

*Exercise***HOW MUCH DO YOU ACTUALLY  
CHERISH YOUR PARTNER?**

*Instructions:* Imagine a life-sized cutout portrait of your partner. Now imagine covering the portrait with sticky notes that tell the story of all you've accomplished and enjoyed together. It can be all the fun times, the comforts, the small silly things, the dreams, the frustrations that you've conquered. Just consider your whole story and what living this life together so far has given you.

Now read the prompts below. Each one is a reason to communicate that you cherish your partner. They are simple yes-or-no answers and there are so many of them for a reason. Thinking about ways to cherish your partner will give power to your connection. Also, we listed so many because it's not likely that each and every one will resonate for you—but for the ones that *do* resonate (hopefully a lot of them!), make a commitment to tell your partner that you cherish this quality in them. Don't be like the Swedish farmer who loved his wife so much that one day he almost told her. Create a ritual time—maybe once a week—for cherishing your partner out loud. If you'd like to download and print these exercises go to [8datesbook.com](http://8datesbook.com).

**I TOLD YOU THAT I CHERISH YOU BECAUSE**

- 1** We have played together and had fun together.  
 YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 2** We have laughed together easily.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 3** We have traveled well together.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER

- 4 No one in the world can replace you.  
 YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 5 We have been able to comfort each other.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 6 We have worked out our finances with each other.  
 YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 7 We have learned to truly trust each other.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 8 You have supported a personal dream of mine.  YES  
 NO  TELL PARTNER
- 9 You have been a great provider.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 10 We had some great adventures together.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 11 We have had some great road trips.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 12 We have enjoyed learning together.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 13 You know me well.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 14 I love the way you experience nature.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 15 We enjoyed singing together.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 16 We have done things together that I could never have  
done with anyone else.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 17 You have been trustworthy.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 18 We have helped heal each other after experiencing a loss  
or setback.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 19 We parented a child together.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER

- 20** You are worth more to me than riches and jewels.  
 YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 21** You have been loyal.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 22** I love how spontaneous you can be.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 23** You have taught me a lot.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 24** You accept me in spite of my faults.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 25** You have understood some of my personal goals.  
 YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 26** We played music so well together.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 27** I respect your wisdom.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 28** We have been a great team.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 29** I love the way you welcome guests.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 30** I love how organized and efficient you can be.  YES  
 NO  TELL PARTNER
- 31** We enjoyed listening to the same music together.  
 YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 32** I admire so many of your skills.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 33** You have loved or helped some of my relatives.  YES  
 NO  TELL PARTNER
- 34** I admire how brave you have been at times.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 35** I respect your values.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER

- 36** You understand my sense of humor.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 37** You have taken my side against someone who attacked me.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 38** We enjoy sex together.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 39** You always look great.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 40** I really appreciate the times when you have covered for me when I have been down.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 41** I can really count on you when the chips are down.  
 YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 42** We loved a pet together.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 43** We fell in love with each other.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 44** You can make me feel safe.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 45** We loved a child together.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 46** You are a kind person.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 47** You have forgiven me.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 48** We helped a friend in need together.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 49** I love how romantic you are.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 50** You are actually attracted to me.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 51** I love your mind.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 52** You are generous.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 53** We have worked out some major conflicts between us.  
 YES  NO  TELL PARTNER

- 54** We took care of a relative together.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 55** I respect the way you treated a friend.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 56** I felt loved and cared for by you.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 57** I love the way you look in the shower.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 58** You helped build a home of solace and peace.  YES  
 NO  TELL PARTNER
- 59** You are a thoughtful person.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 60** We developed similar ethical values together.  YES  
 NO  TELL PARTNER
- 61** You loved my mother.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 62** You have comforted me when I was afraid.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 63** We have had some really romantic trips and dates.  
 YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 64** Our values and beliefs have meshed.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 65** I respect your intelligence.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 66** You have supported me against enemies I have had.  
 YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 67** I love the way you have at times really listened to me.  
 YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 68** You are a great parent.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 69** When I was sick you took care of me.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER

