

THE A.R.E. Questionnaire

➤ **Accessibility: Can I reach you?**

- Stay open to your partner even when you have doubts and fears;
- Being willing to make sense of your emotions so they don't overwhelm you;
- Stepping back from disconnection and tune in to partner's attachment cues.

➤ **Responsiveness: Can I rely on you to respond to me emotionally?**

- Accepting and placing a priority on the emotional signals from your partner;
- Sending clear signals of comfort and caring when your partner needs them.

➤ **Engagement: Do I know you will value me and stay close?**

- Providing the very special attention we give only to a loved one (touch, gaze at, be involved and emotionally present).

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*Directions: Read each statement and circle T or F. You can complete your questionnaire and reflect on your relationship on your own. Or you and your partner can each complete it and then discuss your answers together.*

**In your viewpoint, is your partner accessible to you?**

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

**From your viewpoint, is your partner responsive to you?**

6. If I need connection and comfort, he/she will be there for me. T F
7. My partner responds to signals that I need him/her to come close. T F
8. I find I can lean on my partner when I am anxious or unsure. T F
9. 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
10. 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?**

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

## THE A.R.E. Questionnaire

To score this questionnaire, give one point for each True answer. If you have scored 7 or above, you are well on your way to a secure bond and can use the following book to enhance that bond: *Hold Me Tight*, by Susan Johnson

If you score below 7, this is a time to focus on using the conversations in this book to strengthen the bond with your mate.

When discussing the results with your partner, try to remember that your partner is talking about how safe and connected he or she feels right now in your relationship, not about whether you are a perfect or imperfect partner. You can take turns talking about the question/answer that seemed most positive and important to you. Try to keep those observations to 5 minutes each.

If you feel comfortable, try to explore the question/answer that brought up the most difficult emotions for you. Try to avoid criticism or blame, but as an effort in helping your partner tune into your feelings. Again, keep this talk to 5 minutes each.