

THE EMOTIONAL BUCKET

Every interaction adds to or takes away from the emotional climate of a relationship.

Imagine that each partner carries an emotional bucket.

Positive interactions **add** to the bucket.
Negative interactions **take away** from it.

These experiences gradually fill the bucket.

- Expressions of appreciation.
- Affection.
- Encouragement.
- Support.
- Quality time.
- Repair attempts.

These experiences slowly drain it.

- Criticism.
- Dismissiveness.
- Neglect.
- Harsh words.
- Broken promises.
- Repeated disconnection.

When emotional buckets are full, partners tend to be more patient, forgiving, and resilient during difficult moments.

When emotional buckets become depleted, even small frustrations can feel much larger than they actually are.

Strong relationships are not built by avoiding conflict. They are built by consistently adding positive experiences that strengthen goodwill and connection over time.

APPRECIATION

AFFECTION

QUALITY TIME

SUPPORT

ENCOURAGEMENT

REPAIR ATTEMPTS



CRITICISM

DISMISSIVENESS

NEGLECT

HARSH WORDS

BROKEN PROMISES

REPEATED DISCONNECTION



CLINICAL INSIGHT

Many couples focus almost entirely on resolving problems.

While problem-solving is important, healthy relationships also require intentional replenishment.

Connection is not maintained automatically.

It must be renewed regularly.

REFLECTION

Which experiences help fill my emotional bucket?

- ☐ Appreciation
- ☐ Affection
- ☐ Quality time
- ☐ Feeling understood
- ☐ Acts of service
- ☐ Encouragement
- ☐ Shared laughter
- ☐ Physical touch
- ☐ Other: _____

REFLECTION

Which experiences tend to drain my emotional bucket?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Criticism | ☐ Lack of affection |
| ☐ Being ignored | ☐ Lack of quality time |
| ☐ Broken promises | ☐ Harsh communication |
| ☐ Feeling dismissed | ☐ Other: _____ |
| ☐ Defensiveness | |

PARTNER DISCOVERY



Ask your partner:

"What helps fill your emotional bucket?"

Write their response below.



THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE

Choose one intentional action that will help fill your partner's emotional bucket this week.

CLOSING THOUGHT

Relationships thrive when connection is replenished as consistently as problems are discussed.