- 70** When I most doubted myself, you were in my corner.  
 YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 71** You have supported my own personal goals.  YES  
 NO  TELL PARTNER
- 72** I love the fact that you are not arrogant.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 73** You have stood up for me when someone criticized me in public.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 74** We gave birth to a child together.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 75** We created a home together.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 76** We had many of the same goals in life.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 77** I appreciate the fact that you are not a snob.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 78** I am very attracted to you.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 79** We have been together for so long.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 80** We worked together to create community.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 81** I am grateful that I can feel proud of you.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 82** We have overcome adversity together.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 83** I appreciate the fact that I can really be myself with you.  
 YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 84** You've always supported my own development.  YES  
 NO  TELL PARTNER

- 85** I love how nice you are to strangers.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 86** I really cherish the way you have helped me grieve.  
 YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 87** I really appreciate that we have worshipped or prayed together.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 88** I feel confident that we can get through any turmoil together.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 89** I appreciate that I can always talk to you when I feel down.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 90** I love how honest you have been.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 91** I respect that fact that you work very hard.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 92** I love the fact that you can laugh at yourself.  YES  
 NO  TELL PARTNER
- 93** We have celebrated successes together.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 94** You are one of my best friends.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 95** I love that you are not at all phony.  YES  NO  
 TELL PARTNER
- 96** There have been times when I have felt lost and you helped me find my way.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 97** I love our spiritual connection.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 98** You have been strong at times when I have felt very weak.  
 YES  NO  TELL PARTNER
- 99** I feel that we can be proud of what we have built together in life.  YES  NO  TELL PARTNER

*Exercise***WE ALL HAVE ISSUES**

We have created a list of 25 topics that could represent fundamental differences in your personalities that could create conflict, or fundamental differences in your lifestyle needs that may also be a source of conflict. Lifestyle needs are basic to your identity, and to who you are as a person.

This exercise is an opportunity to get to know each other in new ways, and to be curious about what your potential sources of conflict might be during your relationship. Look over each item. Pick the top three to five that jump out at you. Write down how you feel about each of the issues you selected. Do you feel it's a significant conflict right now? Do you think it will be a source of conflict in the future? You're going to discuss these on your date, so take some time to consider the topic. Some couples chose to explore every topic and wrote down how they felt about every area. Do what seems reasonable for you.

Remember that you're ultimately seeking an understanding of your partner's interior world, and creating shared meaning together. If punctuality is important to your partner, and you think punctual is arriving no more than an hour late, discuss why it's so important or not so important to each other. There's usually a story underneath every strong emotion. Be ready to tell each other your stories and seek the understanding that'll help you manage your conflicts skillfully and with compassion.

As you think about what you need, keep it positive—what you *do* need as opposed to what you *don't* need or want. Also, try to make that positive need as specific as you can so it's



like a recipe for success with you. For example, “I would like you to respect me” isn’t as good as, “I would like you to turn off your electronic devices at dinner so we can just talk to each other.”

## EXPLORE AND BE READY TO DISCUSS.

- » How are we the same and how are we different?
- » How can we accommodate and accept the differences between us?
- » Are there differences we cannot accept?

- 1 Differences in neatness and organization.** One person may be neat and organized, while the other is more disorganized and doesn’t mind a bit of mess.
- 2 Differences in punctuality.** One person is always on time or early, and the other is more casual about time, and often late.
- 3 Differences in doing tasks and getting things done.** One person may be a multitasker, doing lots of things at the same time, and the other likes to focus on one thing at a time.
- 4 Differences in emotionality.** One person is very emotionally expressive and the other is not so expressive. One person might value exploring one’s emotions more than the other, who believes more in action than introspection about feelings.
- 5 Differences in wanting time together versus time apart and alone.** One person wants more time alone than the other, who wants more time together. These reflect basic differences in wanting autonomy versus interdependence.

- 6 Differences in optimal sexual frequency.** One person wants sex more often than the other.
- 7 Differences in talking about your sex life.** One partner wants to talk about your sex life and be able to make it better over time, while the other person prefers to have this area of your life kept spontaneous and unexamined.
- 8 Differences in finances.** One person is much more financially conservative, a worrier and a planner, while the other wants to spend a lot more than the other, and has a philosophy of living for the moment.
- 9 Differences in adventure.** One person is adventurous and willing to take some risks when venturing into the unknown, but the other person is more cautious and risk-averse, and wants any adventure to be worked out in advance so that it's mostly planned and predictable.
- 10 Differences with respect to relatives.** One person wants more independence from relatives, and the other wants more closeness and connection.
- 11 Differences in how to approach household chores and childcare.** One person wants an equal division of labor, while the other doesn't agree with this principle, or feels it's unrealistic.
- 12 Differences in how to discuss disagreements.** One person wants to be able to fight openly and be as emotionally expressive as possible, while the other may require a more logical, calm, and rational approach to conflict, without much emotionality.
- 13 Differences in expressing anger.** One person is comfortable expressing or receiving anger, wants the freedom to express anger, and tends to get over anger easily. The other person sees anger as potentially

destructive and disrespectful and wants anger to be mostly eliminated from your interactions, and may be more likely to take anger personally, or even hold grudges.

