

When You're Always the One Who Initiates - Checklist

A quick-reference checklist to use before or during the conversation about initiation.

Before You Start

- ☐ ☐ Picked a calm moment, not right after a rejection or during stress
- ☐ ☐ Named the real thing underneath the frustration (resentment, loneliness, feeling unwanted)
- ☐ ☐ Written it down in one sentence if needed
- ☐ ☐ Decided what I want from this conversation (to be heard, to understand her, to name the pattern)
- ☐ ☐ Put my phone down and removed obvious distractions

What To Watch For

- ☐ ☐ Watch for the urge to add more words after I say the opener. Go quiet and wait instead.
- ☐ ☐ Watch for using "you always" or "you never" — replace with "I feel" or "I've noticed"
- ☐ ☐ Watch for my instinct to wrap up the conversation when it gets uncomfortable
- ☐ ☐ Watch for defensiveness if she points back at me — let her finish first
- ☐ ☐ Watch for turning this into a scorecard conversation

What To Say

- ☐ ☐ Opening: "I feel like I'm always the one who initiates. I miss feeling like it goes both ways."
- ☐ ☐ After rejection: "I'm not upset about earlier. But I miss feeling wanted by you."
- ☐ ☐ After going quiet: "I've been pulling back and I think it's been making things worse. What I want is to feel closer to you again."
- ☐ ☐ If things escalate: "I want to keep talking about this. Can we take a breath first?"
- ☐ ☐ Close: "I'm glad I said something. I just wanted you to know where I'm at."

What Not To Do

- ☐ ☐ Don't bring this up right after she says no
- ☐ ☐ Don't use "you never initiate" or "you always reject me"
- ☐ ☐ Don't turn it into a list of everything that's wrong

☐ ☐ Don't demand a resolution or a commitment in the same conversation

☐ ☐ Don't go quiet and withdraw if she responds with defensiveness

Repair Move

If the conversation goes badly:

"I don't think I said that right. Can we try again another time? I'm not going anywhere."

Success Check

☐ ☐ I said the real thing, not just the polite version of it

☐ ☐ I stayed in the conversation when it got uncomfortable

☐ ☐ I listened to her response without immediately defending myself