



A CBT WORKBOOK FOR COUPLES, FROM THE SECURE BOND

The Relationship Foundations

The seven basics every love stands on, and nobody was ever taught. Learn them together, once, properly, and build everything else on solid ground.



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Nobody taught us how to love

We are taught mathematics, history, and how to parallel park. Nobody sits us down and teaches the thing our whole life will stand on: how to build a relationship that holds. So we improvise. We copy what we saw at home, the good and the bad, and we hope.

Hope is not a foundation. Skills are. Decades of relationship research agree on something beautiful: lasting couples are not luckier or more compatible. They are couples who, knowingly or not, practice a handful of learnable basics: trust built in small moments, honest communication, repair after conflict, and a friendship that gets tended like something precious.

This workbook walks you through the seven foundations, one by one. Read each one together. Write in it. Argue gently with it. By the last page, you will know exactly which foundations are strong in your home, and which one to tend first.

"A strong relationship is not found. It is built, foundation by foundation, by two people who decided to learn."

Esti Kedem

The rules of this workbook

- **No raising your voice.** Softly is the only way truth gets heard.
- **Validate first.** "I hear you, that makes sense" before any "but".
- **Never dismiss a feeling.** If your partner feels it, it is real.
- **Low scores are not failures.** They are simply the map of where to build next.
- **If it gets too much, close the book gently.** Return on purpose, another evening.

1 Safety and trust

The ground floor of everything. Trust is not a grand promise. It is the answer to three quiet questions your heart asks every day: Are you there for me? Do you have my back? Will you handle my soft places with care?

Research calls it the emotional bank account: trust is built in small deposits, a kept promise, a kind word, a turn toward your partner when they reach for you, and drained by small withdrawals nobody notices at the time.

One deposit my partner made this week that I never mentioned:

PARTNER 1

PARTNER 2

2 Real communication

Not more talking. Truer talking. The honest sentence instead of the hint. Listening to understand instead of listening to answer. The CBT key: most fights are two people defending themselves against a sentence that was never actually said.

The shape that works: "I feel... I need... I will." No "you always". No "you never".

One thing I keep hinting at, that deserves an honest sentence:

PARTNER 1

PARTNER 2

3 Knowing your needs

You cannot receive what you never named. Most of us expect our partner to guess, and then quietly grade them on it. That is not love. That is a trap for both of you. A named need is a door your partner can actually walk through.

I feel most loved when you...

PARTNER 1

PARTNER 2

4 Shared values and direction

Alignment does not mean being the same person. It means your deepest values point the same way: family, money, growth, faith, time. When they do, hard seasons feel like teamwork. When they quietly drift, small things feel like war.

The three values I most want our home to stand on:

PARTNER 1

PARTNER 2

5 Healthy boundaries

Two whole people make one strong couple. A boundary is not a wall against your partner. It is the honest line where you end and they begin, your time, your friendships, your own dreams. Closeness that costs you yourself is not closeness. It is slow disappearing.

One thing that is mine, that makes me a better partner when I keep it:

PARTNER 1

PARTNER 2

6 Repair

Every couple fights. Research is clear that fighting does not predict divorce, failing to repair does. Connected couples are not couples who never break things. They are couples who learned to reach across, first and fast.

Five words that end wars: "We are on the same team." Said after the storm, before sleep. Even 60% sincere still opens the door.

What repair looks like when it works for us:

7 The team

The quiet decision underneath all the others: it is never me against you. It is us against the problem. Teams keep small rituals, the morning coffee, the ten-minute check-in, the us-meeting, because what gets scheduled gets loved.

One small ritual that is ours, or will be, starting this week:

Your foundations check

Now walk the house together. For each foundation, agree on one honest number: 1 means it needs building, 10 means it is holding strong. No blame. This is a map, not a report card.

FOUNDATION	OUR SCORE TODAY (1-10)
1 • Safety and trust • we feel safe, backed, and handled with care	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2 • Real communication • honest sentences, real listening	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3 • Known needs • we name what we need instead of guessing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4 • Shared values • our deepest values point the same way	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5 • Healthy boundaries • two whole people, no disappearing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
6 • Repair • we find our way back, first and fast	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
7 • The team • us against the problem, with rituals that hold us	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Talk about it: *Circle your lowest number together. That is not your weakness. That is your next project, and now you know exactly where to build.*

The foundation we are tending first: _____ Our first small step this week:



Want a builder beside you?

These foundations are simple to read and profound to live. If you want a guide while you build, someone who brings the tools and walks the site with you, I would be glad to meet you both.

Book your Introduction Session

75 minutes · on Zoom · one deep session to map your foundations together

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