- 14 Differences in how to raise and discipline children.** One person tends to be stricter with children and believes that it's essential for children to be respectful, while the other person emphasizes empathy and understanding of children and thinks children should have freedom and be emotionally close to their parents.
- 15 Differences in how to deal with sadness.** One person prefers to ignore moments of sadness or despair, to problem-solve and “get on with life” using action, while the other wants to be able to talk about sadness and be listened to empathetically.
- 16 Differences in preferred activity level.** One person prefers to be very active, while the other prefers calmer and less active forms of recreation.
- 17 Differences in socializing.** One person is more extroverted and gregarious, and gets energized by being with people, while the other person finds being with people an effort and is energized by solitude.
- 18 Differences in influence/power.** One person prefers to be more dominant in any decision making you might face, while the other prefers equality in power.
- 19 Differences in ambition and the importance of work.** One person is far more ambitious and oriented toward work and success, while the other focuses more on quality of family life and fun with the partner.
- 20 Differences with respect to religion and spirituality.** One person values spiritual activities or religious values more than the other.

- 21 Differences with respect to drugs and alcohol.** One person is far more tolerant of the use of recreational drugs and alcohol than the other.
- 22 Differences in independence.** One person feels a greater need to be independent versus interconnected than the other.
- 23 Differences in excitement.** One person feels a greater need to have life be exciting or adventurous than the other.
- 24 Differences in fidelity.** There are major differences in how loyal sexually or romantically you want to be, or have been, to each other.
- 25 Differences in having fun.** One person tends to be serious and doesn't think much about the concept of "having fun," while the other is more playful and less serious.

*Exercise***MY FAMILY HISTORY WITH MONEY**

Complete the questionnaire below, separately and before your date. Then discuss your responses.

**READ EACH QUESTION AND ANSWER IT HONESTLY.**

- »» What did your maternal and paternal grandparents do for a living?
- »» How well off were your grandparents?
- »» What did your parents do for a living?
- »» How well off were your parents?
- »» What were your parents' attitudes about money? How did you view these parental ideas as a child?
- »» Did your parents feel comfortable spending money? How did you view these attitudes about money as a child?
- »» Did your parents save money or invest? How did you view these attitudes about money as a child?
- »» Did your family take family vacations or travel together when you were growing up? How did you view these vacations as a child? Was money discussed?
- »» Did your family entertain? How did you view this as a child?
- »» Did your family engage in philanthropy or charitable activities?

- »» As a child did you have an allowance? How did you view this as a child?
- »» What is your own work history?
- »» What does money mean to you personally and why?
- »» Did your parents celebrate your birthdays? Did you feel special?
- »» Did you have a birthday cake? Did that fact matter to you as a child?
- »» How did your parents show you that they were proud of you? Or didn't they?
- »» Did you get presents at holidays? Did that fact matter to you as a child?
- »» What did your parents teach you about money? How do you feel about those teachings now?
- »» What did your family's history teach you about money? What's your attitude now?
- »» What were your family's values about money? What did you agree with and what did you disagree with?
- »» What is your most painful money memory? Tell the story of that memory to your partner.
- »» What is your happiest or best money memory? Tell the story of that memory to your partner.

*Exercise***WHAT ENOUGH MONEY  
MEANS TO ME**

Both you and your partner should complete the questionnaire below separately. Then be prepared to discuss your responses.

Read each item and circle the correct alternative that fits your point of view for each item, with the following key:

**5** = Strongly Agree   **4** = Agree   **3** = Neither Agree nor Disagree  
**2** = Disagree   **1** = Strongly Disagree

For me, having enough money means having power.

**5**   **4**   **3**   **2**   **1**

For me, having enough money means being independent.

**5**   **4**   **3**   **2**   **1**

For me, having enough money means being strong.

**5**   **4**   **3**   **2**   **1**

For me, enough money means not having to rely on anyone else.

**5**   **4**   **3**   **2**   **1**

For me, enough money means being responsible.

