

Blueprint For Love

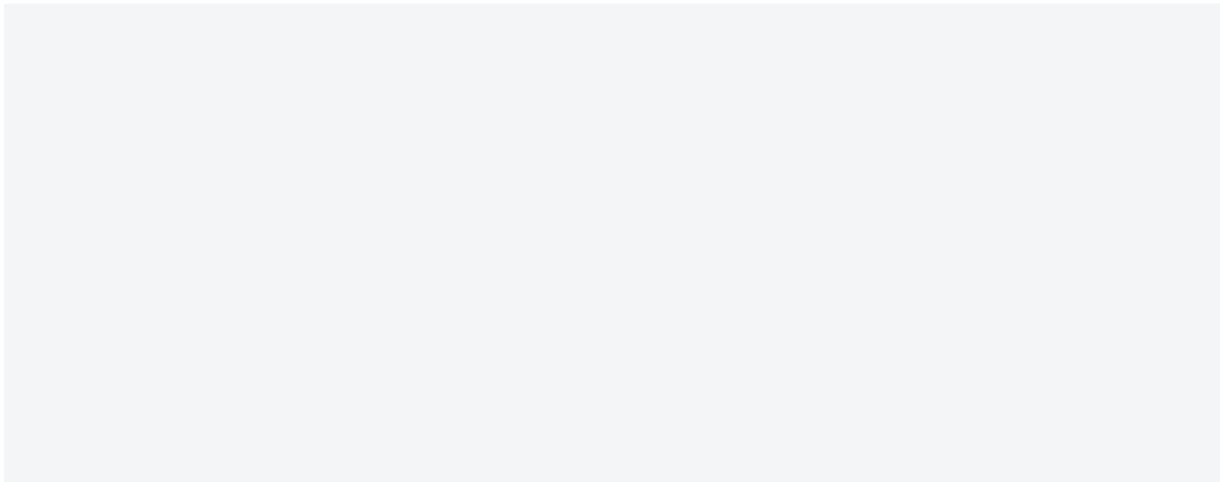
Conflict often arises from misunderstandings or a failure to consider the other's needs and wishes.

Understanding what a loving relationship looks like to your partner may make it easier to recognize what upsets or frustrates them.

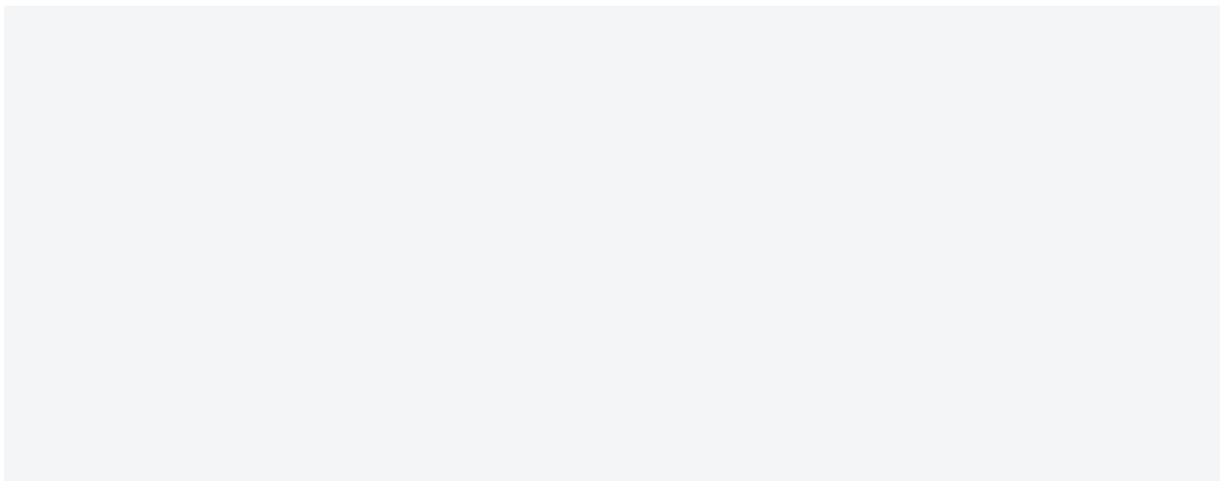
Use this exercise to reflect on how your relationship's blueprint for love might look.

