



# FELT SENSE

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## PSYCHOTHERAPY

### Worksheet: Navigating a Critical Partner (EFT Perspective)

#### Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) inspired worksheet

#### **Purpose**

Use this worksheet to respond to criticism in a way that protects self-worth and invites deeper connection.

#### **1. Translate the Criticism**

- What was said?
- What might be the softer emotion underneath it (fear, disappointment, longing, overwhelm)?
- What might they be needing but expressing poorly?

#### **2. Check Your Internal Response**

- Do you feel shame, anger, collapse, urge to defend, urge to please?
- What do you need right now to stay anchored?

#### **3. Respond to the Need, Not the Jab**

- “I hear you’re upset and wanting more support.”
- “I hear this matters to you.”
- “I want to understand what feels missing for you.”

#### **4. Name Impact + Boundary**

- “I’m open to feedback, but criticism shuts me down.”
- “Please speak to me respectfully so I can hear you.”
- “I care about your concern and need a kinder tone.”

#### **5. Share Your Vulnerability**

- “When I hear criticism, I feel like I can’t get it right.”
- “I want to succeed with you, not fail with you.”
- “Reassurance helps me stay open.”



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### **6. Keep the Relationship Central**

- “We both want closeness, even if this moment looks messy.”
- “Can we talk about what we each need here?”
- “I’m for us, not against you.”

### **7. If Criticism Becomes Contempt or Repeated Harm**

- Pause the conversation.
- State the boundary clearly.
- Revisit later or seek couples therapy support.

### **Reflection**

- What criticism patterns repeat most?
- What helps you stay connected without shrinking yourself?
- What respectful request can you make next time?