
RELATIONSHIP RESILIENCE

Navigating Seasons of Distance

When life pulls you apart: new baby, job change, grief, stress. How to stay connected when everything is working against you.

Boundary Agreement Resource Library

Dr. Hines Inc. | boundaryagreement.com

This guide is a coaching resource, not therapy or counseling.

Distance Is Normal

Every long-term relationship goes through seasons of distance. A new baby. A demanding job. A health crisis. Grief. Depression. Moving. Financial stress. These seasons are not signs of failure. They are tests of the foundation you have built.

The danger is not the distance itself. The danger is believing the distance is permanent, or worse, not noticing it until you are strangers sharing a house.

The New Baby Season

Sleep deprivation, identity shift, touched-out, zero alone time. The marriage gets put on autopilot while the baby takes the wheel. What to do: Schedule even 15 minutes of couple time daily. Not to talk about the baby. To talk about each other.

The Career Sprint

One partner is consumed by work. Long hours, travel, mental preoccupation. The other feels abandoned. What to do: Set a review date. 'This pace lasts until [date]. Then we reassess.' Open-ended sacrifice breeds resentment.

The Grief Season

Loss of a parent, a child, a pregnancy, a friend. Grief is lonely even when you are not alone because everyone grieves differently. What to do: Stop trying to grieve the same way. Ask 'What do you need right now?' daily.

The Mental Health Season

Depression, anxiety, PTSD. One partner is surviving, not thriving. The other feels helpless or frustrated. What to do: Get professional help. Support your partner without becoming their therapist. Maintain your own wellbeing.

The Rebuilding Season

After a betrayal, a crisis, a major failure. You are both in the same house but in different emotional time zones. What to do: Lower expectations to daily basics. 'Did we talk today? Did

we touch today? Did we choose each other today?' Start there.

EXERCISE: The Distance Assessment

Answer honestly about where you are right now.

What season are we in?

When did the distance start?

Does my partner know I feel distant? Have I told them?

What is one thing that would help me feel more connected?

What am I willing to do first, without waiting for my partner to act?

What does 'good enough' look like for this season?
