Exercise 1

BS”D

Appreciations

Exercise:

* affectionate
* amicable
* amusing
* brave
* bright
* calm
* compassionate
* creative
* easygoing
* enthusiastic
* faithful
* friendly
* funny
* generous
* gentle
* hard-working
* helpful
* honest
* humorous
* imaginative
* modest
* neat
* passionate
* patient
* romantic
* sensitive
* sincere
* sympathetic
* thoughtful
* understanding

Choose 3 characteristics you appreciate about your spouse and share incidents when they occurred.

Languages of Love

By Dr. Gary Chapman



Exercise:

Choose and discuss your “love language” with your spouse.

Love Maps

Based on the writings of Dr. John Gottman

Exercise:

Please write down answers to these important questions and do not share with your spouse. After you are done then share them with your spouse

1. My spouse’s closest friends are (list names) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. 2

2. My spouse is currently stressing out over \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. 2

3. Some of my spouse’s life dreams are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. 3

4. One of my spouse’s favorite outfits is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. 2

5. My spouse’s basic philosophy on life is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. 2

6. The relatives my spouse likes the most are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. 2

7. My spouse’s favorite music is

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. 1

8. My spouse’s favorite videos are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. 2

9. My spouse’s favorite getaway place is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. 2

10. The three most special times in my spouse’s life were \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. 3

After you confirm the answers with your spouse, add up the numbers and see who one!

**Total:**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

ACTIVE LISTENING AND “I” MESSAGES

Below are four core principles of active listening.

1. **Physical Attention**

• Face the person who is talking.

• Notice the speaker’s body language; does it match what he/she is saying?

• Can you match the speaker’s body language?

• Try not to do anything else while you are listening.

2. **Paraphrasing**

• Show you are listening and understanding what is being said.

• Restate basic ideas and facts.

• Check to make sure your understanding is accurate by saying:

“It sounds like what you mean is... Is that so?”

3. **Reflecting**

• Show that you understand how the person feels.

• Help the person evaluate his or her feelings after hearing them expressed by someone else.

• Reflect the speaker’s feelings by saying:

“Are you saying that you’re angry/disappointed/glad, because...?”

“It sounds like you feel...”

4. **Clarifying**

• Help clarify what is said.

• Get more information.

• Use a tone of voice that conveys interest.

• Ask open ended questions, as opposed to yes/no questions, to elicit more information.

5. **Encouraging**

• Show interest by saying

“Can you tell me more about that?”

“Really?”

“Is that so?”

“I” Messages

“I” messages focus on what you feel about someone’s behavior and simply state a problem, without blaming someone for it. This makes it easier for the other person to help solve the problem, without having to admit that they were wrong.

“I” messages usually contain four elements:
(1) How I feel about the behavior and its effects
(2) A description of the behavior, what actually happened
(3) The actual, concrete, tangible effects of that behavior on you
(4) The behavior you would prefer

Another way they can be expressed is like this:
I feel \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (express your feeling)
when this happens \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (describe the action that affects you or relates to the feeling)
because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (explain how the action affects you or relates to the feeling)

Attachment and “I” Messages



Exercise: Talk about your feelings to your spouse while your spouse actively listens to you. Chose a time when you felt sad, scared, helpless etc.. Remember not to blame, but express your feelings using an “I” message.

**References for Getting Closer Workshop**

Chapman, G.(1992). *5 Love Languages*

Gottman, J. (2000). *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*

Johnson, S. (2009). *Hold Me Tight: Seven Conversations for a Lifetime of Love*