

# Relationship Skills Assessment

**Q1.** Your neighbor didn't wave back when you greeted them this morning. Which response best separates observable facts from interpretation?

- A)** "They didn't wave back when I said hello this morning. I don't know why."
- B)** "They're definitely upset about the noise from my party last weekend."
- C)** "They've never liked me—this just proves it."
- D)** "They're so rude and unfriendly to everyone on this street."

**Q2.** Your sister didn't call you on your birthday, though she usually does. Which thought best reflects separating what happened from the story you might tell?

- A)** "She didn't call on my birthday. That's unusual for her, and I don't know what's going on."
- B)** "She forgot because I'm not a priority in her life anymore."
- C)** "She's probably mad about the comment I made at Thanksgiving."
- D)** "She's always been self-centered—this is just more of the same."

**Q3.** At a community meeting, another resident spoke immediately after you and presented an opposing view. Which response best demonstrates identifying what occurred versus the story you might create?

- A)** "They were trying to undermine me in front of everyone."
- B)** "They spoke after me and shared a different perspective on the issue."
- C)** "They clearly coordinated this to make me look bad."
- D)** "They don't respect my voice in this community."

**Q4.** Your close friend has canceled plans with you three times in the past month, each time citing work conflicts. Which framing best separates fact from interpretation?

- A)** "They've canceled three times, always mentioning work. I'm wondering what's actually going on but I don't want to assume."
- B)** "They're avoiding me and using work as an excuse."
- C)** "They don't value our friendship the way I value theirs."

**D)** "Something must be wrong—they're pulling away from everyone, not just me."

**Q5.** Your adult child didn't respond to your text for two days, then sent a brief "Sorry, been busy" reply. Which response best demonstrates distinguishing observation from interpretation?

- A)** "They took two days to reply and said they were busy. I notice I'm making up stories about what that means."
- B)** "They're pulling away from me. The brief reply confirms they don't want to talk."
- C)** "They're clearly overwhelmed and I shouldn't take it personally."
- D)** "Two days is too long. They're being dismissive of our relationship."

**Q6.** At your book club, you suggested a title and no one responded before another member suggested something else. Which thought best separates what happened from interpretation?

- A)** "They ignored my suggestion because they don't think I have good taste."
- B)** "My suggestion didn't get a response before the conversation moved on. I'm not sure if people didn't hear it, weren't interested, or something else."
- C)** "The group always favors her suggestions over mine."
- D)** "They didn't respond, which means I should stop suggesting books."

**Q7.** Your partner sighed heavily when you mentioned visiting your parents this weekend. Which response best demonstrates separating observation from the story?

- A)** "They sighed when I mentioned the visit. I want to understand what that was about rather than assume."
- B)** "They hate my parents and don't want to go."
- C)** "They sighed because they're exhausted—it's not about my parents."
- D)** "That sigh tells me everything—they resent how much time I spend with my family."

**Q8.** Your longtime friend posted photos from a dinner party you weren't invited to. Before reaching out, which framing best separates fact from interpretation?

- A)** "They posted pictures from a gathering I wasn't included in. I have feelings about it, but I don't actually know why I wasn't there."
- B)** "They're excluding me from their new friend group."

- C) "They posted those pictures deliberately to hurt me."
- D) "Our friendship must be fading if they didn't think to invite me."

**Q9.** Your mother-in-law made a comment about how "quiet" your house is during a visit. Which thought best demonstrates distinguishing fact from interpretation?

- A) "She said the house is quiet. I'm reading that as criticism, but I should check what she actually meant."
- B) "She's judging us for not having kids yet."
- C) "She's passive-aggressively criticizing how we live."
- D) "She's hinting that we're boring and should be more social."

**Q10.** A member of your faith community whom you considered close has been sitting in a different area and not seeking you out after services for the past month. Which response best separates what you've observed from what you're concluding?

- A) "They've been sitting elsewhere and we haven't talked after services lately. I've noticed I'm assuming this is about me, but I don't actually know."
- B) "They're distancing themselves because of the disagreement we had about the fundraiser."
- C) "They've clearly found closer friends and don't need me anymore."
- D) "They're avoiding me, which means I must have done something wrong."

**Q11.** You're about to confront your roommate about their "inconsiderate" behavior. Before the conversation, what should you do first?

- A) Plan open-ended questions to understand their perspective
- B) Prepare to reflect back what they say to show you're listening
- C) Identify specific things they've done versus the label "inconsiderate" you've applied
- D) Practice staying calm if they become defensive

**Q12.** Your best friend made a joke at your expense in front of others, and you're hurt. You've been thinking "they don't respect me." Before talking to them, what would be most helpful?

- A) Plan how to express your hurt using "I" statements
- B) Prepare questions to understand what they were thinking
- C) Separate the specific joke from your conclusion about respect

- D) Decide whether to raise it or let it go

**Q13.** You and your sibling have been in a cold conflict for weeks. You're convinced "they always have to be right." Before attempting to repair, what's the most important first step?

- A) Reflect on your own contribution to the conflict
- B) Plan how to acknowledge their perspective
- C) Examine specific interactions and whether "always has to be right" is a characterization you're making
- D) Decide what outcome you want from the conversation

**Q14.** Your co-parent keeps adjusting pickup times at the last minute. You've been telling yourself "they don't respect my schedule." Before raising this, what would be most useful?

