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How You Can Support an Emotionally Avoidant Partner

by Nancy Bergeron, R. Psych. | info@nancybergeron.ca



Supporting a partner who struggles with emotional vulnerability can be challenging—especially if your own emotional needs aren't being met. You can offer support, but you are not responsible for doing their emotional work for them. Here are some ways you can create a safer environment for emotional connection:

1. Model Emotional Safety

- Be open with your own emotions in a grounded, non-blaming way.
- Use “I feel” statements instead of “You never” accusations.
- Normalize vulnerability by showing that emotions are human, not shameful.

2. Respect Their Pace—but Hold Boundaries

- Understand that emotional change takes time.
- Avoid forcing deep conversations when they're emotionally shut down.
- At the same time, be clear about your own needs. It's okay to say, “I need emotional openness in this relationship to feel connected.”

3. Affirm Effort, Not Just Outcomes

When your partner makes even a small attempt to open up, acknowledge it gently. “Thank you for sharing that.

It means a lot.” “I know that wasn't easy for you to say.” Positive reinforcement helps override the fear that emotional vulnerability will lead to shame or rejection.

4. Don't Take Avoidance Personally

Their emotional withdrawal is usually about self-protection, not about you. Try not to interpret their distance as lack of care—it's more often fear, confusion, or discomfort.

5. Encourage—but Don't Rescue

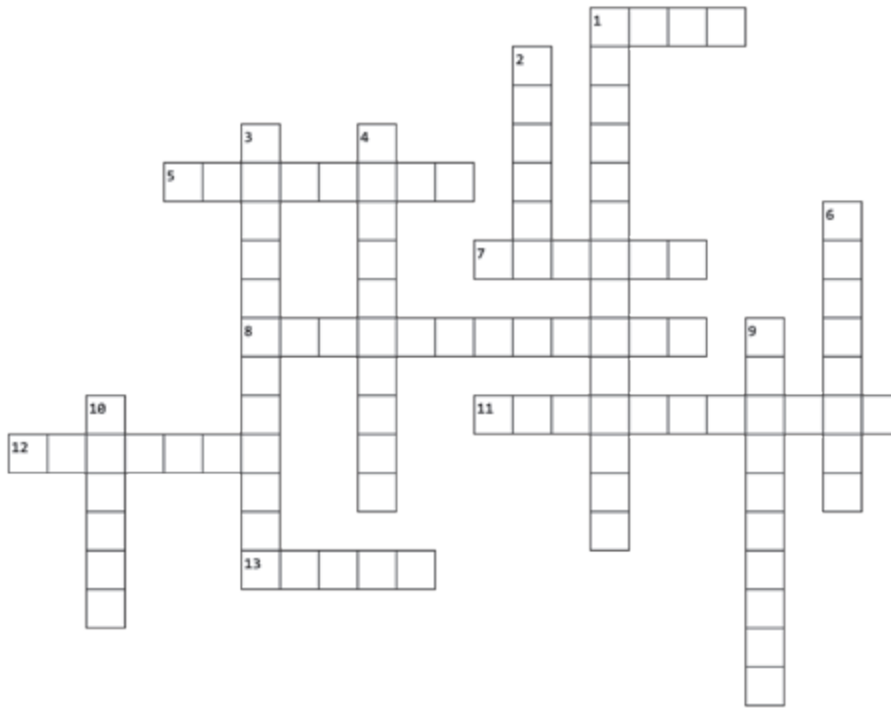
- Invite them into deeper connection but avoid doing all the emotional work.
- Encourage therapy or men's support groups where they can build emotional awareness in a safe space.

6. Stay Connected to Your Own Emotional Needs

Supporting someone else emotionally doesn't mean abandoning your own needs. Therapy, journaling, or support groups can help you stay grounded and clear about what you need in the relationship.

Emotional avoidance doesn't mean a man is incapable of love—it means he may be stuck in old protective patterns. With patience, boundaries, and the right kind of support, many emotionally avoidant men can learn to build deeper, more connected relationships.

October Crossword



Visit bit.ly/mycalgary
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answers

Across

1. This Andrew Lloyd Webber musical debuted on Broadway at the Winter Garden Theatre in October 1982.
5. On October 5 World _____' Day is celebrated to honour those who educate us.
7. Queen Elizabeth II officially opened this iconic Opera House on October 20, 1973.
8. Canadians celebrate this holiday on the second Monday of October.
11. The vibrant hues of autumn leaves are due to a lack of what pigment.
12. This iconic single by John Lennon was released on October 11, 1971, in the United States.
13. On October 8, 2004, Wangari Maathai was awarded the _____ Peace Prize, making her the first African woman ever to receive the award.