Begin by thinking of a couple from your past who had a loving relationship. It may be your parents, but you may choose two other people who showed love, acceptance, and caring for one another, depending on your circumstances.

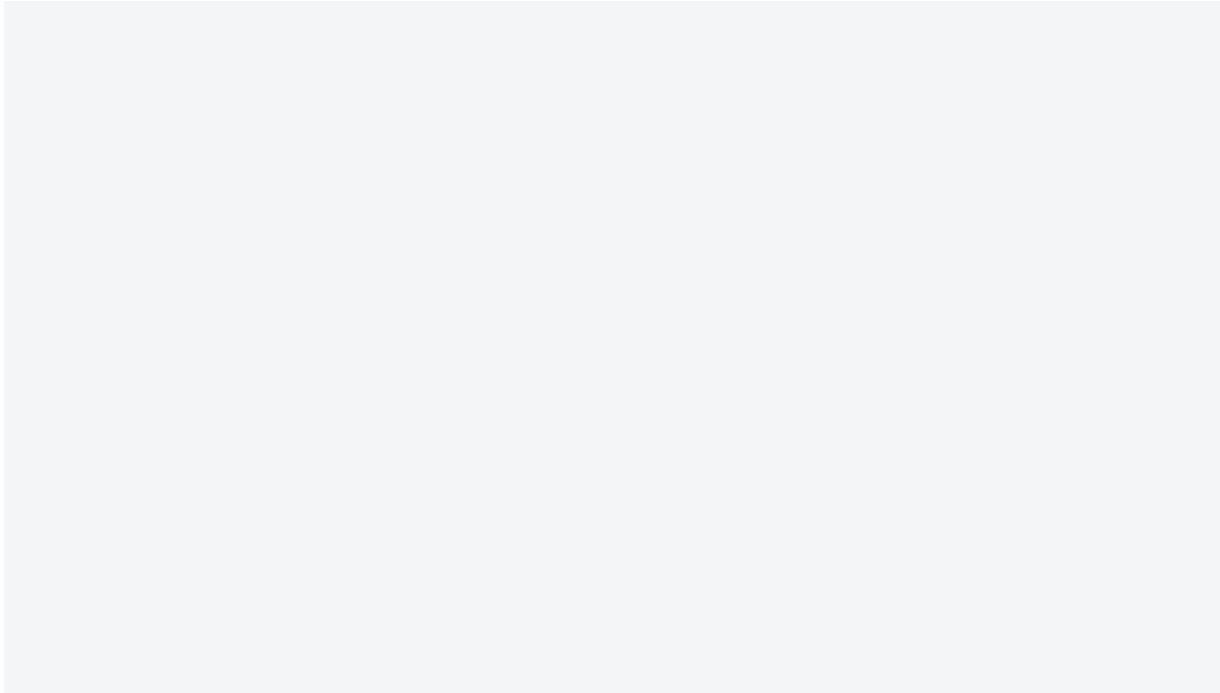
Note down some of your memories of their most romantic times or how they showed their affection:



What beliefs did you form about relationships and love as you grew up, based on your surroundings (were they positive and constructive, or damaging?):



Now, reflect on what *you* are looking for in a relationship (for example, couples should kiss every day / should be best friends / conflict should lead to resolutions that form stronger bonds). There are no wrong answers; this is how you feel, and what you would like to happen:



Spend time with your partner discussing your and their answers. Is there anything you could do more, or less of, in your relationship? Keep an open, non-judgmental mind.

Dr. Jeremy Sutton