

## RECOGNIZING CONFLICT PATTERNS

Adapted from Chapter 6 of Relationship Communication Decoded

Every couple has unique conflict patterns. Stepping back from the heat of the moment helps us see and shift these patterns. This assessment mirrors your strengths and growth opportunities in handling tension.

**Important Note:** This assessment is not intended to be a clinical or diagnostic tool. It is designed for personal insight and reflection on relationships only. If you are experiencing distress or mental health challenges, please seek support from a qualified professional.

### INSTRUCTIONS

Read and rate each statement honestly based on your typical responses during conflict using a **1 (Not at all true) to 5 (Very true)** scale. There are no right or wrong answers, just your honest reflection.

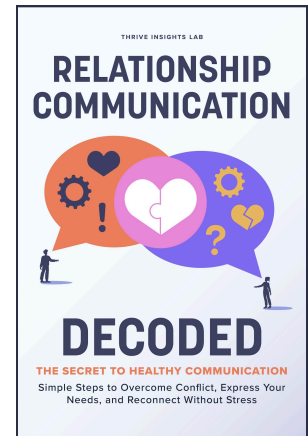
### ITEMS

- |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. I notice when a small disagreement feels bigger than it should.          | [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] |
| 2. I can trace some of my emotional reactions to earlier life experiences.  | [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] |
| 3. I tend to react quickly when I feel misunderstood or criticized.         | [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] |
| 4. I can stay grounded and calm during tough conversations.                 | [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] |
| 5. I've talked with my partner about how we both respond to conflict.       | [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] |
| 6. I recognize patterns in our recurring arguments.                         | [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] |
| 7. I use calming strategies (like pausing or breathing) when tensions rise. | [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] |
| 8. I can shift from defensive to collaborative thinking in a disagreement.  | [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] |
| 9. I often regret how I handled a conflict once it's over.                  | [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] |
| 10. I recognize when I'm escalating a situation and try to step back.       | [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] |

### SCORING

Add your responses to these sets. Each score will range from 5 to 25.

- **Conflict Sensing:** 1, 2, 3, 6, 9 = \_\_\_\_
- **Regulation & Tools:** 4, 5, 7, 8, 10 = \_\_\_\_



## INTERPRETATION GUIDE

Your scores for Conflict Sensing and Regulation & Tools provide insight into your current approach to conflict. Remember, these scores highlight areas for growth and deeper understanding, not fixed achievements. Each insight is an opportunity to enhance your connection.

### Conflict Sensing

*Your ability to recognize your own and shared emotional patterns in conflict*

- **Consistent Sensing (20–25):** You are highly sensitive to emotional dynamics in conflicts and consistently demonstrate a deep understanding of your own and others' reactions. This consistent sensing is a robust foundation for navigating disagreements with clarity and empathy.
- **Developing Sensing (13–19):** You possess a solid base in recognizing emotional patterns during conflict, though you might occasionally overlook subtle cues or find it challenging to grasp deeper conflict dynamics. This is a valuable area to cultivate for richer understanding.
- **Emerging Sensing (5–12):** Your ability to recognize emotional patterns in conflicts may be in its early stages, possibly resulting in more impulsive reactions or missed signals. This is an exciting starting point for exploring and expanding your emotional understanding to achieve more intentional responses.

### Regulation & Tools

*Your ability to control responses and use constructive strategies in conflict*

- **Consistent Regulation (20–25):** You effectively use strategies to stay grounded and navigate conflict collaboratively. This consistent regulation is a significant strength, enabling you to maintain calm and foster productive dialogue even during tense situations.
- **Developing Regulation (13–19):** You have some tools for conflict regulation, but may find applying them consistently challenging under pressure. With focused practice, these tools can become more reliable habits for healthier conflict resolution.
- **Emerging Regulation (5–12):** You may be in the early stages of developing effective strategies to regulate your emotions and use constructive tools during conflict, which can sometimes contribute to escalation. This is an opportunity to build practical skills for more grounded and effective interactions.

## REFLECTION

*Take a moment to reflect on your results. Capture your thoughts in the space provided below.*

Based on your scores, which area (Emotional Awareness or Regulation & Tools) do you feel is more of a strength for you, and which presents a “Growth Zone” or “Hot Spot”?

Thinking about a recent conflict, how did your typical patterns, as revealed by this assessment, show up? What might you have done differently?

What’s one small step you can take this week to begin shifting one of your conflict patterns toward a more constructive approach?

## NEXT STEPS

You’ve gained valuable insight into your conflict patterns. Return to Chapter 6 of *Relationship Communication Decoded* to delve deeper into understanding the roots of these patterns and discover practical strategies for self-regulation, communication tools, and fostering healthier, more responsive interactions in your relationship.