- A) Document the instances so you have evidence
- B) Plan how to propose a more consistent schedule
- C) Examine the specific instances and what you actually know about why changes were made
- D) Prepare to validate their challenges while also asserting your needs

**Q15.** Two friends in your social circle are feuding and each has told you the other is "toxic." Before taking sides, what skill would be most valuable to apply?

- A) Reflective listening to understand each friend's pain
- B) Asking each friend curious questions about what happened
- C) Helping each friend identify specific incidents versus the characterization "toxic"
- D) Staying neutral and not getting involved

**Q16.** \*Context: A person processing conflict with their partner, talking to a friend.\* Which skill is this person demonstrating?

- A) Giving their partner the benefit of the doubt
- B) Separating what was actually said from the characterization they've applied
- C) Preparing to have a more productive follow-up conversation
- D) Minimizing their own feelings to keep the peace

**Q17.** \*Context: In a family mediation session.\* Which skill is the mediator helping the adult child practice?

- A) Expressing feelings more clearly
- B) Moving from a characterization ("always criticizes")
- C) Validating her own parenting choices

**D)** Preparing to set boundaries with her mother

**Q18.** \*Context: A person journaling after a difficult interaction:\* Which skill is evident in this journal entry?

- A)** Processing emotions through writing
- B)** Distinguishing the actual words from the meaning being assigned to them
- C)** Preparing a response to her mother
- D)** Practicing self-compassion

**Q19.** \*Context: Two neighbors discussing a community dispute:\* Which skill is Neighbor B helping Neighbor A apply?

- A)** Calming down before taking action
- B)** Separating specific actions from a characterization about intent
- C)** Finding common ground with the Hendersons
- D)** Documenting incidents for a formal complaint

**Q20.** \*Context: A couple in therapy:\* Which skill is the therapist teaching?

- A)** Communication improvement techniques
- B)** Separating observable incidents from the overarching interpretation
- C)** How to express needs more effectively
- D)** Empathy for their partner's perspective

**Q21.** \*Context: A conversation between longtime friends:\* Which skill would most improve this conversation?

- A)** Taking turns speaking without interruption
- B)** Both parties separating specific behaviors from the accusations they're making
- C)** Using "I feel" statements instead of "you" statements
- D)** Taking a break to calm down

**Q22.** \*Context: A parent-adult child phone call:\* Which skill would most help this exchange?

- A)** Active listening to understand each other's feelings
- B)** Both parties identifying specific expectations versus characterizations like "impossible to please" and "always favored"
- C)** The adult child validating the parent's desire for more connection
- D)** The parent acknowledging the adult child's other responsibilities

**Q23.** \*Context: A group text among friends planning an event:\* Which skill is most notably absent?

- A)** Conflict resolution techniques

**B)** Separating specific incidents from generalizations and accusations

**C)** De-escalation through humor

**D)** Group facilitation

**Q24.** \*Context: A tense exchange between in-laws:\* Which skill would most improve this conversation?

- A)** The spouse validating the son-in-law's feelings
- B)** Both parties identifying specific incidents rather than using characterizations like "undermining," "too sensitive," and "paranoid"
- C)** Setting boundaries with the mother
- D)** The son-in-law expressing appreciation for his spouse's family

**Q25.** \*Context: A person venting to their therapist before a family gathering:\* Which skill would most help this person prepare more effectively?

- A)** Planning responses to anticipated difficult moments
- B)** Examining which predictions are based on specific past events versus patterns assumed to continue
- C)** Setting intentions for how they want to show up
- D)** Identifying an ally at the gathering

**Q26.** Your friend says: "I've been taking care of my mom every day after work, and my siblings haven't offered to help once. I'm exhausted and I feel completely alone in this." Which response best demonstrates reflective listening?

- A)** "You should talk to your siblings directly about sharing the responsibility."
- B)** "You're carrying your mom's care by yourself with no support from your siblings, and it's left you exhausted and isolated. That's so much to hold alone."
- C)** "At least you're able to be there for her. Some people don't have that option."
- D)** "I get it—family dynamics are hard. My sister never helps either."

**Q27.** Your partner says: "Every time I bring up how I'm feeling, you get defensive. I'm starting to think there's no point in trying to talk to you about anything hard." Which response best reflects what they're experiencing?

- A)** "I don't always get defensive—what about last week when I listened the whole time?"
- B)** "You feel like when you share something difficult, I react in a way that shuts things down, and now you're questioning whether it's even worth trying. That sounds really lonely."
- C)** "I'm sorry you feel that way. I'll try to do better."

**D)** "Why didn't you bring this up before it got to this point?"

**Q28.** A neighbor says: "We've lived here for twenty years. Now there's construction, traffic, strangers everywhere. It doesn't feel like our neighborhood anymore." Which response best demonstrates understanding what they said and how they feel?

**A)** "Change is hard, but development brings good things too—like new restaurants."

**B)** "You've called this place home for two decades, and now it's transforming into something unrecognizable. That loss of the place you knew—that's real grief."

**C)** "Have you gone to any of the community meetings about the development?"

**D)** "I know what you mean. The traffic has been terrible for everyone."

**Q29.** Your adult child says: "You're always giving me advice I didn't ask for. It makes me feel like you don't think I can handle my own life." Which response best reflects their experience?

**A)** "I'm just trying to help because I care about you."

**B)** "You're telling me that when I offer advice without being asked, it lands as a vote of no confidence in you—like I don't trust you to figure things out yourself."

