

MARRIAGE EXERCISE – GROWING THROUGH DIFFICULTIES

Marriage Exercise – Looking for What’s Good

When you are working on your marriage, it is easy to start bantering around a bunch of compliments. But praise is only powerful when it is based on something real. Something observed. Something that actually happened. This month, you are going to do a quick recall of certain characteristics of your husband, back it up with real-life examples, and then share it with him.

From the list below, circle three items that you think are characteristic of your husband. If there are more than three, still circle just three. (You can circle another three if you choose to do this exercise again.) If you’re having difficulty coming up with three, feel free to define the word characteristic very loosely.

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|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Loving | 22. Responsible | 43. Rich |
| 2. Vulnerable | 23. Dependable | 43. Cheerful |
| 3. Sensitive | 24. Creative | 44. Calm |
| 4. Committed | 25. Nurturing | 46. Coordinated |
| 5. Brave | 26. Imaginative | 47. Lively |
| 6. Involved | 27. Warm | 48. A great parent |
| 7. Intelligent | 28. Fun | 49. Gracious |
| 8. Expressive | 29. Attractive | 50. Assertive |
| 9. Thoughtful | 30. Kind | 51. Playful |
| 10. Active | 31. Interesting | 52. Protective |
| 11. Generous | 32. Gentle | 53. Caring |
| 12. Careful | 33. Supportive | 54. Sweet |
| 13. Loyal | 34. Practical | 55. A great friend |
| 14. Reserved | 35. Funny | 56. Tender |
| 15. Truthful | 36. Considerate | 57. Exciting |
| 16. Adventurous | 37. Witty | 58. Flexible |
| 17. Strong | 38. Affectionate | 59. Full of plans |
| 18. Receptive | 39. Relaxed | 60. Understanding |
| 19. Energetic | 40. Organized | 61. Shy |
| 20. Reliable | 41. Resourceful | 62. Totally silly |
| 21. Sexy | 42. Athletic | |

For the three items you circled, briefly think of an actual incident that illustrates this characteristic in your husband. Write the characteristic and the incident below:

1. Characteristic _____ Incident _____

2. Characteristic _____ Incident _____

3. Characteristic _____ Incident _____

*Adapted from Gottman, John; Nan Silver (2002--02--04). The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work, Random House, Inc.. Kindle Edition. Gottman, John; Nan Silver (2002--02--04)

Date Night Questions

It is important for the health of your marriage to take time to plan and have a date night together. As you pull aside from all the demands of life, you're able to focus on each other. This can be challenging; but if you make it a high priority, it will have great benefits in the years to come.

Read the following verses together:

Romans 5:3-5
James 1:2-4
2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Talk about some of the trials you have faced together. How have you seen God work through your marriage in the midst of these?

Now, share the three characteristics that you chose from the Marriage Exercise "Looking for What's Good" with your husband. Share the incidents as well as this will affirm your husband. Let him know how much you appreciate him and the characteristics God built into him.