

## **Flip Flop Factor**

The qualities that you consider negative are the “flop” (negative) side of the equation. The qualities that appealed to you when you were first attracted to each other or that still appeal to you today are the “flip” (positive) side. Put them down next to each other and you will discover that neither side exists in isolation; that what you consider the good inevitably keeps company with the bad; and that the attributes that repel you may also attract you, when looked at from another angle.

Ask yourself: what attributes do I dislike about my partner, what does it reveal about me that I object to, or resent these attributes? Do they represent some disavowed aspect of myself?

In what ways are these negative attributes related to attributes that I admire, and that first attracted me to my partner? What does it reveal about me that I was attracted to these attributes in my partner? Do I lack them? Envy them?

\*Qualities you hate in your partner may be related to those you hate in yourself. They also may be related to qualities you lack, and envy your partner for having.

\*You assign different meaning to attributes after a while. For example, if you had a childhood in which there was chaos you may be attracted to someone who is dependable and predictable. These are traits you do not have but want due to an unstable childhood of chaos. Yet later in life you may assign different meaning to dependable and predictable as boring and selfish. You may say “he is so aloof, whereas before you saw it as he was so independent.

This exercise shows you that you choose this person for a reason. That reason may be that you’re drawn to what is unaccessed or undeveloped in yourself, what you envy, what you are incapable or expressing on your own. The very attributes you criticize are likely to be intimately related to another set of attributes that enhance you and help you transcend your limited self.