

Accessibility, Responsiveness and Engagement Questionnaire

From: [Hold Me Tight: Seven Conversations for a Lifetime of Love \(2008\)](#)

[Dr. Susan Johnson](#)

Read each statement and circle T for *true* and F for *false*. To score the questionnaire, give one point for each “true” answer. You can complete this questionnaire to reflect on your relationship on your own. Or you and your partner can each complete it and then discuss your answers together in the way described after the questionnaire.

From your viewpoint, is your partner accessible to you?

- I can get my partner’s attention easily. T / F
- My partner is easy to connect with emotionally. T / F
- My partner shows me that I come first with him/her. T / F
- I am not feeling lonely or shut out in this relationship. T / F
- I can share my deepest feelings with my partner. He/she will listen. T / F

From your viewpoint, is your partner responsive to you?

- If I need connection and comfort, he/she will be there for me. T / F
- My partner responds to signals that I need him/her to come close. T / F
- I find I can lean on my partner when I am anxious or unsure. T / F
- Even when we fight or disagree, I know that I am important to my partner and we will find a way to come together. T / F
- If I need reassurance about how important I am to my partner, I can get it. T / F

Are you positively emotionally engaged with each other?

- I feel very comfortable being close to, trusting my partner. T / F
- I can confide in my partner about almost anything. T / F
- I feel confident, even when we are apart, that we are connected to each other T / F
- I know that my partner cares about my joys, hurts, and fears. T / F
- I feel safe enough to take emotional risks with my partner. T / F

If you scored 7 or above, you are well on your way to a secure bond and can use the book [Hold Me Tight](#) to enhance that bond. If you scored below 7, this is a time to focus on using the conversations in this book to strengthen the bond with your partner.

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Maybe you are more comfortable reflecting general points rather than using the questionnaire. You can simply reflect on the questions below, or you might want to write your answers down in a journal and so deepen your exploration of them. You might also want to share and discuss your responses with your partner at some point.

- What messages about love/marriage did you get from your parents? Your community? Was being able to reach for and trust others seen as a strength and a resource?
- Before your present relationship, did you experience a safe, loving relationship with someone you trusted, felt close to, and could turn to if needed? Do you have an image of what this looks like in your head, a model that can help you as you create your present relationship? Think of one good time or typical moment that captures this relationship and share it with your partner.
- Did your past relationships teach you that loved ones were unreliable and that you had to be vigilant and fight to be seen and responded to? Or did you learn that depending on others is dangerous and it is best to distance yourself, to not need others and avoid closeness? These basic strategies often switch on when we feel that our lover is distant or disconnected. Which strategy did you use in past relationships, say, with your parents, when things started to go wrong?
- Can you remember a time when you really needed to know a loved one was with you? If he or she was not, what was that like for you and what did you learn from it? How did you cope? Does this have an impact on your relationships now?
- If it is hard for you to turn to and trust others, to let them close when you really need them, what do you do when life gets too big to handle or when you feel alone?
- Name two very concrete and specific things that a safe, accessible, responsive, and engaged lover in a relationship with you would do on a typical day and how those things would make you feel at the moment.
- In your present relationship, can you ask your partner, let him or her see, when you need closeness and comfort? Is this easy for you or difficult to do? Perhaps

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you wonder if this is a sign of weakness, or maybe it seems too risky for you. Rate your difficulty in doing this on a scale from 1 to 10. A high score means this is very difficult for you to do. Share this with your partner.

- When you feel disconnected or alone in your present relationship, are you likely to get very emotional or even anxious and push your partner to respond? Or are you more likely to shut down and try not to feel your need to connect? Can you think of a time when this happened?
- Think of a time in your relationship when questions like “Are you there for me?” were hanging in the air unanswered and you wound up getting into a fight about a mundane problem. Share this with your partner.