Down

1. The Orient Express departed on its first journey from Paris on October 4, 1883, to this city now known as Istanbul.
2. Stock markets crashed worldwide on October 19, 1987, and became known as Black _____.
3. NHL star Glenn Hall, nicknamed Mr. Goalie, was born on October 3, 1981, in Humboldt, _____.
4. Canadian filmmaker James Cameron released the sci-fi action hit, *The _____* in October 1984.
6. This beloved Canadian Ryan was born on October 23, 1976, in Vancouver, B.C.
9. The dystopian novel where books are banned and burned, _____ 451 by Ray Bradbury, was published on October 19, 1953.
10. The "Thrilla in _____" on October 1, 1975, saw Muhammad Ali beat Joe Frazier after 14 rounds.

Halloween Safety

by Alberta Health Services

As a member of Calgary's Child Magazine Partners for Safety initiative, AHS EMS would like to remind parents and trick-or-treaters of some Halloween safety tips as October 31 approaches. Partners for Safety vehicles will be out patrolling communities on Halloween night to provide a visible safety resource for parents and trick-or-treaters.

Trick-or-Treaters

- Remember: All regular pedestrian rules still apply. Be sure to cross the road at marked crosswalks, or well-lit corners only. It is safest to work your way up one side of the street, and then cross once to the other side.
- Avoid houses that are not well lit. Do not accept rides from strangers or enter any home you feel is unsafe.
- Let your parents know where you are going to be at all times (route) and advise them if you will be late returning.

Parents

- Be certain that young trick-or-treaters are accompanied by an adult. Older children should stay in groups.
- Pre-determine boundaries to trick-or-treat within and establish a firm time to return home.
- Advise children not to eat anything until they return home. Dispose of any items that appear to have been tampered with, or that are not properly wrapped.

Costumes

- Choose bright coloured costumes that are highly visible. Adding reflective tape to costumes further increases visibility.



- Consider sending your children with a flashlight for additional safety and increased visibility.
- When purchasing or making costumes, look for materials and accessories that are labeled flame-resistant.
- All costume accessories, such as sticks, rods, or wands, should be soft and flexible, with no sharp edges.
- Consider using hypoallergenic make-up kits instead of masks that may impair breathing, or vision.
- Be sure costumes are loose enough to be worn over warm clothing, but not so long that they become a tripping hazard. Costumes should not be longer than your child's ankles.
- Ensure your child is wearing adequate footwear that takes into consideration weather conditions and walking.

The Birth of Ballet

On October 15, 1581, Catherine de' Medici, the Queen Mother of France, commissioned "Ballet Comique de la Reine" in Paris. The performance depicted the myth of Circe from Homer's *Odyssey* and is believed to be the first true ballet, combining music, dance, plot, and staging.



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The Art of Finding Work: Job Seekers: Be Clear on Your “Secret Sauce”

by Nick Kossovan

Most job seekers present themselves to employers as a jack of all trades, master of none, when they should be presenting a unique set of skills.

You think you're talented.

Everyone you're up against thinks they're talented.

What makes you special?

When you apply for a job, possessing the necessary skills and qualifications is not enough. You need to find ways to differentiate yourself; otherwise, you will blend in with the other job seekers you're competing against.

The key to differentiating yourself and rising above all the noise so you're seen and heard rather than ignored lies in your “secret sauce”—the unique skills, experiences, and attributes that make you one-of-a-kind. Thus, you become what most job seekers aren't: memorable.

Asking Yourself the Following Questions Will Help You Define Your Secret Sauce:

In My Current or Previous Positions, What Were My Favourite Tasks?

For the most part, we enjoy activities we're good at (e.g., working with numbers, designing costumes, conducting research, organizing events, writing blogs). Our inherent strengths and aptitudes create a natural talent for the activity, thereby making it enjoyable since you're not fighting who you are.

List everything, work-related and non-work-related, you enjoy doing.

What Feedback Have I Received from Colleagues or Supervisors Regarding My Work?

Reflect on your career journey. Think of all the positive and negative feedback you received, whether in formal performance reviews or an offhand manner, regarding your work or something you did.

- “I enjoy sitting in on your presentations.”
- “You have a knack for listening.”
- “The way you motivate your team is impressive.”

What Problems Have I Successfully Solved in Previous Positions?