**5**   **4**   **3**   **2**   **1**

For me, enough money means being able to relax and not worry.

**5**   **4**   **3**   **2**   **1**

For me, enough money means being able to have time to do what I like.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, enough money means being able to have luxury.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, enough money means being able to create.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, enough money means being able to give some of it to other people.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money means love, caring, and affection.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money means safety, security, and stability.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money means feeling competent.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money means having control.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money means safety, security, and stability.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money allows me to feel positive self-esteem.

**5 4 3 2 1**



For me, having enough money means being acceptable to myself and others.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money means a reward for a lot of effort.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money means being a successful adult.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money means avoiding stress.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money means deserved self-indulgence.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money means feeling respected.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money means taking responsibility as an adult.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money has meant greater sexual opportunity.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money means great freedom.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money means I can have companionship.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money means feeling rich and comfortable.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money means filling a void in my life.

**5 4 3 2 1**

For me, having enough money means I can be happy.

**5 4 3 2 1**

The conflicts around money are best navigated when you understand the ways your history with money are the same, and the ways they're different. What to each of you constitutes *having enough*? With this quiz, you can delve deep into understanding what money means to your partner. Think about how you each contribute to the greater wealth of your relationship, whether that is time, work around the house, or financially. It's never too early to understand your partner's relationship and history with money, and it's never too late either. For a lifetime of love, and less conflict, express gratitude for what you have, what you each contribute, and what you are building together. Different meanings drive different relationships to money. There are ways to make your money attitudes compatible. It's worth the effort in discussion now to avoid the disagreements over how you spend and save your hard-earned cash.

*Exercise***FOR THE FUN OF IT**

Read through the list before your date. Circle all the items in the list that represent a starting point for how you'd like to play or have adventure with your partner, and then star the top three that you would like to do first. For the truly adventurous, you can use the list as a weekly suggestion for something new and try them all. We've also left some blank lines so you can fill in your own ideas of play.

- »» Take a hike or long walk together
- »» Take a drive this weekend to somewhere we've both wanted to explore
- »» Plan a picnic
- »» Play a board game or card game together
- »» Choose and learn a new video game together
- »» Shop for cars, antiques, new clothes—whatever passion you share
- »» Plan a meal together and invite friends over
- »» Cook a dish from a new cuisine together
- »» Choose a new restaurant to explore or cuisine to try
- »» Play catch
- »» Learn a new language together (or at least a few phrases)
- »» Speak in foreign accents while doing just about anything
- »» Go bicycling or rent a bicycle for two

- » Go roller-skating or ice-skating
- » Rent Segways
- » Row a boat or canoe or kayak together
- » Go to a bookstore and explore books in a section we don't usually read
- » Go visit wildlife: bird-watching, whale watching, the local zoo, or the aquarium
- » Learn a new sport together
- » Go see a live performance: play, improv, musical, stand-up comedy, circus, dance—whatever sounds fun
- » Take a performance class together, like improv, acting, singing, or stand-up comedy
- » Read a joke book together. Read a book of poems together. Or alternate reading one joke and one poem.
- » Go dancing
- » Go fishing
- » Go to a concert or any live music
- » Create a playlist of the music from when we met and dance or listen to it together
- » Work out together
- » Get tickets to our favorite sports event and cheer together
- » Go to a spa and enjoy being together in the hot tub or sauna
- » Play music together
- » Sing loudly together to music we both know

- »» Go to an art gallery or museum
- »» Pretend we are spies while out at the mall or in town
- »» Go wine tasting or beer tasting or chocolate tasting
- »» Climb a hill, mountain, or friendly tree
- »» Tell stories about the most embarrassing or entertaining episodes of our lives
- »» Go to a climbing gym
- »» Go to a trampoline gym
- »» Go to a theme park or amusement park
- »» Play in the water together: swimming, water skiing, riding waves, paddleboarding, sailing
- »» Make a date to meet somewhere and pretend we don't know each other and are meeting for the first time. Flirt, and try to seduce each other
- »» Color, draw, or paint together
- »» Make something together, such as crafts, pottery, model airplanes, clothing, costumes, woodwork
- »» Throw an impromptu party and invite everyone who's available at the moment
- »» Do yoga together or take a couples' yoga class
- »» Learn couples' massage
- »» Go for a walk in a new neighborhood
- »» Write a love letter to each other with our nondominant hand

