

The Partner's Toolkit

6 pages for loving someone who regresses – how to meet both versions of the person you love

What You're Actually Seeing

Age regression is a real, often involuntary shift into a younger mental and emotional state – a state where the person is more easily overwhelmed, more honest, and more in need of safety. It is not a fetish, it is not manipulation, and it is not something they chose to do to you.

For many people, it's the way their nervous system gets to rest – the only state where the 'always adult, always performing' part can turn off. Your job isn't to fix it or analyze it. Your job is to be safe to be around when it happens.

The myth	Why it's wrong	The truth
It's a kink.	SFW regression isn't sexual at all – it's a soothing state, like comfort seeking.	It's a need for safety and softness, not a scene.
They're trying to escape you.	Regression often happens around the people they trust most.	It's a sign of safety – they couldn't do this with someone they didn't love.
I have to be their parent now.	No one is asking you to be a parent or a therapist.	You're still partners. You just also get to be someone they feel small around safely.
If I don't handle it perfectly, I'll ruin them.	You're not a professional; you're a person who loves them.	Care + presence outweighs perfect technique. Showing up is the skill.

8 Do's and Don'ts for the First Time It Happens

- **DO:** match their energy – if they're small, be calm, not loud
- **DO:** ask gentle yes/no questions they can answer easily ('want a blanket?')
- **DO:** stay present and unbothered – your calm is the safest thing you have
- **DO:** check in after, when they're back – 'how was that for you?'
- **DON'T:** interrogate what happened while they're still in that state
- **DON'T:** bring up the topic they were upset about until they're grounded
- **DON'T:** treat them as weird or shame them – that shuts the door fast
- **DON'T:** make it about you ('this is a lot for ME') in the moment

The Dialogue Tree: 'What's Happening Right Now?'

The first time you see it happen, you'll have a hundred questions. This tree gives you the path – pick the line that fits.

You (internally): They seem... different? Younger? What do I do?

- I'm confused and worried ? +Information

You (out loud): "Hey – you're okay. I'm right here. Do you want a blanket, or are you okay with me just sitting with you?"

- They relax a little ? +Calm

They (small): "...mkay. Sit with me."

- Sit, stay quiet, let it be ? +Safety

You (later, when they're back): "I just want to make sure you felt safe. Was that okay? What helps most next time?" – You did the right thing: presence first, questions later.

- They seem scared – I want to help ? +Presence

You (out loud): "I'm here. You're safe. We don't have to talk about it unless you want to – I just wanted you to know I'm not going anywhere."

- They lean in / relax ? +Trust

You (later): You didn't need to know everything to be helpful. You were warm and stayed. That's the whole assignment. +Trust earned.

- I don't even know what I'm seeing ? +Understanding

You (out loud): "I want to understand this so I can support you the right way. When you're settled, can you tell me what helps you feel safe when this happens?"

- They explain their needs ? +Boundary Wise

You (later): You turned confusion into a question – and questions are how partners learn each other. +Boundary Wise.

You can't lose this fight. Every line here keeps you curious instead of afraid.

Script 1: During (The Grounding Script)

"Hey. I'm here. I'm going to sit with you, and you don't have to talk if you don't want to. If you need anything – a blanket, water, a stuffie – just point or say it. No rush. I've got you, and I'm not going anywhere."

Script 2: After (The Soft Debrief)

"I want to make sure that was okay for you. Did you feel safe? Is there anything I did that helped, or anything you'd want different next time? I'm not evaluating you – I'm learning how to love you the way you need."

Script 3: The Morning-After Check-In

"Hey – just checking in after last night. I want you to know I don't see it as weird, and I don't love you any less for it. If you want to talk about it, I'm here. If you'd rather it just be a normal Tuesday, that's fine too. You're safe, and you're mine."

The After-Care Card

Print this out and keep it somewhere easy – inside a drawer, a notebook, on the fridge. It's for both of you.

What I Need After I Reset

Space: to come back at my own pace

Safety: knowing you're not weirded out or angry

Touch: a hand, a hug, or none – I'll tell you which

Normalcy: the next day being a regular day

What You Can Say to Me

During: "You're safe. I'm here. No pressure."

After: "You're still you, and I still love you."

Tomorrow: "It's a normal day. We're good."

Care doesn't need to be perfect. It needs to be present.

The Partner You Get to Be

You can't see every sign, learn every rule, or be calm every single time. That's not the job. The job is: stay curious, don't shame, show up – and let them be both versions of themselves, because both versions are the person you love. From The Unadultering Society · sfwagere.com