

## Does an unhappy partner make you less happy?

### Level 2: Intermediate – Teacher's notes

**Article summary:** The article discusses new research on how each partner's mood affects the other person in a relationship.

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Skills:** Reading, Speaking, Writing

**Language focus:** Phrasal verbs

**Materials needed:** One copy of the worksheet per student

#### 1. Warmer

- a. This activity aims to get students thinking and talking about emotional well-being and healthy relationships. You may wish to elicit adjectives describing healthy and unhealthy relationships. Encourage students to share personal experiences and opinions if they wish.

#### 2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and compare their answers in pairs or small groups. As an extension activity, ask students to write the part of speech for each key word.

**Key:**

- |             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1. <i>b</i> | 7. <i>h</i>  |
| 2. <i>e</i> | 8. <i>i</i>  |
| 3. <i>d</i> | 9. <i>k</i>  |
| 4. <i>f</i> | 10. <i>g</i> |
| 5. <i>c</i> | 11. <i>l</i> |
| 6. <i>a</i> | 12. <i>j</i> |

- b. Before reading the article carefully, students use some of the key words to fill the gaps in the sentences to ensure that they understand and know how the words are used in other contexts.

**Key:**

- |                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. <i>traits</i>      | 5. <i>satisfaction</i> |
| 2. <i>mood</i>        | 6. <i>toxic</i>        |
| 3. <i>recover</i>     | 7. <i>decline</i>      |
| 4. <i>complicated</i> | 8. <i>heartbeat</i>    |

#### 3. Comprehension check

- a. Students answer the questions based on the information in the article. They may do this in different ways, e.g., in item 1, they may say, 'They become more like each other and mimic each other's behaviours' or similar.

**Key (suggested answers):**

1. *They become similar to each other.*
2. *heartbeats and brainwaves*
3. *She wanted to find out if the happier person in a couple is "dragged down" or if the unhappier person is "lifted up".*
4. *more than 20,000*
5. *37 years for the Germans and 14 years for the Dutch*
6. *The person with higher well-being experienced a decline. People with lower well-being sometimes had a small increase.*
7. *Negative emotions are more commonly passed back and forth than positive ones.*
8. *That they make people healthier and are overall beneficial.*
9. *They often report low mood and well-being but are happy they had children.*
10. *more relationship stability*

#### 4. Key language

- a. Students could be asked to do this exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs. You may wish to note which are separable and which are not:

*soak (something) up; sync up (with someone/thing); rub off on (someone/something); lift (someone/thing) up; drag (someone/thing) down; stem from (someone/thing)*

**Key:**

1. *rub off on*
2. *lift up*
3. *sync up*
4. *soak up*
5. *drag down*

## Does an unhappy partner make you less happy?

### Level 2: Intermediate – Teacher's notes

- b. Allow the class to try out the phrasal verbs on their own. Monitor and assist students as you walk around the class. Allow time for feedback so students can share some of the sentences they have written.

#### 5. Discussion

- a. Students discuss the statements related to the article and give their reasons and justifications for each answer, referring to their own experiences wherever possible.

#### 6. In your own words

- a. Ask students to research emotional well-being in relationships.
- b. Students could then present their reports to the class. Encourage students to share the information they have gathered and their opinions about the issue. Encourage students to use some of the given phrases in their presentations when stating facts and their views.