



Building a Couple Identity



Content on this side is intended for the educator's reference. The information on the back can be photocopied and shared with clients.

Objective: Clients will strengthen their couple identity by identifying and talking about shared values and goals, common purposes, and ways they can work together to protect their relationship from negative influences.

Audience: This tool is applicable for couples who need help working together to identify who they are as a couple and what defines their relationship.

Estimated Time: 15-20 minutes

Educator Instructions: Before reading the instructions on the tool, start with the Discussion Starter provided below or something similar. This tool can be used to create discussion about building a sense of couple identity (a sense of "us" or "we-ness"). Talk about the importance of strengthening a relationship connection, and help them identify some goals they can work toward to help them build a stronger couple identity. In addition, you could suggest they write their goal on a piece of paper and post it on their refrigerator or somewhere it can serve as a frequent reminder to them.

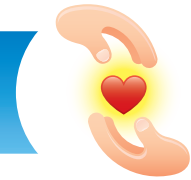
Discussion Starter: Couple identity refers to the sense of "us" or "we-ness" a couple develops as they build their relationship. Each partner maintains his/her identity, but also thinks in terms of "we" and "us" when thinking about day-to-day activities, as well as long-term plans. Couples foster their identity by having similar values and goals, finding ways to act on their goals, and limiting negative influences that could be harmful to the relationship. This activity will help you think about one goal you have in common and some steps you can take to work together toward that goal.

Follow-up: During your next visit, talk about the different ways they are building their couple identity.





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Partners become strong couples when they work together to decide who they are as a couple and what they can do to strengthen their relationship. Their relationship is defined by the values and goals they share, the things they do together, and the ways they protect their relationship from negative or disruptive influences.

Identify shared values and goals to direct the relationship

Shared values or goals allow partners to focus their relationship in a common direction. Partners might want to work together to save money for a home, or have values they want to pass on to their children. *What are some goals you have in common?*

Engage in common purposes

Working toward a common purpose together helps partners deepen their friendship. Think about one of the goals you listed above. Name 3 specific things you can do together to work toward that goal:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Protect the relationship from negative or disruptive influences

Healthy couples are defined by what partners do together, but also by the things they limit in their relationship. Partners show loyalty by avoiding certain thoughts, threats, and interactions with others. Think back to the goal you identified. Are there any negative or disruptive influences that might stand in the way of reaching that goal? How can you work around those challenges?

A strong couple identity can provide lasting stability and satisfaction.