

INTIMACY

We use many terms when referring to intimacy (affection, sexual relationship), yet **intimacy** encompasses more than a physical relationship.

You might think a deep connection translates to a thriving physical relationship and vice versa. While this can be the case, it's not always true.

Each couple experiences intimacy differently and it might vary between partners as well.

This is why it is so important to talk about it!

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**Intimacy** is the deep connection we have with our partner emotionally, spiritually, physically, etc.

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When discussing intimacy, **it is crucial to call out the ‘compare and contrast’ model we often hold to our expectations.** Comparing and contrasting your intimate relationship to anyone else’s relationship (your previous relationships included) or even previous versions of the relationship you are in, is not a healthy perspective.

INSTEAD, WE  
ENCOURAGE  
YOU TO GAIN  
UNDERSTANDING BY  
BREAKING DOWN  
HOW YOU RELATE  
TO INTIMACY IN  
YOUR RELATIONSHIP  
AND **BUILD**  
**SKILLS TO MORE**  
**OPENLY DISCUSS**  
**INTIMACY.**

## DISCUSSION

// Consider affection – How do you and your partner like to receive affection from one another? How do you like to show affection? Are affectionate acts verbal or nonverbal in your relationship? How do you both respond to affection? Where did you and your partner learn about affection?

// Do you consider other areas of closeness in your relationship to be intimate? How is a close spiritual connection intimate? How is a close emotional connection intimate?

// Consider your sexual relationship – What do you and your partner need from each other to feel comfortable discussing your sexual relationship? Have you discussed preferences with regards to sex?

// When do you and your partner feel most intimate with one another? What barriers keep you from feeling close to each other?

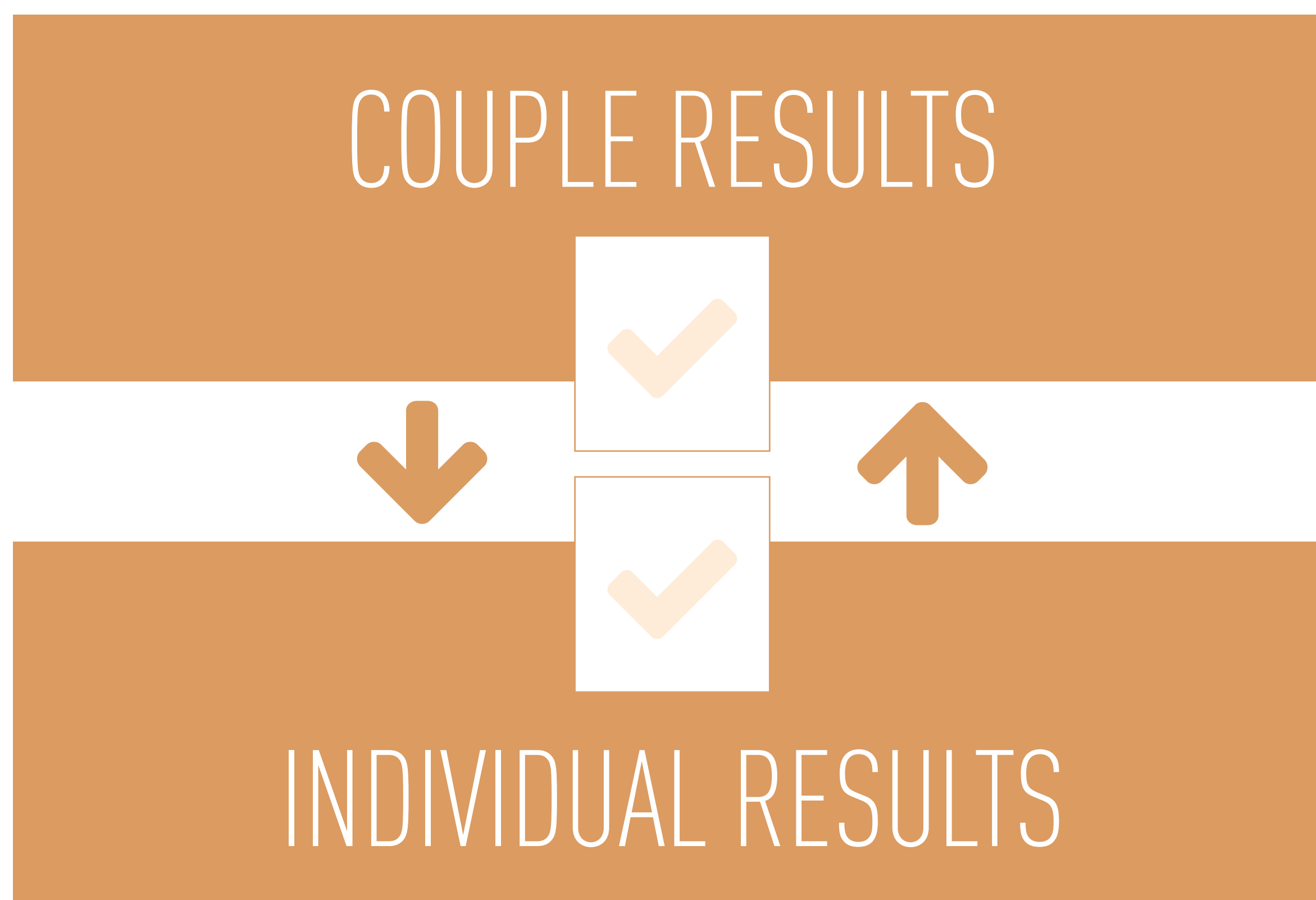
// How has intimacy changed over the length of your relationship? What outside factors impact intimacy (kids, job, other family members, health, money, etc.)?

# CHECK IN WITH CHECKUP

## Check in with your Couple Checkup results

by reviewing the *Sexual Expectations* (dating/engaged couples) or *Sexual Relationship* (married couples) section of your report.

Are you surprised by the suggested discussion items?



Does this accurately reflect how you feel about intimacy in your relationship?

## TAKEAWAY

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Intimacy is more than sex and affection; it's a deep connection that weaves throughout the entire relationship.

## APPLICATION

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Begin to recognize how each of you nurture intimacy in your relationship. Take note of when you feel that deep connection and when you feel it is missing. Communicate about feelings, preferences, and expectations regarding intimacy.

## NEXT STEPS

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If your goal is to increase intimacy in your relationship, you'll need to take some steps to get there. Decide on a time in the future to have a conversation about your level of connection. The key is to establish a time to discuss progress for the sake of accountability.

## SECTION SUGGESTION

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Consider exploring **Balancing I and We** or **Spirituality** next.