



SUPPORT EXERCISE

Take a sheet of paper and draw yourself (a dot, a circle will do) in the middle. Think about the people, occupations and objects in your life. Represent them around you on the piece of paper, showing their importance to you by closeness. Include all the usual preoccupations in life and usual material things (eg car, work, money, house, family, friends as well as more peripheral things as you think about everyday life). Represent them all on the piece of paper so that you can see what you are surrounded by.

When you have exhausted your list, take two different coloured pens. One colour is to represent the support you get from these items, the other is to represent the support you give out to them. Draw two lines between yourself and each of the items/people in your picture, showing by thickness/thinness of coloured pen how much you feel supported by each item and how much you feel they require your support. Some may have all one colour, showing support going just one way. Others may have a dotted line to describe v.little support, or a v.thick line to show a lot. Use your gut feeling rather than your thinking, if there is a conflict between the two (eg if you think you ought to be feeling supported by your partner because s/he says they support you, but you feel as though you are not supported, draw the line as you experience the feeling).

This can take as long as 30 minutes. Then take 10 mins each to look at what you would like to change. Look at the balance between what you give out and what you get in from your world. If, when you look at the lines, something bothers you – think about whether you can change anything to that bit of your support system. Try to come up with one thing you will change.