

reaction	explanation
Escalate	Raise your voice, your emotions spiral out of control
withdraw	you leave the conversation, either physically or emotionally
earn-it mode	you try to do more and more to earn their love and care
stonewall	you remove yourself from the conversation by becoming a stone wall
belittle	you call them names, use insults, ridicule, or mock them
shut down	you emotionally disconnect and close your heart
arrogance	you position yourself as more mature, smarter, superior, or wiser than them
pacify	you try to soothe or calm them; you try to get them not to feel negative emotions
blame	you work to establish blame or place responsibility on them
contempt	you become disrespectful or dishonor them with your words or actions
negative interpretation	you see them through a negative lens and conclude that their motives are more negative than is really true
control	you hold back, restrain, oppress, or dominate; you talk over or prevent them from having a chance to explain their position, opinions, or feelings
innocent victim	you see your spouse as the aggressor and you as being unfairly accused, mistreated, or unappreciated
dishonesty	you tell a lie or half-truth; you fail to reveal important details or give out false information
isolate	you go into seclusion or into your "cave"
demand	you try to force them to do something, usually with implied threat of punishment if they refuse
withhold	you hold back your affection, feelings, or sex from spouse
provoke	you intentionally aggravate, hassle, goad, or irritate them
denial	you refuse to admit truth or reality
exaggerate	you make overstatements or enlarge your words beyond truth; you say 'you always' or 'you never'
distress-maintaining	you replay the argument over and over; you can't stop thinking about the conflict
invalidate	you send a subtle or overt message that their feelings, thoughts, or opinions are wrong, inaccurate, or unacceptable
rewrite history	you recast your earlier times together in a negative light; your recall of previous disappointments becomes distorted
independence	you do your own thing; you become separate in attitude, behavior, and decision making
passive-aggressive	negative or hurtful behavior that is subtle and disguised by actions that appear normal and at times loving and caring
defensiveness	you try to defend yourself by providing an explanation; you make excuses for your actions
clinginess	you need to be in constant or close proximity
avoidance	you evade the conversation, issue, or person
act out	you engage in negative behaviors like drug or alcohol abuse, affairs, excessive shopping, or overeating
fix-it mode	you focus almost exclusively on what is needed to solve or fix the problem
pessimism	you become negative, distrustful, cynical, and skeptical in your view of them
complain	you express unhappiness or make accusations
negative body language	you give a false smile, shift from side to side, fold arms across chest
criticize	you pass judgment, condemn, or point out their faults; you attack their character
strike out	you lash out and become verbally or physically aggressive
manipulation	you attempt to control, influence, or maneuver them for your advantage
anger	you display strong feelings of displeasure; you experience uncontrolled emotions such as rage
catastrophize	you experience dramatic, overstated, or exaggerated words or thoughts
indifference	you become unresponsive to them; you lack interest, sympathy, or concern

pursue the truth	you try to determine what really happened, who is telling the truth, or whose facts are correct
abdicate	you deny or give away responsibilities
judge	you negatively evaluate, form an opinion, or conclude something about them
self-deprecate	you run yourself down or become very critical of yourself
selfishness	you become more concerned with yourself and your interests, feelings, wants or desires
mind-read	you make assumptions about their private feelings, behaviors, or motives
lecture	you sermonize, talk down to, scold, or reprimand them
self-abandonment	you desert or neglect yourself, you take care of everyone except you
cross-complain	you meet their complaint with an immediate complaint of your own, totally ignoring what they say
righteous indignation	you believe that you deserve to be angry, resentful, or annoyed because of what they did
whine	you express yourself by using a childish, high-pitched nasal tone and stress one syllable toward the end of the sentence
humor	you use laughter, humor, or joking as a way of not dealing with the issue at hand
apathy	you become pessimistic, distrustful, cynical, and skeptical as you view them
ignore	you stuff down your feelings and thoughts instead of trying to understand or discuss them
sarcasm	you use negative or hostile humor, hurtful words, cutting remarks, or demanding statements
numb out	you stop feeling and become devoid of emotion
minimize	you assert that they are overreacting; you intentionally underestimate, downplay the issue or their feeling
passivity	you agree to some suggestion with no intent to follow through, or say "I'm sorry" just to end conversation
rationalize	you attempt to make your actions seem reasonable; you try to provide believable reasons or motives for your behaviors
dump on	you emotional "vomit", unload, dump, or pile on them
disconnect	you emotionally detach or disengage from them
repeat yourself	you say your position over and over again, instead of understanding their position
right/wrong	you argue about who is right and who is wrong; you debate whose opinion, perception, or emotion is the correct one
stubborn	you will not budge from your position; you become persistent
silent treatment	you become quiet or "log off" during conversation
righteousness	you make what you're upset about a moral issue or argue about issues or morality
play dumb	you pretend not to understand or know what they are talking about
sulk	you go off and feel sorry for yourself
nag	you badger, pester, or harass them to do what you want
yes, but...	you start agreeing, then start disagreeing
tantrum	you have a sudden outburst of frustration or a fit of temper
abusive	you become cruel or violent physically, emotionally, or sexually