

TOOLBOX

FOR

RECONNECTING AND REKINDLING
YOUR MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP



A 3-WEEK ONLINE COURSE FOR COUPLES

THE COUPLE'S DIALOGUE

SENDER

Ask for appointment
Make eye contact
Take a few deep breaths in sync

ALWAYS START WITH APPRECIATION

- *"One thing I appreciate about you is..."*
- *"And what that makes me feel is..."*

THEN SHARE FRUSTRATION

- *"It was frustrating when..."*
- *"When that happened, I felt..."*
- *"That reminds me of when I was little and..."*
- *"What I'm really afraid of is..."*
- *"What I did in reaction was..."*

- Yes or no. If no, try again.

- Yes or no. If no, try again.

END WITH 1 MIN. FULL-BODY HUG

RECEIVER

Grant appointment
Make eye contact
Take a few deep breaths in sync

MIRROR

- *"Let me see if I got you. If I did, you said..."*
- *"Did I get it?" (add or correct)*
- *"Is there more about that?"*

"Thanks for sharing that."

MIRROR

- *"Let me see if I got you. If I did, you said..."*
- *"Did I get it?" (add or correct)*
- *"Is there more about that?"*

- **Summarize** *"To summarize what I heard you say..."*

VALIDATE

- *"You make sense, and what makes sense is..."*
- *"Is that the validation you need?"*

EMPATHIZE

- *"I can imagine your feel..."*
- *"Did I empathize with you?"*

CARING BEHAVIORS

OBJECTIVE: To share with each other specifics about what you want, what pleases you, what your partner could do that will make you feel loved and valued. Then to commit to do these things for each other randomly at least three times a day over the next two months.

PURPOSE: To rekindle feelings of romance and to create a safety zone in the relationship where bonding can occur.

INSTRUCTIONS: Make a list as you think about three areas: (1) what your partner is already doing that pleases you, (2) what your partner used to do that pleased you and (3) what have always wanted but never asked for. These may be very private fantasies but should not be a present source of conflict.

With each item complete the sentence, “I feel loved and cared about when you...” (Examples: make me coffee in the morning, call me from work just to check in, tell me I’m doing a good job, help me with my chores around the house, spend quality time talking with me, take a shower with me, compliment me on how I look, give me a back rub, want to have sex with me, bring me an unexpected gift, cuddle without having to have sex)

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |

Indicate the importance of each item with an A, B or C, with A being most important.

Now exchange lists. On your partner’s list put an X by any items you are not willing to do at this time, making the rest of the list conflict free. Then beginning tomorrow, do at least two of these behaviors each day for two months. Start with the easier ones first and then move to the more difficult ones. These acts are to be GIFTS, NOT OBLIGATIONS. However, do them whether you feel like it or not. The act of doing these things will begin to ignite your desire, rekindle the romance and create a safety zone that will allow deeper connection and bonding. If either of you experience some resistance with this exercise, keep on doing these caring behaviors until the resistance is overcome. Do it even if you don’t feel it. Your feelings will follow.

CARING BEHAVIORS DIALOGUE

SENDER

Ask for appointment
Make eye contact
Take a few deep breaths in sync

RECEIVER

Grant appointment
Make eye contact
Take a few deep breaths in sync

MIRROR

- *“One thing that makes me feel loved and cared about is...”*
- *“When that happens, I feel...”*
- *“That reminds me of when I was little and...”*
- *“Let me see if I got you. If I did, you said...”*
- *“Did I get it?” (add or correct)*
- *“Is there more about that?”*
- **Summarize** *“To summarize what I heard you say...”*

“Yes.”

VALIDATE

- *“You make sense, and what makes sense is...”*
- *“Is that the validation you need?”*

“Yes.”

EMPATHIZE

- *“I can imagine your feel...”*
- *“Did I empathize with you?”*

END WITH ONE-MINUTE FULL BODY HUG

FOUR POWERFUL APPRECIATIONS EACH DAY

This is a tool to help you you rekindle romantic love and create a safety zone in your relationship for further growth and healing.

It has to do with four critical moments that occur each day:

- 1. The first four minutes you both are awake in the morning**
- 2. Saying “Goodbye”**
- 3. The first four minutes you are home in the evening**
- 4. Saying “Good night”**

According to Dr. Gary Brainerd, what you do during these times each day has 5 times the impact on your relationship than other times.

The goal is to use these four critical moments to say or do things that make your partner feel loved. Start by doing the following during these four times each day:

1. Give a 60-second full-body hug.

In about 20 seconds you both will begin to feel pleasurable sensations all over your body as oxytocin and other super-healthy pleasure chemicals are released into your system. Continue for one full minute to get the full effect.

But don't just count the seconds. Use the time to share an appreciation.

2. Share an appreciation...“One thing I appreciate about you is...”

Look into each other's eyes, and one at a time, finish this statement:
“One thing I appreciate about you is...”

It should be whatever comes to your mind that you genuinely appreciate. It could be *“I appreciate you wearing that shirt today. You make it look good, and it makes me feel proud to be with you.”* Or it could be something like *“One thing I appreciate about you is the way you give of yourself so unselfishly to take care of our children.”*

Get the idea? Now try it.

A 30-second appreciation one way. Then a 30-second appreciation the other way.

Giving one. Receiving one. All while embracing in a 60-second full body hug.

3. Do this four times a day over the next six weeks.