

The Privacy Balance Worksheet

From “The Six Spheres of Privacy” — particlebits.com

How this works

Privacy is the balance between three things: what you share, what you feel comfortable sharing, and with whom. This worksheet takes you through the article's two exercises: **Step 1**, inventory what you are sharing today; **Step 2**, decide what you actually *want* to share. The difference between the two answers — not how private or open you are — is what gets scored.

On the next page, for every row (category of information) and every column (sphere of your life), write two numbers from the scale below: **Actual** for how much you *actually* share, and **Want** for how much you *want* to share. Go with your first instinct; there are no wrong answers.

0	Nothing
1	A little
2	Some
3	A lot
4	Everything

The five spheres you will rate

(Your Personal sphere is the baseline — it always holds everything, so it has no column.)

- **Private** — your partner or closest intimate relationships
- **Family** — your family, and those you consider family
- **Social** — your friends and social circles
- **Professional** — your coworkers, boss, and professional contacts
- **Public** — the outside world: acquaintances, strangers, the Internet

Steps 1 & 2: The inventory

Actual = how much you actually share today · Want = how much you want to share · each is a number from 0 (nothing) to 4 (everything)

		Private	Family	Social	Professional	Public
Health Physical and mental health, conditions, treatment, habits	Actual					
	Want					
Money Income, debts, spending, financial situation	Actual					
	Want					
Romantic & Sexual Life Relationships, desires, preferences, history	Actual					
	Want					
Beliefs & Opinions Religion, politics, controversial or unpopular views	Actual					
	Want					
Emotions & Struggles Fears, failures, worries, what you are going through	Actual					
	Want					
Whereabouts & Daily Life Location, routines, plans, what you did today	Actual					
	Want					

Scoring

For each cell in your grid, the **gap** is Actual – Want. A positive gap means you are sharing *more* than you want (over-sharing); a negative gap means *less* (under-sharing).

For each sphere (column), add up the gaps *ignoring their signs* —six numbers per column, each between 0 and 4. Write the total below, then look up your verdict.

	Private	Family	Social	Professional	Public
Total of <i> gaps </i> (0–24)					
Verdict					

Total	Verdict
0–3	Balanced
4–8	Minor imbalance
9–24	Major imbalance

Direction: if most of a column's gaps were positive, read the “over-sharing” guidance on the next page for that sphere; if mostly negative, read “under-sharing”; if both, read both — each direction has its own fix.

What your results mean

Private

Balanced: What you share with your partner matches what you want to share. This balance is the foundation of trust in your closest relationship — keep tending it.

Over-sharing: More of your life reaches your partner than you are comfortable with. Revisit what you consider yours alone and practice keeping it there — closeness does not require total transparency.

Under-sharing: You are holding back more from your partner than you would like to. Sharing more here is one of the most direct ways to strengthen the relationship.

Family

Balanced: Your family knows about as much of your life as you want them to. Balance here tends to show up as easy, low-friction relationships.

Over-sharing: Your family knows more than you would like. Decide which topics you want to reclaim and set gentle boundaries before resentment builds.

Under-sharing: You want your family to know more of your life than they currently do. Think of the mother who keeps asking you to call — small, regular sharing strengthens these bonds.

Social

Balanced: You are sharing with friends at the level you are comfortable with. Your social life reflects the self you intend to show.

Over-sharing: Your friends are getting more than you intend. Audit what you volunteer in conversation and on social media, and remember that anything shared socially tends to travel.

Under-sharing: You would like your friends closer to your life than they are. Opening up a little more is a low-risk way to deepen friendships.

Professional

Balanced: Your work persona is under control — colleagues see what you want them to see, and little else.

Over-sharing: Too much of your outside life is reaching your workplace. Leaks here can affect your livelihood — tighten what you bring into work conversations and keep personal accounts separate from professional ones.

Under-sharing: You are more guarded at work than you want to be. Sharing selectively — interests, context, appropriate personal news — can build trust with colleagues.

Public

Balanced: Your public exposure matches your intent. Whether you have kept a low profile or chosen your openness deliberately, both are strong privacy.

Over-sharing: You are exposing more publicly than you want. Audit your online accounts, tighten privacy settings, prune old posts, and reconsider what you post going forward — public information rarely comes back.

Under-sharing: You want more public presence than you have. Decide deliberately what to publish and where; openness chosen on purpose is also good privacy.

Both directions at once? You are over-sharing some topics and under-sharing others here. Look at your individual action items from your circled cells — each direction has its own fix.

Your action items

Circle every cell in your grid where the gap is **2 or more** in either direction. Each circled cell is one concrete action item — use the guidance below for its sphere and direction.

Sphere	Gap of +2 or more (over-sharing)	Gap of -2 or less (under-sharing)
Private	consider whether this belongs to you alone, and hold it back	try opening up about this; it can bring you closer
Family	set a gentle boundary around this topic with family	let your family into this part of your life a bit more

Social	be more deliberate about this in conversation and on social media	share a bit more of this with friends you trust
Professional	keep this out of workplace conversations and accounts	share this selectively at work, where it builds trust
Public	remove or lock down this information where it is publicly visible	publish this deliberately, on your own terms