



Reconnect

family matters york

Reconnect uses couple-to-couple mentoring to explore challenges and build new relationship skills. We look specifically at communication and offer a safe and supportive space for couples to strengthen and enrich their relationship. Our starting point is this skills card:



Going through this process improves communication and, ultimately, emotional connection but it requires time, effort, commitment and action from both parties.

Practical arrangements

If we agree after the initial assessment that our service is a good fit for you, I will match you with a Support Couple and they will get in touch to arrange an introductory session. This first session is an opportunity for you to get to know each other and find out what the mentoring sessions entail. We recognise it can be daunting starting a process like this, but it gets easier.

If you are happy to continue, we will offer four further Reconnect sessions all held at the Support Couple's home. The sessions will last no longer than 1.5 hours and be held in a quiet, private space, free from interruption. Some of the material may evoke an emotional response. If this applies to you, please take care of yourself. If necessary, you can take a short break during the session, however please be aware that the time available is limited.

If for any reason your Support Couple is unable to continue, FMY will place you with another Support Couple as soon as possible.

At the end of your final session your Support Couple will ask you to complete a questionnaire. Your responses will be anonymous and will be returned to the Relationship Support Lead for evaluation purposes. Six months after that, we will arrange to meet you both to complete our final questionnaire. Please do complete all our evaluation questionnaires. We need your feedback to ensure the quality of our service and to help us apply for more funding.

Donations

We do not ask for payment for our services because we want our support to be accessible to all. However, we rely on external funding and donations to sustain our work and are grateful for any contributions, large or small!

£30 donation would pay for one session of mentoring.

£150 donation would meet the cost of the full Reconnect programme.

You can donate via the QR code or by visiting: <https://fmy.org.uk/donate/>



Limitations of our service

Please be aware that relationship support is not suitable for couples where there is any form of domestic abuse. Please seek support from IDAS (tel. 0300 110 110), or the National Domestic Violence helpline (open 24 hours every day; tel. 0808 2000 247). The Reconnect service is also not suitable for people who may be at risk of harm to themselves, or others, or who are currently receiving treatment or therapy for a severe mental health condition. Details of counselling organisations can be found on our website here:

<https://fmy.org.uk/resources/other-services-referrals/>

We will also refuse to provide services to anyone attending sessions under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Data. Confidentiality and Safeguarding

To support you through Reconnect we process some personal data about you. More information about what we keep, why and how we store it can be found in our Data Privacy Notice at the foot of our Home Page on our website here: <https://fmy.org.uk/>

Please ask if you would like a copy of this.

You can choose what you disclose to your Support Couple; they will respect your confidentiality. Likewise, please keep confidential anything your Support Couple shares with you about their relationship.

We make brief notes after sessions, which are kept securely and destroyed at the end of the programme. Notes remain the property of FMY but can be viewed by request.

The Support Couple may discuss aspects of your case, anonymously, during their own supervision sessions to ensure you receive the best support possible.

In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary for the Support Couple to break confidentiality. For example, we may need to take action and/or share information if we felt you were in danger, or if you were a danger to yourself and others, or if we became aware of children being at risk of harm. Wherever possible in such cases, we would seek to inform you first. Equally, if you have any concerns about your experiences with the Support Couple, please contact the Relationship Support Lead (see Contacts).

Healthy relationships checklist



Communication

You talk openly about your likes and dislikes. Whether texting or talking, it feels easy, breezy and happy. Disagreements are managed calmly.

There are occasional disagreements, you don't listen to each other and find compromise hard. You sometimes worry about how they will react.

During disagreements your partner screams and shouts at you. They blame you for everything, call you names and make you feel small.



Equal

You feel you have an equal say in your relationship and decisions are made jointly. You have the freedom to see friends and family when you want to.

One of you tends to make most of the decisions about where you go and what you do. Your partner puts pressure on you to get their own way.

You are worried about sharing your views and tread on eggshells around them. You are often put off from doing things you enjoy or being with the people you care about.



Respect

You value the other's opinions, beliefs and culture without trying to change them. You have the freedom to be yourself.

You don't feel valued. Your partner interrupts or doesn't listen. They may ignore you or give you the 'silent treatment'.

Your partner doesn't care what you think and undermines what you say. They disregard your wishes and safety, threatening you or causing you harm.



Trust

You trust each other and feel confident that you have a solid relationship. You don't need to second guess each other and spend time apart as well as together.

You're concerned they're cheating on you or that they are not being honest. They question your loyalty and monitor what you do.

They make it hard for you to be around other people and try to cut you off from friends and family. They constantly check up on you.



Consent

You are enthusiastic about the part sexual activity plays in your relationship. You discuss birth control and sexual health, and make decisions together.

One of you is pressuring the other into sexual activity that doesn't feel quite right. You may be having sex but you are not addressing the possible consequences.

You may be threatened and forced into sexual activity you do not want. They may use violence during sex or punish you for not doing what they want. This is sexual violence.

Our expectations of you

Be willing to take responsibility for your own relationship

Going through Reconnect requires commitment from both partners. You will need to be willing to make changes and learn some new ways of relating to each other; you will need to try to stay in the moment and avoid blaming each other for past mistakes.

Trust your Support Couple and value their time

Reconnect is run by committed volunteer Support Couples who spend time preparing for your sessions and possess great skill and empathy. We value their time greatly and we would appreciate if you would do the same.

Engage with the exercises

Our Support Couple will share concepts and skills, model them for you and then ask you to practise them in the sessions. This may feel unusual at first, but please try to give these exercises your best effort. The Support Couple will not judge you, but encourage, support and hold you accountable throughout the process.

Homework

Your Support Couple will give you small pieces of 'homework' to complete between the sessions. This could be practising a listening exercise or simply spending quality time together. The homework is intended to help you build on the skills covered in the sessions and is an important part of the process. Please make sure you are both committed to prioritising time for the homework.

Cancellations

Please prioritise your time with your Support Couple and make every effort to attend each session. We understand there may be times when you need to rearrange a date because of unforeseen circumstances like illness, bereavement or unexpected difficulties. If you need to rearrange, please try to give at least 24 hours' notice to your Support Couple and reschedule as soon as possible. We aim for you to complete your five Reconnect sessions within 12 weeks so that you can build on progress made and maintain momentum throughout the programme. If a session is missed without good reason or warning and you do not contact your Support Couple to explain within 24 hours, we may need to consider withdrawing further Reconnect sessions. While we want to support you and do what we can to meet your needs, we also want to ensure that the time and effort invested by our volunteer Support Couples is valued.

Childcare

Please arrange appropriate childcare for your Reconnect sessions so that you can focus on the time with your support couple without distraction.

Contacts



If you have any questions or concerns please do get in touch.

Emma Marshall
Relationship Support Lead
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07491 910239

Kath Weston
Charity Manager
kathweston@fmy.org.uk

OTHER SERVICES & REFERRALS



TOUCAN TOGETHER

Toucan Together is a relationships app that helps you learn about each other and work towards relationship goals.



The Marriage Course is a seven week global course designed to help you invest in your marriage.

familylife

Family Life is a charity that supports couples with events, talks and blogs about relationships.



Care for the Family offer a range of courses, events, podcasts and articles on couple relationships.

