

Managing difficult feelings

Positive purpose

If your behaviour when you're upset were to serve a positive purpose, what might that be?

- To help someone to know what you're feeling
- To stop you both from dealing with something that's too painful to cope with
- To stop you from behaving in a way that would be worse
- To stop you from behaving in a way that reminds you of someone else
- To help you hold on to your fragile feelings about yourself as good or worthwhile
- To communicate feelings you're scared to express directly
- To help your partner to know how to help you
- To help or encourage your partner or someone else (e.g. a child)
- To help you feel in the right or to justify yourself
- To fulfil or pursue an important principle (e.g. justice or fairness)
- To get help you can't ask for directly
- To reassure yourself that you're lovable
- To protect or take responsibility for something or someone
- To provoke a positive response in someone

Repeating past relationships

When you have strong negative feelings about your partner or yourself, what other times in your life, or other situations, do those feelings remind you of?

- When you were a child
- When you were in a previous relationship
- Your parents' or grandparents' relationship
- Your relationship with siblings
- Your time at school
- Your earlier friendships

Disowning feelings

When you disown or suppress your feelings, or react strongly to other people expressing strong feelings, why might that be important for you to do?

- To stop you from embarrassing yourself
- To stop you from feeling overwhelmingly sad, guilty, anxious, angry, ashamed, jealous or envious
- To stop you from feeling something positive that you distrust or think won't last
- To stop you being reminded of a time or of events that are too painful to remember
- To avoid expressing needs that you don't think will get met
- To avoid expressing needs that you think you don't deserve
- To avoid becoming someone you're frightened to be
- To avoid having to be someone you don't think you can sustain
- To avoid committing to something you're doubtful about
- To avoid having to change in ways that are uncomfortable or intolerable
- To prevent you looking weak
- To prevent you looking strong or overbearing
- To stop you doing something you might regret