**Exercise: Positive context - Turning away – Turning Against**

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| **I. Criticism** | True/False |
| 1. I see it as my responsibility to present all of my complaints. 2. I try to see patterns and analyze my child’s personality as part of my complaint. 3. I analyze my child’s personality in addition to discussing specific actions that bother me. 4. I complain, in part, to get things off my chest. 5. I let things build up for a long time before I complain. 6. I do not state my complaints in a neutral manner. 7. When I complain, I bring up my child’s faults. 8. When I bring up a problem, it is my goal to get my child to see that I am right. 9. It is my goal to get my child to accept some blame for the problem. 10. When I complain, my emotions are very intense and powerful. 11. When I bring up a problem, I know I am basically right. 12. I resent having to bring up these issues in the first place. 13. I regret my tactless words when I complain. 14. When I complain, I use phrases like “You always” and “You never”. 15. I think it is very important to determine who is at fault or who is to blame. |  |
| **II Contempt** | True/False |
| 1. When I get upset, I see glaring faults in my child’s personality. 2. I try to point out ways in which my child is inadequate in certain situations. 3. When my child is upset with me, all I can think of is ways I have been let down by them. 4. I have no respect for my child when we are discussing an issue. 5. My child can be pretty arrogant at times. 6. During our discussions, I find myself putting my child down. 7. I can’t help feeling that there is a lot of stupidity in my child’s behavior. 8. When I get dumped on, I think of ways to get even. 9. It is hard to respect my child when he/she is being incompetent. 10. When I see a glaring fault in my child, it is hard for me to see their positive qualities. 11. There is not a whole lot to look up to in how my child handles things. 12. My child is too stubborn to compromise. 13. When my child is upset with me, I tend to turn the tables and counter attack. |  |
| **III. Defensiveness** | True/False |
| 1. I don’t feel that I get credit for all of the positive things that I do. 2. When my child complains, I think, “I am innocent of these charges!” 3. There is some truth to my child’s complaints, but it is not the whole truth. 4. When my child complains, I realize that I also have a set of complaints that need to be heard. 5. My child is too touchy and gets feelings hurt too easily. 6. To avoid blame, I have to explain why and how the problem arose. 7. I feel unfairly attacked when my child’s being negative. 8. What goes wrong is actually not that much my responsibility. 9. It seems like all my child can do is find fault with me. 10. When my child complains, I feel that if my position were just understood, we would not have all these problems. 11. When my child complained, I thought of a way to re-explain my position. 12. When my child complains, I think of complaints of my own that are not getting attention. 13. During a hot argument, I keep thinking of ways to retaliate. 14. When my child complains, I try to think of ways to protect myself. |  |
| **IV. Stonewalling** | True/False |
| 1. When my child complains, I feel it’s unfair that I have to deal with this. 2. I think to myself, “It is best to withdraw to avoid a big fight.” 3. I withdraw to try to calm down. 4. When we have a blow up, I just want to leave. 5. I do not want to ‘fan the flames of the conflict’, so I just sit back and wait for it to blow over. 6. I think that withdrawing is often the best solution. 7. I have to control myself to avoid saying what I really feel. 8. At times when my child is very negative, I believe it is best just to not respond.. 9. I’d rather withdraw than get my feelings hurt. 10. I wonder why small issues suddenly become big ones. 11. I withdraw when my child seems out of control. 12. I feel overwhelmed during conflicts so it is easier to walk away than engage. 13. I believe is more responsible to leave rather to say something I will regret later. 14. I think to myself, “I don’t have to take this kind of treatment.” 15. I believe in the proverb, “It is better to be thought of as a fool than to open your mouth and remove all doubt | 14.  15. |

If you have more than five ‘true’ in any given category, circle the heading to discuss further with your spouse or friend.

Has your spouse/friend seen these tendencies in your relationship with them?

How might you work on this area together with your spouse/friend?