Every position exists to solve a problem. For instance, accountants are hired to monitor a company's incoming revenue and outgoing expenses and oversee its compliance with local tax laws.

What problems have you solved for your employers? Increased website traffic? Decreased spending? Increased customer satisfaction? Decreased safety violations? Increased sales? (employers' favourite).

What Unique Experiences or Backgrounds Do I Have That Contribute to My Skill Set?

A candidate who grew up in Québec City will have a competitive edge being fluently bilingual over someone who simply attended French immersion in Calgary, Alberta. The same could be said for a candidate whose mother was a social worker, making them more attuned to the needs of others, or their father who was a pharmaceutical representative, thus exposing them to human dynamics that influence.

Everyone has a unique story of how their place of birth and experiences, especially first experiences, developed their strengths and passions. Explaining to an employer that your enjoyment of and passion for providing customer service comes from having spent your weekends and summers working the front desk at your family's 85-room hotel in Estevan, Saskatchewan, has much more impact than simply saying, “I like helping people.”

What Skills Have I Gained Through Hobbies or Volunteer Work?

I once hired a call centre agent who volunteered at a local suicide prevention hotline for several years. And a candidate who coached a little league baseball team turned out to be one of the best first-time managers I ever hired.

Don't ignore the skills and experience you've acquired outside your employment or education. Skills, experience, and knowledge aren't just acquired at work or school. The skills and experience you gain from volunteering, starting/running a business, being a parent, playing in a sports league, or serving on your condo board can be valuable to employers.

If the above questions don't solicit as many skills as you'd like, seek the opinions of family members, friends,



and colleagues. Ask them what they think your key strengths are. Their insights may surprise you.

Once you've identified your hard and soft skills—your soft skills (e.g., communication, critical thinking, time management) are the most important to employers—you need to communicate your unique skills as selling points. Merely listing your “skills” and “qualifications” doesn't distinguish you from other applicants. You must describe who you are and what you offer in a straightforward, memorable narrative conveying your unique value proposition.

Not memorable: “I speak French.”

Memorable: “I was born in Québec City. French is my mother tongue.”

Additionally, frame your skills and qualifications in terms of how they can benefit an employer.

No value add: “I have strong analytical skills.”

Value add: “During my seven years as a financial analyst at Wayne Enterprises, I developed above-average analytical skills that enabled the company to take advantage of several initial public offerings that turned out to be quite lucrative. One recommended buy resulted in a \$7.5 million gain within less than a year.”

Based on my experience, most candidates fail to emphasize their uniqueness; hence, they don't stick in my head. Given the number of candidates I've interviewed throughout my career, one would think I'd have heard many inspiring, funny, entertaining, and sad career and life stories. Unfortunately, that's not the case. Job seekers need to work on being mentally sticky. In a competitive job market filled with qualified candidates, articulating your secret sauce will ultimately set you apart.



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Rightsizing vs Downsizing: It's Not About Less, It's About What's Next

by Christopher Matlashewski, Calgary Realtor and Rightsizing Specialist



The word downsizing can feel heavy. For many, it brings up thoughts of giving something up — losing space, letting go of memories, or saying goodbye to a home that's been filled with life. But what if we shifted the conversation? What if this next move wasn't about less, but about more? More freedom. More simplicity. More time. That's what I call rightsizing — finding the space that fits the life you're living now, not the one you had ten or 20 years ago.

Living in Alignment with Today

The home that served your family beautifully for decades might not serve your life today — and that's okay. Rightsizing is about recognizing that life evolves, and your space should, too. Maybe you no longer need a big backyard to mow or multiple levels of stairs to climb. Maybe those extra bedrooms are just collecting dust — or storage bins. When your home reflects your current stage of life, it becomes a place of comfort, not upkeep. Rightsizing doesn't mean lowering your standards. In fact, it often means raising them. It's about creating a home that supports your lifestyle, your values, and your next chapter.

It's Not About Square Footage — It's About Quality of Life

A smaller space can still feel luxurious. In fact, when your space is intentional, well-designed, and filled

only with the things you truly love, it becomes easier to enjoy the home and the life that comes with it. Without the burden of excess rooms, maintenance, or unneeded furniture, your time opens up. You can focus on what really matters: your health, your hobbies, your relationships, or that trip you've been meaning to take for years. Rightsizing means prioritizing freedom over square footage — and that shift can be incredibly empowering.

Making Space for What's Next

We often think of moving as leaving something behind. But what if it's about making space for what's next? Whether that means locking the door and heading south for the winter, spending weekends with grandkids, or finally taking up painting or golfing; the right-sized home is the launchpad, not the limit. By choosing a home that fits your life (rather than the other way around), you open the door to more experiences, more flexibility, and less stress.