**C)** "I didn't realize it came across that way. I'll stop giving advice."

**D)** "What kind of support would you like from me instead?"

**Q30.** A member of your community group says: "I've volunteered for this organization for five years and I just found out they're eliminating my role. They didn't even ask for my input." Which response best demonstrates reflective listening?

**A)** "Five years of service and then your role disappears without anyone consulting you—that's got to feel like a real dismissal of everything you've contributed."

**B)** "That's frustrating. Did they say why they're making the change?"

**C)** "Maybe they have budget constraints you don't know about."

**D)** "You should write to the board about how this was handled."

**Q31.** Your sibling says: "I was there for you through your whole divorce, and now that I'm going through something hard, you're barely checking in." Which response best reflects what they're sharing?

**A)** "I've been really busy, but you're right—I should be more present."

**B)** "You showed up for me during one of the hardest times in my life, and now you're going through something and it feels like I'm not showing up for you the same way. That imbalance hurts."

**C)** "I didn't realize you needed more from me. How can I help?"

**D)** "We have different ways of handling things. I thought you wanted space."

**Q32.** A friend going through a breakup says: "I keep thinking about all the time I invested. Six years. And now I have to start completely over. I'm 34." Which response best demonstrates restating their message while acknowledging emotion?

**A)** "Six years feels like a huge investment, and now you're facing starting over at a time when that feels especially daunting. That combination of loss and fear of what's next is really heavy."

**B)** "34 is still young—you have plenty of time to find someone."

**C)** "At least you found out now instead of ten years from now."

**D)** "What are you thinking you want next?"

**Q33.** Your parent says: "I used to be able to do everything myself. Now I need help with things I've done my whole life. It's humiliating." Which response best demonstrates reflective listening?

**A)** "You've always been so independent, and needing help with things you used to handle easily—that's a real blow to your sense of self. Humiliating is a strong word, and it sounds like it's exactly right."

**B)** "It's normal to need more help as we age. There's no shame in it."

**C)** "We're happy to help. Just let us know what you need."

**D)** "You can still do so much on your own. Focus on what you can do."

**Q34.** Your teenage child says: "You don't understand anything about my life. Everything I care about, you think is stupid." Which response best demonstrates reflective listening?

**A)** "I don't think the things you care about are stupid. Give me an example."

**B)** "It sounds like you're feeling like I don't get your world, and that when you share what matters to you, it doesn't feel valued. That disconnect is painful."

**C)** "I'm trying my best to understand. This is hard for me too."

**D)** "I care about what you care about. I just want what's best for you."

**Q35.** Your friend is upset and talking quickly about a falling out with another friend. They seem like they want to process, not problem-solve. What skill would be most appropriate right now?

- A)** Asking open questions to understand what happened
- B)** Helping them separate what happened from the interpretation
- C)** Restating what you're hearing to help them feel understood
- D)** Sharing a similar experience to show you relate

**Q36.** Your partner just shared something vulnerable about feeling disconnected in your relationship. What should you do first?

- A)** Ask what would help them feel more connected
- B)** Share your own experience of the relationship
- C)** Reflect back what they shared and acknowledge how hard it was to say
- D)** Explain your perspective on why the disconnection has happened

**Q37.** You're having a difficult conversation with your sibling. They've just said something that hurt, and you notice they're starting to shut down. What would be most effective?

- A)** Express how their words affected you
- B)** Pause and reflect back what they seem to be experiencing right now
- C)** Ask what they need to feel safe continuing the conversation
- D)** Suggest taking a break and coming back to it

**Q38.** A neighbor is upset about a decision your homeowners association made. They're venting to you but you actually support the decision. What should you do first?

- A)** Listen and reflect their frustration before sharing your own view
- B)** Explain the reasoning behind the decision
- C)** Ask questions to understand their specific concerns
- D)** Validate their right to disagree while noting the decision is final

**Q39.** A family member is sharing their distress about their adult child's choices. You actually think the adult child is making reasonable decisions, but the family member is clearly hurting. What's most important to do first?

- A)** Acknowledge their pain and reflect what they're experiencing before offering perspective
- B)** Gently share why you think the adult child's choices might be understandable
- C)** Ask questions about what specifically worries them
- D)** Reassure them that their child will be okay

**Q40.** You've been in conflict with your co-parent. They've just explained their perspective at length and you disagree with much of it. What would be most effective to do next?

- A)** Share where you see things differently
- B)** Reflect back what you heard them say to confirm you understood before responding
- C)** Ask clarifying questions about points of disagreement
- D)** Look for common ground you can both agree on

**Q41.** \*Context: A friend responds to another friend's frustration:\* Which skill is Friend B demonstrating?

- A)** Problem-solving the friendship dynamic
- B)** Paraphrasing the situation while naming the emotional impact
- C)** Helping Friend A identify which friendships to invest in
- D)** Validating that Friend A's friends are being unfair

**Q42.** \*Context: A parent responds to a teenager who came home upset:\* Which skill is the parent demonstrating?

- A)** Helping the teen problem-solve social situations
- B)** Restating what happened and acknowledging the emotional experience
- C)** Normalizing the difficulty of adolescence
- D)** Encouraging the teen to reach out to others

**Q43.** \*Context: A conversation between spouses:\* Which skill is Spouse B using?

- A)** Encouraging Spouse A to set boundaries
- B)** Accurately reflecting both the event and the complex emotions
- C)** Validating that the mother's behavior was wrong
- D)** Helping Spouse A plan a response for next time

**Q44.** \*Context: A community leader responds to a long-time member's frustration:\* Which skill is the leader demonstrating?

