

Quiz: Is There Too Much Criticism in Your Relationship?

The following quiz can help you see how well you and your partner state your needs (i.e., complain) without resorting to harmful criticism. Take the quiz twice. The first time, answer the questions for yourself. The second time, answer the questions the way you believe your partner would answer them.

PARTNER A

T/F

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| _____ | 1. I often feel attacked or criticized when we talk about our disagreements. | _____ |
| _____ | 2. I often have to defend myself because the things my partner says about me are so unfair. | _____ |
| _____ | 3. When I complain, I think it's important to present many examples of what my partner does wrong. | _____ |
| _____ | 4. When my partner complains, I often just want to leave the scene. | _____ |
| _____ | 5. I think it's important to point out when problems are not my fault. | _____ |
| _____ | 6. I often feel insulted when my partner complains. | _____ |
| _____ | 7. I think my partner should know what I need without my having to say it. | _____ |
| _____ | 8. I often feel as though my personality is being assaulted. | _____ |
| _____ | 9. When I complain, I think it's important to show my partner the moral basis for my position. | _____ |
| _____ | 10. I often think my partner is selfish and self-centered. | _____ |
| _____ | 11. I am not guilty of many things my partner accuses me of. | _____ |
| _____ | 12. Small issues often escalate out of proportion. | _____ |

PARTNER B

T/F

PARTNER A

T/F

PARTNER B

T/F

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| _____ | 13. My partner's feelings get hurt too easily. | _____ |
| _____ | 14. I often feel disgusted by some of my partner's attitudes. | _____ |
| _____ | 15. My partner uses phrases such as "you always" or "you never" when complaining. | _____ |
| _____ | 16. I think it's helpful to point out ways my partner can improve his or her personality. | _____ |
| _____ | 17. When I complain to my partner, I think it's helpful to mention examples of other people who do things the way I'd like them to be done. | _____ |
| _____ | 18. I often think to myself, "Who needs all this conflict?" | _____ |
| _____ | 19. If I have to ask my partner for a compliment or a favor, then it really doesn't count. | _____ |
| _____ | 20. I often feel disrespected by my partner. | _____ |

SCORING: If you have more than four "true" answers either time you take the test, you may have a problem with too much criticism in your relationship. Use the tips in the section titled "Healthy Complaining Versus Harmful Complaining" to reduce the criticism.