



Guilt and Relationships

Directions: Look at what is says on both sides of the page below as there are opposite types of personality traits on each side. Try to accurately place an **X** on the line in between each personality trait closest to the side that most describes you. The closer you place the X to one side, the stronger you feel that you exhibit that trait. If you are somewhere in between, place your X at the middle point.

Example:

(Middle Point)



Quiet

X

Talkative

(In this example above, the person is more talkative than quiet)

DO YOUR BEST TO COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:
(Keep in mind that this exercise is about identifying problems with guilt in relationships so both sides are negative. If you find you are neutral, not exhibiting either side, mark your X in the middle)



“Everything’s My Fault”

Somehow you end up taking the blame for almost everything in the relationship

“Nothing’s My Fault”

You usually try to convince your partner that problems are their fault, not yours

Chronically Disappointed

Always letting others know how they let you down: Critical

Disenchanted

Going out of your way to make sure you don’t live up to expectations

Enmeshed

The relationship itself becomes everything to you:
“Us” over “Me”

Egocentric

Even in a relationship, you tend to be self-centered and even selfish

“Control Freak”

You tend to try to control things; even things that are out of your control

Apathetic

Often you don’t care enough to think about your partners concerns

Hypersensitive

Easily hurt or offended

Numb

Unfeeling, Insensitive



Discuss the above exercise as a group, sharing your answers to the degree you are comfortable.

Then, when complete discuss the following process questions:

1. Was there an area that stood out to you that you need to work on the most?
2. What is an area of strength for you? (Something where you were in the middle)
3. Do you ever use “guilt trips” to influence others in your relationships? If so, how.
4. Do others use guilt to try to manipulate you? If so, does it work?

The remedy for preventing negative and manipulative use of guilt in relationships is to instead focus on developing positive qualities. To end on a positive note complete and discuss the following:

Review the following list of positive relationship qualities and rate yourself on a scale from 1 to 10 with regard to how well you bring that quality into your relationships:

<u>Positive Relationship Qualities</u>	Self-Rating 1-10
Honest and Open Communication: Sharing your true thoughts and feelings and actively listening to others as well	
Empathy and Compassion: Striving to understand your partner’s situation and viewpoint and genuinely caring enough to help	
Loyalty and Integrity You can be trusted to do the right thing, even when no one is looking and you follow through with your word	
Responsibility and Commitment You take care of your business in a reliable manner and you are dedicated to fulfill your obligations	
Dignity and Respect You show consideration and positive regard for your partners feelings, preferences and viewpoints	
Love and Forgiveness Deep admiration, affection, warmth, passion & connection, for better or for worse; in good times & bad	

Discuss your charts as a group. Emphasize what areas of strength you bring to your relationships