

"Talk to me."

When you feel shut out and want to connect

I know something's going on, but I can't help because you won't talk to me.

- ☐ I want to know what's wrong.
- ☐ We'll deal with it.
- ☐ I'm getting mixed messages.
- ☐ I need you to be honest.
- ☐ I can't read your mind.
- ☐ I'm afraid to say anything.
- ☐ I don't want to make things worse.
- ☐ I hate when you give me The Silent Treatment.
- ☐ Being shut out feels like punishment.
- ☐ You say you're fine but it's obvious you're not.
- ☐ If you can't talk, give me an Ouch card.
- ☐ Sometimes your silence means you're hurt, but other times it means you're pissed off.

- ☐ I feel like a hostage.
- ☐ Your silence is deafening.
- ☐ I'm not going to do this.
- ☐ I'm hurt and pissed.
- ☐ Tell me if you're hurt or pissed.
- ☐ If you won't talk, I will leave.
- ☐ I don't want to leave, but this is torture.
- ☐ You can text me if that's easier.
- ☐ I won't walk on eggshells anymore.
- ☐ I need you to meet me halfway.
- ☐ You need to show me you're trying.
- ☐ Other

When you shut me out, I feel...

- ☐ sad.
- ☐ hopeless.
- ☐ helpless.
- ☐ anxious.
- ☐ lonely.
- ☐ rejected.
- ☐ disrespected.
- ☐ pressured to apologize.
- ☐ bullied.
- ☐ manipulated.
- ☐ controlled.
- ☐ resentful.
- ☐ unappreciated.
- ☐ foolish.
- ☐ trapped.
- ☐ like I'm walking on eggshells.
- ☐ like I've been silenced, too.

- ☐ scared.
- ☐ confused.
- ☐ hurt.
- ☐ resentful.
- ☐ humiliated.
- ☐ judged.
- ☐ discouraged.
- ☐ abused.
- ☐ like a beggar.
- ☐ like a disappointment.
- ☐ like I can't do anything right.
- ☐ like a little kid who's in trouble.
- ☐ like giving up.
- ☐ like leaving.
- ☐ other

Here's what you could do to make me feel better...

- ☐ No more Silent Treatment.
- ☐ Tell me what this is about.
- ☐ Don't hide things from me.
- ☐ Talk with me about it.
- ☐ Don't make me guess.
- ☐ Give me a chance.
- ☐ Trust me more.
- ☐ Ask for help.
- ☐ Assume the best about me.
- ☐ Do your part to reconnect.
- ☐ If I screw up, don't shut down.
- ☐ Don't punish me by pushing me away.
- ☐ Air any fears, fuck-ups, or grievances right away.
- ☐ Call a Time Out if you start to get overwhelmed.
- ☐ Use the STOP Strategy to calm down.
- ☐ Use Betsy's cards to help us reconnect and try again.
- ☐ Go for a walk.
- ☐ Tell me how to succeed.
- ☐ Don't wait for me to fail.
- ☐ Tell me the whole story.
- ☐ Don't wait until I make a complaint to make one of your own.
- ☐ Do The Art of Conversation with me once a week to work on communication.
- ☐ Book a practice session with Betsy.
- ☐ If I ask a question, give me an answer.
- ☐ Don't answer my questions with sarcasm.
- ☐ Talk about our needs and expectations before we head into difficult situations.
- ☐ Rather than complaining, suggest a plan that's a win-win for both of us.
- ☐ Other

If you're willing to do these things, I'll ...

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| ☐ know what's really going on. | ☐ be less critical. |
| ☐ be able to help. | ☐ stop resenting you. |
| ☐ trust you more. | ☐ stop avoiding you. |
| ☐ feel more relaxed. | ☐ stop feeling like a victim. |
| ☐ be less fearful. | ☐ feel like we're a team. |
| ☐ forgive the past. | ☐ like you better. |
| ☐ stop imagining the worst. | ☐ stop threatening to leave. |
| ☐ stop asking a million questions. | ☐ feel hopeful about the future. |
| ☐ give you space more easily. | ☐ know what I can do better. |
| ☐ feel more connected. | ☐ be more affectionate. |
| ☐ want to be together more often. | ☐ want to be more intimate. |
| ☐ work at being a better listener. | ☐ other |
| ☐ stop doing things that make it hard for you to talk to me. | |

**Now that I've been honest with you, please be honest with me.
I'm listening.**

Thanks.

Signed: