

If completing this exercise highlights any significant difficulty for you, you may find it beneficial to make contact with a couples therapist.



Tilia Therapy