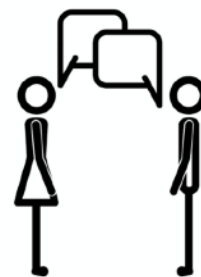


Couples spend an average of only 12 minutes talking per day! That's it! And it's usually about logistical issues such as schedules and chores. This is not healthy for your relationship. Incorporate these 8 things into your relationship for better communication and connection.



The 8 Easy A's

1. Arrivals (Reunions)- when you see your partner, share a hug/kiss/positive exchange
2. Aparts (Partings)- have a positive goodbye, acknowledge them leaving, ask something they're doing that day
3. Appreciation/Admiration- notice something positive and share it, they don't know it unless you say it
4. Affection- embrace/cuddle/kiss before day ends, turning towards one another rather than away, giving and accepting bids of connection, chivalry and manners also a plus, showing kindness and positive regard
5. Assembly (Check-In)- at least once a week, choose a consistent day/time that will work for you and your partner, have 15-30 minutes to do this, you can also have a stop point to avoid being flooded, minimize interruptions
6. Accompany (Date Night/Day/Activity)- ask open ended questions, we-time should be relaxing/connecting, enjoy one another, have fun/ laugh, flirt, think back to how it felt early in relationship
7. Assume- choose to assume the best explanation/intention of your partner, rather than the worst, rarely does anyone do anything to another to intentionally hurt someone, check your own faulty thoughts and assumptions
8. Acceptance- accept that you have different opinions, thoughts, and perspectives, both are valid and real; you don't have to understand something to accept it; accept without resignation or resentment; accept bids of connection; accept responsibility

Assembly (The Check In) How-To Cheat Sheet

Below are some ideas and suggestions (in no particular order) for what to discuss when you assemble or "check-in" with one another. Remember to have this conversation when you're calm and not distracted. Do an assembly at least once a week.

- **Logistics**– menu for the week, activities, coordinate schedules, pace of schedule (too busy, not enough, just right)
- **Wellness**– what went well last week and is going well now, gratitude, say thank you and show appreciation
- **Needs**– be vulnerable, this involves going "under the surface," this is a safe time and space to do this as neither of you are flooded, distracted, or in a hurry, share any concerns or feelings you've been having, include fears and/or desires
- **Conflict**– circle back to anything that didn't get resolved since the last check-in, apologize if needed, ask how you can help your partner forgive and move past conflict
- **Better**– acknowledge what you can do better in the coming week and ask for what you'd like your partner to do better
- **Connection**– schedule time for intimacy; remember one another's love languages when doing this; can include scheduling a date night, sexual intimacy, or any other way you and your partner like to connect
- **Nos**– discuss anything that you can potentially say no to so that you can say yes and prioritize each other
- **Prepare**– what's coming up that both of you are prepping for, ask for help if needed
- **Engage**– listen, show empathy, ask questions, be curious, open up and share, confide, be responsive, lean in, give assurance and validation
- **Insight**– share what you've learned since the last check-in, discuss anything you've read/written/processed, reflect on any realizations you've had, share any growth that has recently occurred
- **Finances**– review budget, big ticket items to be aware of, help one another cope with and understand financial matters and stresses
- **Self-Care**– discuss how you can help the other prioritize self-care, share what you enjoy and encourage one another to make it happen

Tips for Success

Set a specific day and time for the check-in. Make this become a habit.

Use the Check In outline above until you can do it without it.

Talk about which As you are great at and which ones don't come as naturally. Ask for help.

Notice when your partner does an A. That's a great time to verbalize appreciation.

Work on your inner narratives. Sometimes assuming the best and accepting your partner are the hardest!

Print this out or take a picture with your phone and refer to it daily until they all become automatic.