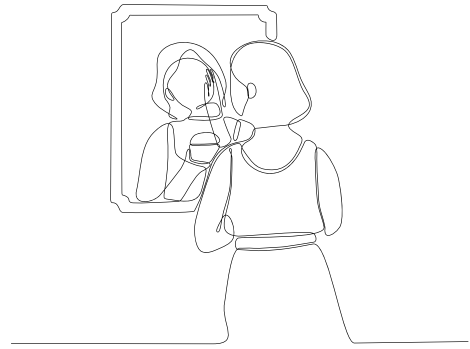


IDENTIFYING CORE NEGATIVE IMAGE (CNI)



Everyone in a long-term relationship has a Core Negative image (CNI) about their partner. Your CNI is an exaggerated version of them at their worst. The problem is that our partners also have a CNI about us. And the two tend to feed off of each other. But powerful things happen when we identify and name these CNIs. We learn how to 'bust' our partners' CNI by doing things that contradict it. Here's how you can identify and use CNIs as a compass.

Make 3 lists, keep them private for now.

1. Your CNI of your partner along with an example of behavior they do that reinforces your CNI of them
2. Your partner's CNI of you (take a guess- don't ask yet)
3. Three things your partner could do that would "bust" your CNI

TIP:

- Be specific and brief
- For the CNI, 3 – 5 adjectives will do

EXAMPLES:

- Controlling, angry, condescending and "critical mother"
- Irresponsible, fun-seeking, forgetful and selfish

WRITING A LETTER TO YOUR ADAPTIVE CHILD

Now, it's time to take turns sharing.

Partner A:

- Share your GUESS of your partner's CNI of you (partner affirms or disconfirms without sharing specifics)
- Share your CNI of your partner; give an example of one thing they do that reinforces the CNI
 - Partner B- acknowledges as much as they can.
- Share one example of a behavior your partner could do that would BUST the CNI

Partner B:

- Visualize your protective and containing boundaries. Put them up!
- Acknowledge what you can
- Ask for clarification if needed

Switch Roles:

- Partner B's turn to share- since you already know what your partner's CNI of you is, simply share your guess and say "you were close to my guess" or "this is what I actually said:"