- A)** Apologizing for the organization's response
- B)** Reflecting the member's experience while naming the emotional weight

- C) Defending the organization's decision-making process
- D) Asking for specifics about what happened

**Q45.** \*Context: A friend responds to someone going through a divorce.\* Which skill is the friend demonstrating?

- A) Helping reframe the situation more positively
- B) Restating the multiple layers and naming the emotional core
- C) Offering perspective on divorce not being a failure
- D) Asking what support would be helpful

**Q46.** \*Context: A friend responds to another friend's struggle.\* Which skill is most notably missing from Friend B's response?

- A) Asking about what happened with the application
- B) Acknowledging the emotional weight of the news before moving to alternatives
- C) Helping separate facts from interpretations about what this means
- D) Offering to help research other programs

**Q47.** \*Context: A conversation between family members.\* Which skill is most missing?

- A) Asking what caused the estrangement
- B) Reflecting the pain of two years of silence before offering suggestions
- C) Staying neutral between grandmother and aunt
- D) Sharing perspective on family reconciliation

**Q48.** \*Context: A partner responds after a vulnerability.\* Which skill is most missing?

- A) Asking what prompted this fear
- B) Reflecting what was shared and acknowledging the vulnerability of the moment
- C) Sharing their own fears about the relationship
- D) Reassuring Partner A about the relationship's stability

**Q49.** \*Context: A group chat after a friend shares news.\* Which skill is most notably absent from the group's response?

- A) Asking what led to the decision
- B) Reflecting the complex pain of ending something even when it was your choice
- C) Giving Kai space to process
- D) Validating that the relationship had positives

**Q50.** \*Context: A volunteer coordinator responds to a long-time volunteer.\* Which skill is most missing?

- A) Explaining the scheduling policy more thoroughly
- B) Acknowledging the volunteer's service and reflecting how the response landed before explaining constraints
- C) Offering to help find a replacement this one time
- D) Validating that the policy could be frustrating

**Q51.** Your friend mentions they're thinking about ending a long-term friendship. Which question best invites genuine exploration?

- A) "What's been shifting for you in that friendship?"
- B) "Don't you think you should try to work it out first?"
- C) "Is this about what happened at her birthday party?"
- D) "Are you sure you're not just going through a rough patch?"

**Q52.** Your sibling seems hesitant about attending a family event. Which question would best help you understand what's going on?

- A) "What's making you hesitate about coming?"
- B) "You're not going to skip it just to avoid Dad, are you?"
- C) "Don't you think Mom would be hurt if you didn't come?"
- D) "Is it the travel or the family drama?"

**Q53.** A neighbor says they're considering moving out of the neighborhood. Which question best opens exploration?

- A) "What would you miss about this place, and what are you hoping to find somewhere else?"
- B) "Is this because of the new development?"
- C) "Don't you think you'd regret leaving after being here so long?"
- D) "Have you actually looked at what housing costs in other areas?"

**Q54.** Your partner has seemed withdrawn lately. Which question would best invite them to share?

- A) "Is this about work or is it something with us?"
- B) "Why are you being so distant lately?"
- C) "What's been weighing on you?"
- D) "Don't you think you should talk to someone about whatever's going on?"

**Q55.** A friend keeps declining social invitations. You want to understand without pressuring. Which question works best?

- A) "Are you avoiding everyone or just me?"
- B) "What would feel doable for you right now in terms of getting together?"
- C) "Why don't you want to hang out anymore?"
- D) "Don't you think isolating is making things worse?"

**Q56.** Your parent makes a comment that suggests they're unhappy with how you're raising your kids. Which question would best open a constructive conversation?

- A) "What is it about my parenting that concerns you?"
- B) "Why do you always have to criticize how I do things?"
- C) "Can you just let me parent my own children?"
- D) "Don't you remember how things were when you were raising us?"

**Q57.** In a community meeting, someone expresses frustration that "nothing ever changes around here." Which question would best help understand their concern?

- A) "What changes were you hoping to see, and what's gotten in the way?"
- B) "Don't you think that's a bit of an exaggeration?"
- C) "Have you volunteered to help with any of the initiatives?"
- D) "Is this about the park proposal or the traffic issue?"

**Q58.** Your teenage child says they hate school. Which question would best invite them to share more?

- A) "What is it about school that's not working for you right now?"
- B) "Is someone bullying you?"
- C) "Don't you think 'hate' is a strong word?"
- D) "What about seeing your friends—don't you like that part?"

**Q59.** A friend is considering a major life change that seems risky to you. Which question would best help you understand their thinking without pushing your concern?

- A) "Have you really thought about what could go wrong?"
- B) "What's drawing you toward making this change?"
- C) "Is this because you're unhappy with how things are now?"
- D) "Don't you think you should get more advice before deciding?"

**Q60.** Your co-parent wants to change the custody schedule. You're frustrated but want to understand before reacting. Which question works best?

- A) "What's behind wanting to make this change?"
- B) "Are you doing this to get back at me for something?"
- C) "Don't you think the current schedule is working fine?"
- D) "Is this really about the kids or about your new relationship?"