You're Not Giving Up — You're Moving Forward

If you've been wrestling with the idea of downsizing but something about the word feels off — trust that instinct. You're not settling. You're evolving. Rightsizing is a move made with clarity, intention, and vision. It's not about having less. It's about creating more of what matters.

YOUR CITY OF CALGARY

The 2025 General Election Is Here

by The City of Calgary

Eligible voters can cast their ballots for the 2025 General Election starting October 6, 2025.

During Advance Vote, from October 6 to 11, voters can vote at any of the Advance Vote stations, regardless of the ward in which they reside.

On Election Day, October 20, voters must vote at their designated voting station.

Voters can use the "Where Do I Vote?" tool on the Elections Calgary website to find their nearest Advance Vote location, as well as their designated voting station on Election Day.

Special (mail-in) ballots are available for request for voters who cannot vote during the Advance Vote or on Election Day for any reason. The last day to request a mail-in ballot to be mailed to you is October 3. The last day for in-person pick-up is October 20 at 10:00 am. All mail-in ballots must be received by the Elections Calgary office by 12:00 pm (noon) on October 20. Mail-in packages can be requested online or by calling 403-476-4100.

More information on where, when and how to vote, voter identification requirements and other important information about the 2025 General Election can be found at electionscalgary.ca/vote or by calling 403-476-4100.



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Dear Neighbours,

So many of my Calgary-Elbow constituents, like many Albertans across the province, continue to feel pressure from the ongoing affordability crisis.

From soaring taxes to eroding public health care services, I've heard too many stories from our friends and neighbours who feel abandoned by the UCP government.

Our province has had the slowest wage growth in Canada since 2019, the highest inflation, and the highest youth unemployment in the country.

From rising property taxes to real estate transfer fees and the ad valorem wine tax, UCP government policies have hit families and businesses hard. On top everything else, the UCP government is going to raise the cost of auto insurance.

Alberta already has the highest auto insurance premiums in Canada and because of the UCP government, drivers can soon expect to pay 15 percent or more. To make matters worse, the right to sue insurance companies if they don't provide the benefits that injured people are owed will no longer exist.

On the health care front, chaos continues to reign. Look no further than the UCP government's promise to reduce wait times through the Alberta Surgical Initiative (ASI). A recent report by the Parkland Institute, a non-partisan research institute based at the University of Alberta, revealed the "average cost per outsourced procedure has risen by 79 percent since 2019," when the province started contracting private surgical services through the ASI.

The report also points out that wait times have increased. Since the start of the ASI, wait times have increased for nine of 11 priority procedures tracked by the Canadian Institute for Health Information, including knee replacements and all cancer surgeries.

It's extremely concerning considering there are now multiple ongoing investigations by the Alberta Auditor General and the RCMP following allegations raised by former AHS CEO Athana Mentzelopoulos of political interference and contract irregularities in private surgical contracts.

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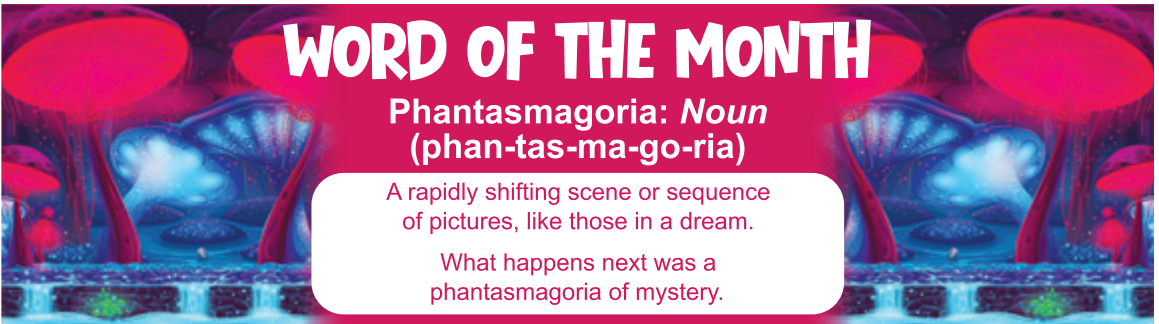


WORD OF THE MONTH

Phantasmagoria: Noun
(phan-tas-ma-go-ria)

A rapidly shifting scene or sequence of pictures, like those in a dream.

What happens next was a phantasmagoria of mystery.



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