



COUPLE AND FAMILY MAPS

FLEXIBILITY EXERCISES - PRACTICAL TIPS TO BALANCE YOUR RELATIONSHIP

If you find yourself “Inflexible” or “Somewhat Flexible”, try one or more of these ideas to become more flexible:

- **Share leadership and roles.** If you and your partner have strictly defined roles and leadership patterns, try changing the normal routine.
- **Put away your lists, calendars, and schedules for a day.** Experience the day together without looking at a watch or clock.
- **Brainstorm a list of your roles, and expectations for your relationship.** Revise this list in a way that increases flexibility.
- **Switch roles with your partner for a week.** If your partner normally does the grocery shopping, make this your job for the week while your partner takes over one of your jobs.
- **Do something really spontaneous.** Clear your schedule for a day or week and use the time to meet your partner for a romantic getaway.

If you find yourself “Overly Flexible” or “Very Flexible”, try one or more of these ideas to add more stability:

- **Add more consistency, tradition and rituals.** Research has found rituals and routines are associated with higher marital satisfaction and stronger family relationships. Rituals create strong bonds and build loving relationships and are organizers of family life. Rituals are more than holidays and rites of passage—daily routines are also very important rituals for couples and families. Daily rituals include mealtime rituals, wake up and bedtime rituals, and everyday greetings and goodbyes.
- **Make a list of household tasks and who will do them.** Negotiate these with your partner.
- **Add more consistency to your parenting.**
- **Keep promises you made to your partner.**