**Q61.** You've been reflecting back what your friend is saying, and they seem to feel heard. Now you want to help them think through their situation more deeply. What would be most useful next?

- A) Offer your perspective on the situation
- B) Ask curious questions to help them explore different angles
- C) Help them identify what facts support their feelings
- D) Share what you would do in their situation

**Q62.** A family member is upset with you but only giving vague explanations like "you just don't get it." What skill would be most helpful?

- A) Reflecting back that they seem frustrated and you want to understand
- B) Asking open questions that invite them to be more specific
- C) Explaining your perspective more clearly
- D) Giving them space and trying again later

**Q63.** You and your partner disagree about how to handle a conflict with neighbors. You've each shared your position. The conversation is going in circles. What would help most?

- A) Summarize both positions to find common ground
- B) Ask your partner questions about what's underlying their position
- C) Take a break and return to it later
- D) Suggest compromising in the middle

**Q64.** A friend is complaining about the same relationship problem they've complained about many times. You've listened and reflected repeatedly. What might be useful now?

- A) Point out that this is a recurring pattern
- B) Ask questions that help them explore what's keeping them in the situation
- C) Share your honest opinion about what they should do

**D)** Set a boundary about how much of this you can listen to

**Q65.** Your adult child has made a decision you disagree with. You've already expressed your concern once. The decision stands. What would be most helpful now?

- A)** Accept the decision and let it go
- B)** Ask curious questions to understand their reasoning, not to change their mind
- C)** Make sure they know your door is open if it doesn't work out
- D)** Explain your concern one more time, more clearly

**Q66.** \*Context: A parent talks with their adult child:\* Which skill is the parent demonstrating?

- A)** Supporting their child's decision unconditionally
- B)** Asking open, exploratory questions to understand the motivation
- C)** Hiding their concern to avoid conflict
- D)** Helping their child think through logistics

**Q67.** \*Context: A friend responds to relationship concerns:\* Which skill is Person B using?

- A)** Helping Person A make a decision
- B)** Asking exploratory questions that invite Person A to examine both paths
- C)** Staying neutral to avoid influencing the decision
- D)** Reflecting Person A's ambivalence

**Q68.** \*Context: A neighbor conversation about a community conflict:\* Which skill is Neighbor B demonstrating?

- A)** Challenging Neighbor A's interpretation of events
- B)** Asking questions that invite Neighbor A to examine their assumption
- C)** Defending the neighborhood council
- D)** Gathering information about the council's position

**Q69.** \*Context: A couple discussing a potential move:\* Which skill is Partner B using?

- A)** Trying to change Partner A's mind about Seattle
- B)** Acknowledging the position and then asking open questions to understand the underlying concerns
- C)** Accepting the decision and moving on
- D)** Negotiating a compromise

**Q70.** \*Context: A coach responds to a mentee's career concern:\* Which skill is the coach

demonstrating?

- A)** Helping the mentee weigh pros and cons
- B)** Asking open questions that invite exploration of both options
- C)** Staying neutral to let the mentee decide independently
- D)** Assessing the mentee's qualifications for school

**Q71.** \*Context: A parent responds to their teenager's frustration:\* Which skill would most improve the parent's response?

- A)** Validating that college isn't for everyone
- B)** Asking open questions about what's behind the resistance
- C)** Explaining the benefits of college
- D)** Sharing their own college experience

**Q72.** \*Context: A conversation between friends:\* Which skill is most missing?

- A)** Reflecting Mei's feelings about the relationship
- B)** Asking curious questions about what's driving Mei's thinking
- C)** Staying neutral about Jordan
- D)** Offering support for whatever Mei decides

**Q73.** \*Context: A difficult family conversation:\* Which skill is most notably absent?

- A)** Validating Sibling A's need for boundaries
- B)** Asking open questions about what's driving the need for distance
- C)** Sharing their own relationship with Dad
- D)** Suggesting family therapy

**Q74.** \*Context: A neighborhood association meeting:\* Which skill would most improve the president's response?

- A)** Defending the block party's value
- B)** Asking the resident what's behind their suggestion without defensiveness
- C)** Taking a vote on the proposal
- D)** Tabling the discussion for a future meeting

**Q75.** \*Context: A friend responds to news about a mutual acquaintance:\* Which skill is most missing from Taylor's responses?

- A)** Discretion about other people's relationships
- B)** Asking Quinn open questions about what the news brought up for them
- C)** Empathy for Sam and Avery
- D)** Reflecting Quinn's concerns back to them



**Q76.** Your best friend says: "I feel like ever since you got promoted, you don't have time for me. I'm happy for you, but I also feel abandoned." Which response best demonstrates restating their message while acknowledging their emotional experience?

- A)** "You're noticing we have less time together since my promotion, and you're holding two things at once—genuine happiness for me and feeling left behind. That's complicated."
- B)** "I'm sorry you feel abandoned. I've just been so busy. Let's schedule something soon."
- C)** "You're feeling left out since my promotion. I'll try to be better about making time."
- D)** "It sounds like you feel abandoned. Why didn't you say something sooner?"

**Q77.** Your parent says: "I don't understand why you can't just visit more often. Your brother manages to come by every week." Before responding, which approach would be most useful?

- A)** Explain your schedule constraints and competing demands
- B)** Reflect back what they're experiencing before addressing the comparison
- C)** Ask open questions about what visiting more often would mean to them
- D)** Separate the fact (your brother visits weekly, you don't

**Q78.** A member of your community group says: "I feel like the leadership doesn't care about members who've been here a long time. All the attention goes to new people." Which response best demonstrates reflective listening?

