

## Activity

#05

# Weighing the baggage

This activity will help you to think through your past experiences and the impact this is having on you now.

What you do and how you do it is influenced significantly by your past, your childhood and your experiences as an adult. This 'baggage' has helped you become the person you are today. Some of it makes you more resilient and others will make you more vulnerable.

## How to use this tool

- 1 Read through the three parts of the model and consider what is included in your baggage.
- 2 Consider the events that have happened and how you communicate individually and as a partnership.
- 3 Share your responses with your partner - and ask them to share their responses with you.
- 4 Look at the areas where you have similarities and the areas where you have differences.
- 5 Use this knowledge to consider what actions you need to take - both individually and jointly.



Based on the Vulnerability Stress Adaptation Model developed by Benjamin Karney and Thomas Bradbury (2012).  
Visit [www.researchgate.net/figure/The-vulnerability-stress-adaptation-model-of-marriage-Karney-Bradbury-1995\\_fig5\\_6231234](http://www.researchgate.net/figure/The-vulnerability-stress-adaptation-model-of-marriage-Karney-Bradbury-1995_fig5_6231234).

## The stuff you bring with you

### The enduring vulnerabilities

These are personal traits and past experiences that each person brings to the relationship. Remember, some people may not readily disclose this information.



## Stressful stuff happens

### Stressful events

These can be things like having a child, becoming unemployed, illness or bereavement



## How we communicate

### Adaptive processes

The things you do to communicate, behave and cope during stressful events and ways to resolve conflict



## Relationship quality

### The quality of your relationship

What is the quality of your relationship?  
How healthy does it feel?  
Are there any obvious challenges?



## Impact

### The affect of your baggage

Is the quality of your relationship affected by the baggage that you have identified?





## What have you learnt?

Has anything surprised you? Has anything disappointed you? Have you spotted any unknown strengths or positives? Write down what you learnt.



## What do you need to do or change?

Write down a few actions that you need to take, either individually or together.

In partnership with

