



## CONSENSUAL CONVERSATIONS FOR COUPLES

Initiating an uncomfortable conversation with our partner can be tricky. We can get so involved in our own anxious feelings that we forget about how it might be received by the other. A 'consensual conversation' means ensuring that you are both ready and prepared for the interaction. That way, uncomfortable conversations create an opportunity for collaboration and the building of emotional trust, and avoid emotional ambush.

1

Let your partner know "there's something that's been sitting with me that I'd like to talk about" (find your own words). "Are you open to this?"

2

If "Yes", agree on a time and location for the conversation to take place, which offer comfort and minimise interruption (leave electronic devices elsewhere)

3

Follow through on the arrangement and take some time before the conversation to bring yourself to a calm state that will help foster a positive interaction

4

Don't get drawn into the 'content' or trying to 'fix' the problem, but stay with a non-blaming sharing of your emotional experience