- A)** "That's not true—we just honored long-term members last month."
- B)** "You're feeling like your tenure here isn't valued, and that the newcomers get attention that you don't. After being here a long time, that invisibility stings."
- C)** "You're feeling undervalued compared to new members. What would make you feel more appreciated?"
- D)** "It sounds like you feel overlooked. I can bring that feedback to the leadership team."

**Q79.** Your partner says: "You always put your friends before me." You want to respond skillfully. What should you do first?

- A)** Reflect back that they're feeling deprioritized compared to your friends
- B)** Ask for specific examples of when they felt put second

**C)** Explain that "always" isn't accurate and cite counter-examples

**D)** Examine whether they've given you specific observations or if "always put your friends first" is a characterization to explore

**Q80.** Your adult sibling says: "You were always Mom's favorite. You have no idea what it was like for me growing up." Which response best demonstrates separating facts from interpretations? | Q# | Skill | Type | Answer | Difficulty |

1	1	A	A	Easy	2	1	A	A	Easy	3	1	A	B	Easy	4	1	A	A	Medium	5	1	A	A	Medium	6	1	A	B	Medium	7	1	A	A	Medium	8	1	A	A	Medium	9	1	A	A	Hard	10	1	A	A	Hard	11	1	B	C	Easy	12	1	B	C	Medium	13	1	B	C	Medium	14	1	B	C	Medium	15	1	B	C	Hard	16	1	C	B	Easy	17	1	C	B	Medium	18	1	C	B	Easy	19	1	C	B	Medium	20	1	C	B	Medium	21	1	D	B	Easy	22	1	D	B	Medium	23	1	D	B	Medium	24	1	D	B	Medium	25	1	D	B	Hard	26	2	A	B	Easy	27	2	A	B	Easy	28	2	A	B	Medium	29	2	A	B	Medium	30	2	A	A	Medium	31	2	A	B	Medium	32	2	A	A	Medium	33	2	A	A	Hard	34	2	A	B	Hard	35	2	B	C	Easy	36	2	B	C	Easy	37	2	B	B	Medium	38	2	B	A	Medium	39	2	B	A	Medium	40	2	B	B	Medium	41	2	C	B	Easy	42	2	C	B	Easy	43	2	C	B	Medium	44	2	C	B	Medium	45	2	C	B	Medium	46	2	D	B	Easy	47	2	D	B	Easy	48	2	D	B	Medium	49	2	D	B	Medium	50	2	D	B	Medium	51	3	A	A	Easy	52	3	A	A	Easy	53	3	A	A	Easy	54	3	A	C	Easy	55	3	A	B	Medium	56	3	A	A	Medium	57	3	A	A	Medium	58	3	A	A	Medium	59	3	A	B	Medium	60	3	A	A	Medium	61	3	B	B	Easy	62	3	B	B	Medium	63	3	B	B	Medium	64	3	B	B	Medium	65	3	B	B	Hard	66	3	C	B	Easy	67	3	C	B	Easy	68	3	C	B	Medium	69	3	C	B	Medium	70	3	C	B	Easy	71	3	D	B	Easy	72	3	D	B	Easy	73	3	D	B	Easy	74	3	D	B	Medium	75	3	D	B	Medium	76	2	A	A	Extra Hard	77	1	B	D	Extra Hard	78	2	A	B	Extra Hard	79	1	B	D	Extra Hard	80	1	A	B	Extra Hard
Answer				Count	Percentage																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																										

Answer	Count	Percentage																			
-----	-----	-----		A	21	26.3%		B	48	60.0%		C	10	12.5%		D	1	1.3%		Skill	Count
-----	-----		Skill 1 (Facts vs. Interpretations)	25		Skill 2 (Reflective Listening)	25		Skill 3 (Open Questions)	25		Mixed/Extra Hard	5		Difficulty	Count					
-----	-----		Easy	26		Medium	39		Hard	8		Extra Hard	7	The questions cover: -							
 \*\*Romantic partnerships:\*\* current, ending, long-term, co-parenting - \*\*Family:\*\* parents, siblings, adult

children, teenagers, in-laws, extended family -  
\*\*Friendships:\*\* close friends, longtime friends, friend groups, mutual friends - \*\*Community:\*\* neighbors, HOAs, community organizations, faith communities, volunteer groups - \*\*Interpersonal:\*\* book clubs, social circles, mentoring relationships Would you like me to adjust the answer distribution, add more questions at specific difficulty levels, or create variations with different relationship contexts?

- A)** "That's not true. Mom was hard on me too."
- B)** "I hear you saying you experienced our childhood very differently than I did, and that from your perspective, there was favoritism. I'd like to understand more about what that was like for you."
- C)** "You're carrying a lot of pain from growing up, and it sounds like you felt unseen. That must have been really lonely."
- D)** "What specifically happened that makes you feel I was the favorite?"

# Answer Key

**Q1: A**

A states only what happened and acknowledges uncertainty. B assumes a specific cause. C treats a pattern as confirmed. D generalizes to character judgment.

**Q2: A**

A notes the fact and acknowledges it's unusual without assigning cause. B assumes deprioritization. C assumes anger about a specific event. D attacks character.

