

The litmus test

In this test, we measure family members based on how being around them impacts these 4 universal needs that are essential to us generating healthy emotional wellbeing.

Please note that this litmus test is not an exact science, it's only a guide. It is also very important, where specified, that you verify your answers with a third objective party.

Why?

This is because your answers to these questions will most likely be biased due to being too close to the situation.

Test 1: What **Status** do you hold in your family member's mind?

Ask yourself these questions:

- 1a. Am I viewed as important by this family member?
- 1b. Do they treat me like I matter to them?
- 1c. Do they treat me with respect when other members of the public are not around?

Then in order to get close to the more honest answer, verify your answers with another person (the more objective that person is the better).

After verifying...

If your answer is: The family member doesn't treat me like I matter to them, move them closer to the poisonous end of the scale.

If your answers are that the family member sometimes/ most times treats me like I matter to them and treats me with respect, move them closer to the supportive end of the scale.

Test 2: What's your **Relationship** experience with the family member like?

Ask yourself these questions:

- 2a. Do I feel connected to them, or, do they make me feel like I belong.

Feeling like we belong or are connected with others adds bucket loads of self-worth to our sense of self. It is an extremely important recipe to/for a healthy emotional mind.

Important side note:

It is important to check that you are not the one putting up the barriers that are interfering with you feeling connected. Again check your answers out with an objective third party.

After verifying with a third party...

If your answer is that you feel connected or have some connection, move them closer to the supportive end of the scale.

However If your answer is that you don't feel any form of connection, move them further down to the poisonous end of the scale.

Move on to next test

Test 3: How is your **Health** impacted when you are around your family member? (Here we are considering either emotional or physical health or both)

If you notice that you tend to feel more unwell: either emotionally or physically, move them to the more poisonous end of the scale. (i.e. do they make you feel exhausted, distressed, depressed, anxious, frustrated, etc.)

If you notice that you tend to feel better when you are around them or being around them has no specific impact on your health, move them closer to the supportive end of the scale.

Test 4: How **Secure or Safe** do you feel when around your family member?

If they make you feel vulnerable, scared, fearful of being rejected, fearful of opening up because they emotionally abuse this, then they should be moved closer to the poisonous end of the scale.

However if you tend to feel mostly safe and secure around them, you can move them closer to the supportive end of the scale.

If you feel neutral about this question, you can probably move them closer to the middle of the scale.

Now you should have a clearer idea of whether your family member/s has/have more of a supportive or poisonous impact on your emotional health.

Now you can return to the article and continue with the steps.

By Adewale Ademuyiwa: www.stresstherapist.net

If you have determined that your family member is more on the poisonous end of the scale, then you might want to skip to step 5 in the guidelines on the main page where you downloaded this litmus test from.