

## EXERCISE

### At What Stage Is Your Relationship?

#### Couples' Diagnostic Questionnaire

Answer the following questions for yourself, and then share your answers with your partner to see what stage you might each be in.

If your answers are very different, it could mean that you are each at different stages. If this is the case, take some time to discuss how you might get to the next level together.

**Stage 1: All I can see are your good points**

**1. What initially attracted you to each other?**

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**2. What is the best thing about your relationship?**

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**3. What was the very beginning of your relationship like?**

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**Stage 2: Rediscovering Your Differences**

**1. What was your first disappointment in your partner? What happened, and how did you resolve it?**

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**2. When do you feel least fulfilled in your relationship?**

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**3. In what significant ways are the two of you similar? How are you different? What methods have you worked out to accommodate your differences?**

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**Stage 3: From “We” back to “Me”**

**1. Do you spend time in activities away from your partner? If so, what do you do, and how often?**

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**2. How comfortable are you with doing activities away from your partner? How comfortable are you with your partner doing things away from you?**

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**3. How safe do you feel expressing your innermost thoughts and feelings to your partner? How do you ask for emotional support from your partner when you are feeling vulnerable? Do you expect to get it? And if so, is it the way you want it?**

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**Stage 4: Recoupling**

**1. Would your partner say that you are emotionally responsive to his/her vulnerability? How might they say you show this?**

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**2. Do you take an active role in nurturing your relationship? Does your partner do the same? How?**

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**3. Do you support your partner's development as an individual? How do you do that? Do you support his/her growth as an individual even when there's something about it you don't like? How?**

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**Stage 5: Happy Ever After - Independence and Interdependence**

**1. Do you believe that your partner is giving at least 50 percent of him/herself to the relationship?**

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**2. Do the two of you have joint commitments to projects, work activities, or social causes? If so, what are they, and what do each of you contribute?**

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**3. Did you deliberately decide to create something together in one of the aforementioned areas?**

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**4. Finally, if your relationship were a drama, movie, or book, what would it be titled? How would it end?**

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**If you were able to answer the questions in a given section easily, it indicates that you are already familiar with the scope of that stage.**

**However, if the questions started to get difficult at some point, it may indicate that you have reached a stage that needs more attention before you are ready to move on.**

**You might also feel that you are in one stage sometimes, yet somewhere quite different at other times. This is normal. Relationships are a living thing and progress at their own pace.**

**It is important to note that at whatever stage your relationship is, it is the only place it can be right now. It simply can't proceed to another stage until you are both ready.**