**Q3: B**

B describes the observable sequence without intent. A assumes undermining. C assumes coordination. D jumps to a respect judgment.

**Q4: A**

A states the facts and acknowledges uncertainty. B assumes avoidance. C judges relative value. D assumes a broader pattern without evidence.

**Q5: A**

A states facts and names the tendency to interpret. B treats distance as confirmed. C is a positive interpretation but still interpretation. D judges their behavior.

**Q6: B**

B describes what happened and lists multiple possible explanations. A assumes judgment. C assumes a pattern of favoritism. D leaps to a behavioral conclusion.

**Q7: A**

A describes the sigh and expresses curiosity. B and D assume negative meaning. C assumes a positive explanation. Only A stays genuinely open.

**Q8: A**

A states the observable fact, acknowledges feelings, and notes the limit of knowledge. B, C, and D all assume intent or meaning.

**Q9: A**

A notes the actual words, acknowledges the interpretation being made, and expresses intention to verify. B, C, and D all assume specific critical meanings.

**Q10: A**

A describes the observations, acknowledges the assumption being made, and stays open. B assumes a specific cause. C assumes replacement. D assumes wrongdoing.

**Q11: C**

"Inconsiderate" is a judgment. Before any conversation, identifying specific behaviors prevents accusation and enables discussion of concrete things.

**Q12: C**

The joke is a fact; "they don't respect me" is interpretation. Examining whether that conclusion is warranted by this single event prevents escalation.

**Q13: C**

"Always has to be right" is a characterization that may or may not be supported by specific incidents. Examining this prevents entering the conversation with a fixed story.

**Q14: C**

There are facts (last-minute changes) and an interpretation (don't respect my schedule). Examining what you know about reasons prevents accusation and may reveal alternative explanations.

**Q15: C**

"Toxic" is a sweeping interpretation. Before listening (A) or asking questions (B), understanding what specific behaviors are being characterized helps assess the situation.

**Q16: B**

The person explicitly separates the actual words ("can we talk about this tomorrow") from the interpretation ("shut me down"). This is the core skill, not benefit of the doubt or minimizing.

**Q17: B**

The mediator helps move from "always criticizes" to specific incidents (vegetable question, buying clothes), which is the facts vs. interpretation skill.

**Q18: B**

The journaler explicitly separates the question asked from the interpretation about disappointment and failure.

**Q19: B**

Neighbor B helps move from "trying to control everything" to specific events (email, HOA report) and names the interpretation.

**Q20: B**

The therapist explicitly separates three specific events from the sweeping interpretation and names the distinction.

**Q21: B**

"Distant," "don't care," "selfish," and "only call when you need something" are all interpretations. Neither identifies specific behaviors that led to these conclusions.

**Q22: B**

"Impossible to please" and "always favored" are characterizations. Identifying specific observations and expectations would ground the conversation.

**Q23: B**

"Always had a problem," "never help with anything," and the initial vague accusation are all generalizations without specific grounding.

**Q24: B**

"Undermining," "too sensitive," "always take her side," and "paranoid" are all interpretations treated as facts. Specific incidents would ground the discussion.

**Q25: B**

"Definitely," "will," and "always" treat interpretations of past behavior as certain predictions. Examining the actual evidence would reduce anticipatory reactivity.

**Q26: B**

B paraphrases the situation (sole caregiver, no sibling help) and names the emotional experience (exhausted, isolated). A gives advice. C minimizes. D redirects to own experience.

**Q27: B**

B paraphrases their experience (sharing leads to shutdown, questioning if it's worth it) and names the emotional impact (lonely). A defends. C is hollow. D deflects.

**Q28: B**

B reflects the content (long history, transformation) and names the emotion (loss, grief). A offers a silver lining. C jumps to action. D personalizes without acknowledging their experience.

**Q29: B**

B paraphrases (unsolicited advice) and names the emotional impact (vote of no confidence, not trusted). A defends intent. C capitulates without reflecting. D moves to solutions too fast.

**Q30: A**

A paraphrases (five years, role eliminated, no consultation) and names the emotional dimension (dismissal of contribution). B asks before acknowledging. C offers explanation. D advises.

**Q31: B**

B reflects the content (they showed up, now you're not) and names the emotional impact (imbalance, hurts). A acknowledges fault but doesn't reflect their experience. C moves to solutions. D defends.

**Q32: A**

A reflects the content (six years, starting over, age concern) and names emotions (loss, fear, heaviness). B and C minimize. D moves past the emotional processing.

**Q33: A**

A reflects the content (loss of independence) and honors the emotional language they used (humiliating). B normalizes and dismisses. C is supportive but skips the emotion. D redirects to positivity.

**Q34: B**

B reflects the content (don't understand, things feel dismissed) and names the emotion (disconnect, painful). A defends. C centers parent's struggle. D reassures without reflecting.

**Q35: C**

When someone is processing and not seeking solutions, reflective listening helps them feel heard and continue exploring.

**Q36: C**

After vulnerability, reflection creates safety. Questions, perspective-sharing, and explanations can all feel like bypassing the moment.

**Q37: B**

When someone is shutting down, reflecting what you observe ("It seems like something just shifted for you") can help them stay present.

**Q38: A**

Reflecting their experience first creates the possibility they'll be able to hear a different perspective later. Leading with explanation or facts will likely escalate.

**Q39: A**

They're hurting. Reflecting that comes before offering alternative perspectives, exploring concerns, or reassuring.

