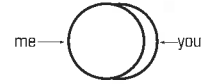




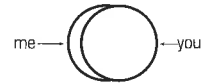
Balancing You, Me and Us

It's a romantic idea that when two people are in love they become one - but in reality, that way of thinking can sometimes be unhealthy. Another way to look at relationships is that two people, ME and YOU, overlap to create a third part of a relationship - US. If one of those three parts dominates, the other parts get neglected.

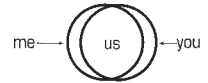
For example, if the relationship's all about ME, then I am focused on getting my needs met and expect you to make my needs your priority too - but your needs suffer.



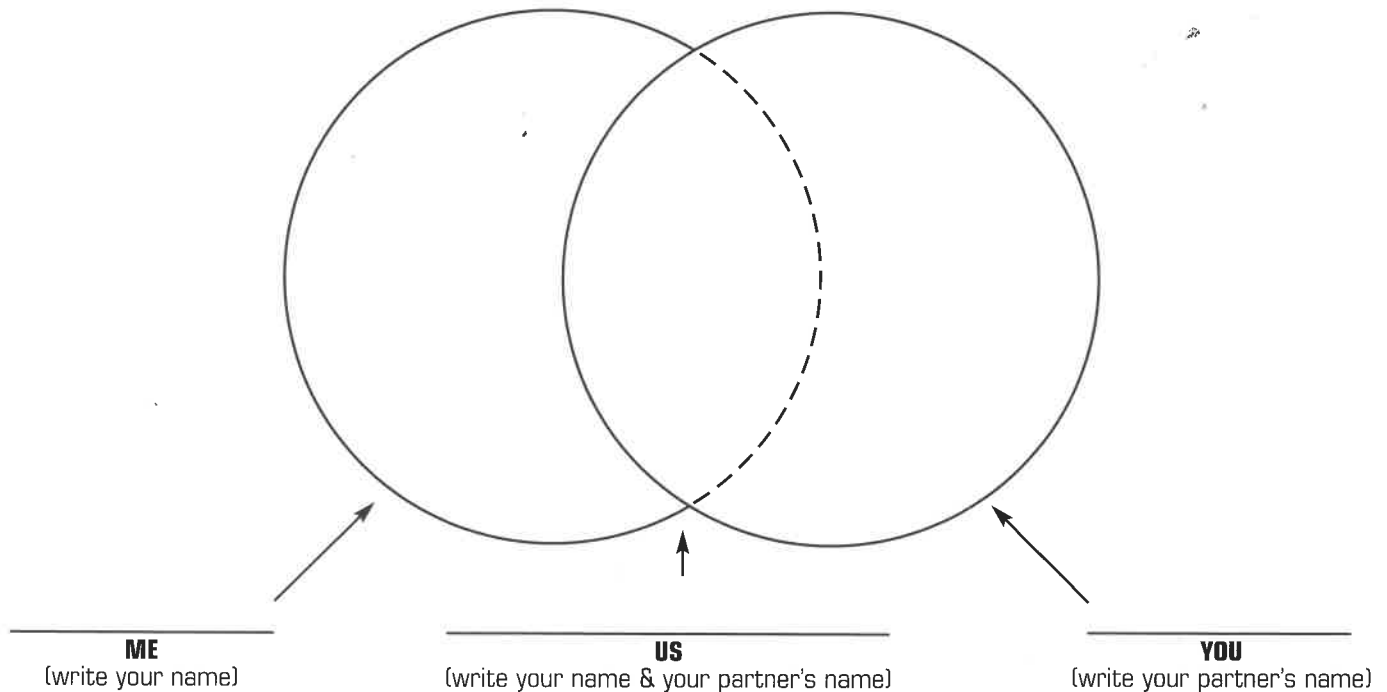
If the relationship's all about YOU, then I might spend all my energy trying to please you, but I do not take care of my own needs.



If the relationship is all about US, then we are both focused so intensely on the relationship that we each lose our individual identities.



In a healthy relationship, the ME, YOU and US are in balance most of the time. There might be days when I am having a problem so we focus on me, or you are celebrating a special accomplishment so we focus on you. But as a whole, we are able to achieve a balance between ME, YOU and US.



The overlapping circles above represent the three parts of a relationship - ME, YOU and US. Write your name and the name of your partner under the left and right circles. In the part of the circle that represents only you, write the things that are a part of you as an individual - for example, your close friends, family members, activities you enjoy by yourself, your education or career goals, talents and hobbies that are uniquely yours. Then do the same for your partner. In the center, where the two circles overlap to represent the US in your relationship, write things that you and your partner share together: special feelings, activities you enjoy together, friends that you have in common, special memories or future plans.

Now ask yourself: Are the Me, You and Us in your relationship in balance? _____
If not, which part(s) need more attention? _____