- » Ride the local bus system around our town rather than drive
- » Stay up all night
- » Turn off all electronic devices for the entire day
- » Take an art class
- » Take a cooking class
- » Take a dance class
- » Ask a couple you don't know very well to go on a double date
- » Strike up a conversation together with strangers sitting near you in a restaurant, on a park bench, or on the subway
- » Try a new sport
- » Play in the mud
- » Scuba dive or go cage diving with sharks
- » Go bungee jumping
- » Go hiking, camping, or backpacking
- » Travel to an exotic country
- » Do anything you've always wanted to do, but were afraid to try
- » \_\_\_\_\_
- » \_\_\_\_\_

*Exercise:***SHARED MEANING QUESTIONNAIRE**

To get a sense of how well you and your partner create a sense of shared meaning in your lives together, answer the following True or False questions. If a question doesn't apply to you (a question involving family or children when you don't have children, or a question involving living together and you don't live together) simply skip it, modify it to your particular situation (dinnertime with just the two of you), or keep it in mind for future discussion.

**YOUR RITUALS OF CONNECTION**

- » We see eye to eye about rituals for family dinnertime in our home.  T  F
- » Holiday meals (like Thanksgiving, Christmas, Passover) are very special and happy times for us (or we both hate them).  T  F
- » End-of-the-workday reunions in our home are generally special times.  T  F
- » We see eye to eye about the role of TV in our home.  T  F
- » Bedtime is generally a good time for being close.  T  F
- » During the weekends we do things that we enjoy and value, both together and separately.  T  F
- » We have similar intentions and desires about entertaining in our home (having friends over, parties, and so on).  
 T  F

- » We both value, or both dislike, special celebrations (like birthdays, anniversaries, family reunions).  T  F
- » When I get sick, I feel taken care of and loved by my partner.  T  F
- » I really look forward to and enjoy our vacations and the travel we do together.  T  F
- » Spending our morning time together is special to us.  T  F
- » When we do errands together, we generally have a good time.  T  F
- » We have unique and specific ways of becoming renewed and refreshed together when we are burned out or fatigued.  T  F

After answering the questions above, especially if you had very few “True” answers, please create your own rituals of connection by discussing the following questions.

- » When we eat dinner together, how can we make our dinnertime special for us? What is the meaning of dinnertime? What was dinnertime like in each of our families growing up?
- » How should we part at the beginning of each day? What was this like in our families growing up? What should our reunions be like?
- » What should getting ready for bed be like for us? What was it like in our families growing up?



- »» What do weekends mean for each of us? What were they like in our families growing up? How can we make them more meaningful?
- »» What were vacations like in our families growing up? How do we want our vacations to feel?
- »» Pick a special holiday. What is the true meaning of this holiday to us? How should it be celebrated this year? How was it celebrated in each of our families growing up?
- »» How do we each get refreshed and renewed? What makes these rituals meaningful for us?
- »» What rituals do we have when someone is sick? What was it like in our families growing up? What would we like it to be in our family?

*Exercise***SHARED GOALS QUESTIONNAIRE**

Both of you have goals for yourself and for your relationship. Goals can be indicators of how you might change. Goals can be practical, or deeply spiritual. Goals can sometimes cross over into life dreams, which we'll discuss in the next chapter. For now, you're going to explore the meaning of goals in your individual lives and in your relationship. Please answer the following True or False questions. If a question doesn't apply to you, skip it, modify it to your particular situation, or keep it in mind for future discussion.

**YOUR GOALS**

- » We share many of the same goals in our life together.  T  F
- » If I were to look back on my life in very old age, I think I would see that our paths had meshed very well.  T  F
- » My partner values my accomplishments.  T  F
- » My partner honors the personal goals I have that are unrelated to our relationship.  T  F
- » We share many of the same goals for others who are important to us (children, relatives, friends, and community).  T  F
- » We have very similar financial goals.  T  F
- » We tend to have compatible worries about potential financial disasters.  T  F
- » Our life dreams tend to be similar or compatible.  T  F

- » Our hopes and aspirations, as individuals and together, for our children, for our life in general, and for our old age, are compatible.  T  F
- » Even when they are different, we have been able to find a way to honor our life dreams.  T  F

After answering the questions above, especially if you had very few “True” answers, please explore your goals and their meanings by discussing the following questions.

