

# THE COUPLES CURE

## Miraculous Recovery for Couples on the Brink

### Raw Spots (Conversation 2)

---

Areas of hypersensitivity are formed by moments in a person's past or current relationships when an attachment need has been repeatedly neglected, ignored, or dismissed. This results in feeling abandoned. It can also be from just having a big transition or crisis, getting sick job loss. When the need for support from our spouse is particularly intense.

#### You can tell when a raw spot is hit:

1. There's a sudden radical shift in the emotional tone of the conversation. You are thrown off balance
2. The reaction is way out of proportion.

#### Find your raw spots:

1. Think of a time you got thrown off balance
2. What was happening in the relationship? What was the negative attachment cue, the trigger? Was your general feeling in the split second before you reacted? What did they do to spark this?
3. As you think of a moment when this happened, what happens to your body? Do you feel spacey or detached, hot, breathless, tight in the chest, very small? Does this body awareness help you give this a name? What does your brain decide about the meaning of all this? What do you say to yourself when this happens?
4. What did you do then?
5. See if you can tie all these elements together by filling in the blanks below: a. In this incident, the trigger for my raw feeling was \_\_\_\_\_. On the surface, I probably showed \_\_\_\_\_. But deep down, I just felt \_\_\_\_\_ (pick one of the basic negative emotions, sadness, anger, shame, fear). What I longed for was \_\_\_\_\_. The main message I got about our bond, about me or my love was \_\_\_\_\_.
6. What is the history of your raw spots? (Unmet needs in lesson 1)
7. Do you think your partner sees this raw vulnerability in you? OR do they just see the reactive surface feeling or the action response?
8. Can you guess at one of your partner's raw spots? Do you know exactly what you do to irritate it?

We have to share vulnerability with our partners. It's scary though sometimes we don't know how we feel or we are afraid we will stay stuck there...

Can you think of a time when you did share hurt and you felt close to them as a result? What was it that they did that really made a difference?

Now see if you can agree on a typical recent interaction where you both felt disconnected and ended up stuck... In this situation, who turned up the emotional heat or tried to turn it down and avoid strong emotions? Come up with a phrase to describe how you usually deal with more vulnerable feelings in difficult interactions and share this with your partner. Some examples: I turn to stone, go icy, get into battle-mode, run and hide.

In the recent interaction, did you stay with surface reactive feelings, or were you able to share deeper feelings? How hard on a scale of 1-10 was it to talk about your more vulnerable emotions? How is it to talk to them right now? Is there any way your partner can help you share more of these feelings?

Start with: *In this incident, if I listen to my most vulnerable feelings, I felt: lonely, dismissed and unimportant, frustrated and helpless, on guard and uncomfortable, scared, hurt, hopeless, helpless, intimidated, threatened, panicked, rejected, ignored, inadequate, shut out and alone, confused and lost, embarrassed, ashamed, blank, afraid, shocked, sad forlorn, disappointed, numb, humiliated, overwhelmed small or insignificant, unwanted, vulnerable, worried.*

Can you share this feeling with your partner? If this is too hard to do right now, can you instead share the worst catastrophic result of this kind of sharing that you can imagine?

When I think of sharing my softest feelings with you here, it is hard to do. My worst fantasy is that what will happen is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ .