Appreciating the Positive

When life gives you lemons, what do you do?

The way we respond to good and bad things in our lives affects how we see our partners. If you tend to focus on the negative and find fault in situations, you are more likely to focus on problems in your relationship. Showing you care, sharing happy memories, and expressing appreciation can help ease troubled feelings and nurture positive feelings.

How often do you tell your partner you appreciate him or her?

Thinking about what you admire in your partner is important, but that is not enough. *Telling* your partner that you appreciate him or her is even more important. It is easy to get caught up in daily hassles and become too tired or busy to connect and let our partners know they are valued and appreciated. Taking just a moment to say "thank you," sharing happy memories and letting your partner know that you are happy they are in your life can help ease troubled feelings and nurture positive feelings.

What do you appreciate in your partner?

Couples who have the closest, healthiest relationships focus more on the positives than the negatives in their relationship. The more positive ways you can express or show appreciation and love, the better you will be able to work together when problems arise.

Read through the list below and mark characteristics you really like about your partner. Is there more about your partner you like? Add it to the list!

❏ Good personality
❏ Sense of humor
❏ Loyalty
❏ Willingness to help out around the house
❏ Hard worker
❏ How my partner treats my children
❏ Shows compassion and understanding
❏ Dependability
❏ Open-mindedness

❏ Listens to you
❏ Intelligence
❏ My partner's sensitive side
❏ Shares some of my passions
❏ Similar plans and priorities
❏ Willing to solve problems together
❏ Takes care of him/herself
❏ Talks openly about childhood/family
❏ Shows respect, even during conflict

Others:

_____

_____

Now that you have identified some things you like about your partner, think of specific examples of these characteristics. For instance, if you like your partner's sense of humor, think of a time your partner made you laugh.

Share these with your partner!

Tell your partner what you like about him or her, and share the specific example you remember.

Sincere expressions of appreciation can help couples strengthen their relationship over time.

Love Languages

When you show love, do you do things that you like? Or, do you show love in ways that are preferred by your partner?

Often times we give love in the way we want to receive it. But if our primary love language differs from our partner's, then our partner might not recognize it as an expression of love.

What is Your and Your Partner's Love Language?

Which of the following best describes you?
Which one describes your partner?

	Me	My Partner
I feel most loved when my partner uses kind words and compliments to tell me how much I am valued and appreciated. (Your primary love language is **Words of Affirmation**.)	❏	❏
I feel most loved when my partner gives me full attention and I am able to spend alone time with my partner. (Your primary love language is **Quality Time**.)	❏	❏
I feel most loved when my partner gives me gifts. (Your primary love language is **Receiving Gifts**.)	❏	❏
I feel most loved when my partner does things for me, such as cooking dinner, doing laundry, cleaning, and taking care of the car. (Your primary love language is **Acts of Service**.)	❏	❏
I feel most loved when my partner shows his/her feelings through physical contact, such as holding hands, kissing, hugging, or sex. (Your primary love language is **Personal Touch**.)	❏	❏

What are some things you do or say that match your partner's love language? What does your partner do to match your love language?

What are other things you could do differently for each other to show love in ways that matter to you both?

Take time to learn and understand each other's preferred love language. Taking special care to show and express your love and commitment in the way you each prefers can help strengthen your relationship.

Show you care by caring in ways that matter to your partner!