**Q40: B**

Before disagreeing, demonstrating that you heard them increases the chance they'll hear you in return.

**Q41: B**

Friend B restates the content (always initiating, not reciprocated) and names the emotion (exhausting).

**Q42: B**

The parent reflects the content (sat alone, no one noticed) and names the emotional experience (invisible, lonely, hurts).

**Q43: B**

Spouse B paraphrases (comment, froze) and names the layered emotions (angry at mother, possibly at self).

**Q44: B**

The leader paraphrases (fifteen years, brought idea, pushed out) and names the emotion (betrayal).

**Q45: B**

The friend reflects the multiple dimensions (practical, family, emotional) and names the emotional core (crushing sense of failure).

**Q46: B**

Friend B offers brief acknowledgment then jumps to solutions without sitting with the disappointment and lost dream.

**Q47: B**

The nephew moves to advice without acknowledging the two years of pain the aunt just shared.

**Q48: B**

Partner A shared something vulnerable and scary. Partner B dismisses with reassurance rather than acknowledging what it took to say that.

**Q49: B**

Kai named a specific type of pain (ending it but still devastated). No one reflected that complexity before jumping to reassurance or distraction.

**Q50: B**

The coordinator defends the policy without acknowledging two years of service or how dismissive the interaction felt to the volunteer.

**Q51: A**

A is open and invites them to articulate what's changed. B pushes a course of action. C assumes a cause. D questions their judgment.

**Q52: A**

A invites open sharing. B assumes a reason and adds judgment. C guilt. D limits to two options.

**Q53: A**

A is open and invites reflection on both sides. B assumes a cause. C implies they'd regret it. D challenges the practicality.

**Q54: C**

C is open and warm. A limits to two options. B is accusatory ("being so distant"). D implies they need professional help.

**Q55: B**

B meets them where they are and invites them to name what feels possible. A creates a binary. C is accusatory. D lectures.

**Q56: A**

A is direct and curious. B is accusatory ("always"). C is a

boundary statement, not a question. D is defensive.

**Q57: A**

A invites specifics about hopes and barriers. B dismisses. C deflects to their contribution. D limits to two options.

**Q58: A**

A is open and invites them to identify what's wrong. B jumps to a specific cause. C challenges their language. D tries to find a positive.

**Q59: B**

B invites them to share their positive motivation. A implies they haven't thought it through. C assumes unhappiness as the driver. D implies they need more input.

**Q60: A**

A is neutral and curious. B assumes malicious intent. C asserts the current situation is fine. D assumes an ulterior motive.

**Q61: B**

After feeling heard, people are receptive to questions that help them think. Offering perspective or advice comes later, if at all.

**Q62: B**

Open questions ("What would help me get it?" or "Can you give me an example?") invite specificity. A is also useful but doesn't move toward clarity.

**Q63: B**

Going in circles often means you're arguing positions, not understanding interests. Curious questions about what's driving your partner's view can reveal new ground.

**Q64: B**

Questions like "What would need to change for you to feel differently?" or "What keeps you coming back to this?" can shift from venting to insight.

**Q65: B**

Genuine curiosity (not disguised persuasion) can maintain connection even in disagreement and might help you understand something you're missing.

**Q66: B**

The questions invite the child to articulate what's driving the idea, without leading or judging.

**Q67: B**

The questions help Person A explore both options without Person B advocating for either.

**Q68: B**

Neighbor B's questions invite examination of "the whole council" without directly contradicting it.

**Q69: B**

Partner B accepts the position ("I hear that") and then invites exploration of what's behind it.

**Q70: B**

The coach's questions help the mentee articulate what's appealing about each path.

**Q71: B**

The parent shuts down exploration. "What is it about college that doesn't feel right?" or "What would you want to do instead?" would open dialogue.

**Q72: B**

Aisha jumps to opinion and advice without exploring what Mei is thinking or feeling.

**Q73: B**

Sibling B reacts with concern for Dad without exploring what's behind Sibling A's statement.

**Q74: B**

"What's prompting you to suggest that?" or "What concerns do you have about the event?" would be more productive than defensive questioning.

**Q75: B**

Quinn tried to shift to something personal and Taylor dismissed it. A curious question would have opened the conversation Quinn seemed to want.

**Q76: A**

A is the only response that reflects both elements (happy for you AND abandoned) and names the complexity. B apologizes and jumps to solutions. C reflects partially and commits to action. D asks a question that implies fault.

**Q77: D**

This is tricky. The parent is making a comparison that contains an implicit interpretation (that you could visit more if you prioritized it). Before reflecting, asking questions, or explaining, understanding the interpretation embedded in "can't just visit" helps you respond to what's actually being communicated.

**Q78: B**

B reflects content (tenure not valued, new members get attention) and names emotion (invisibility, stings). A defends. C moves to solutions too fast. D is supportive but brief and jumps to action.

**Q79: D**

This is extra hard because A and B both seem right. But "always put your friends before me" is a sweeping characterization. Before reflecting or asking for examples, pausing to recognize this as an interpretation (and inviting them to ground it in specifics) applies Skill 1 before Skills 2 or 3.

**Q80: B**

This is tricky. C is good reflective listening. D is a good open question. But B does something specific: it separates what they said ("from your perspective, there was favoritism") from accepting it as fact, while still validating their experience. It demonstrates Skill 1 while remaining relational.