

PRINTABLE WORKSHEET

Which losing strategy is yours?

Based on Terry Real's five losing strategies in Relational Life Therapy. Think about the last few times things got tense with your partner. Rate each statement: 1 = rarely, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, 4 = almost always.

1. I focus on getting the facts straight and showing what really happened. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

2. I tell my partner how they should handle it — or how they should feel about it. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

3. I say exactly what I feel in the moment, however it comes out. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

4. When I feel hurt, I find a way to make my partner feel some of it too. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

5. I go quiet, leave the room, or change the subject. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

6. I keep explaining my point until my partner sees it my way. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

7. I manage what my partner does so that things go the way I think they should. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

8. I tell myself I'm just being honest, even when I'm raising my voice or listing everything that's wrong. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

9. I bring up my partner's past mistakes to even the score. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

10. I agree just to end the conversation, without really meaning it. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

11. Even after we move on, part of me is still sure I was right. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

12. When I'm worried, I tighten my grip — more checking, more reminders, more rules. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

13. Once I start venting, it's hard for me to stop. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

14. I get sarcastic or cutting, or hold back affection, to make a point. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

15. I pull back emotionally and keep my real feelings to myself. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4

Scoring

Add your ratings for each strategy (each totals 3–12). Your highest total is your go-to move.

Being right (items 1, 6, 11): ____ Instead: Get curious first: reflect back what your partner said before making your case.

Controlling (items 2, 7, 12): ____ Instead: Turn instructions into requests, and accept that your partner can say no.

Unbridled self-expression (items 3, 8, 13): ____ Instead: Keep the honesty, add care: one issue, a soft start, talk about what you feel and want.

Retaliation (items 4, 9, 14): ____ Instead: Name the hurt directly instead of acting it out, and ask for the repair you want.

Withdrawal (items 5, 10, 15): ____ Instead: Stay in a little longer; if flooded, take a named 20-minute break and come back.

Interactive version, with your results calculated for you: victoriarelationshiptherapy.ca/tools-losing-strategies-quiz.html