- » Write your own eulogy. What would you like it to say? What qualities or accomplishments would you most like to be remembered for at the time of your death?
- » What goals do you have in life, for yourself, for your partner, for your children (if you have children)? What do you want to accomplish in the next five to ten years?
- » We often fill our time with things that demand immediate attention—putting out fires, so to speak. But what are the important things in your life that are truly great sources of energy and pleasure that you really need to block out time for, the important things that keep getting postponed or crowded out?
- » What is the role of spirituality or religion in your lives? What was this role in your families growing up? What would you like it to be now or in the future?

As individuals, you will grow and change over the course of your relationship. Your individual beliefs and practices about spirituality and religion aren’t as important as viewing your relationship and the rituals and goals you create together as sacred, spiritual, and meaningful.

*Exercise***DREAM LEVELS**

Read through the list of deep dreams to see if they relate to your own deeply held dreams, or inspire you to think of a dream you have or perhaps spark a dream you have forgotten about.

- 1 Circle the dreams on the list that are dreams you have or write in some of your own in the spaces provided. Be prepared to share this list with your partner on your date.
- 2 In the circle diagram on page 210, name a dream (or up to three dreams) you have and put it in the center circle (Dream #1). This should be the dream that matters the most to you. In the middle circle (Dream #2) write a dream you have that matters, but isn't as important to you. In the outer circle (Dream #3) write down a dream that would be great to fulfill, but is more a "take it or leave it" kind of dream. Circle three dreams below that are most important to you.

- »» To have more freedom
- »» To experience peace
- »» To experience unity with nature
- »» To explore who I am
- »» To go on great adventures
- »» To undertake a spiritual journey
- »» To fight for justice
- »» To create honor

- » To heal my past
- » To be a healer of others
- » To create a family
- » To fulfill my potential
- » To be powerful and influential
- » To age gracefully
- » To explore my creative side
- » To help others
- » To develop mastery
- » To explore an old part of myself I have lost
- » To conquer a fear
- » To have a sense of order
- » To be more productive
- » To be able to truly relax
- » To reflect on my life
- » To finish something important
- » To explore the physical side of myself or become an athlete
- » To compete and win
- » To travel the world
- » To make amends or ask God or another person for forgiveness

»» To build something important

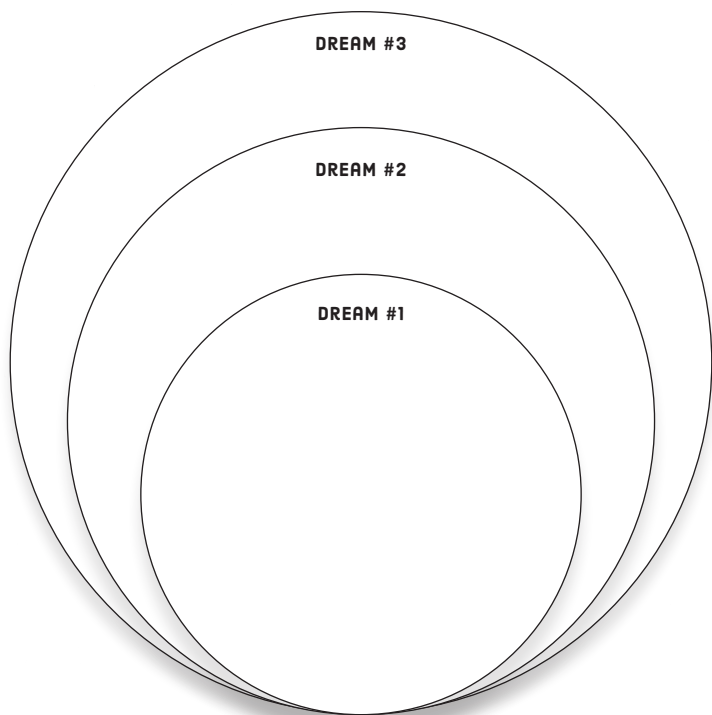
»» To end a chapter in my life—say goodbye to something

»» \_\_\_\_\_

»» \_\_\_\_\_

»» \_\_\_\_\_

»» \_\_\_\_\_



## Bonus Date Night Exercise

### CHERISHING YOUR PARTNER

This is a bonus exercise you can do as an add-on for any of the dates, or a fun framework for a special date night just for cherishing each other.

Using the list below, check all the qualities that apply to your partner and think of an example when your partner displayed that characteristic. Then say to yourself, “I am really lucky to be with my partner.” On your next date, go through your list, give the example, and thank your partner for having that positive quality.

#### WHAT I REALLY CHERISH ABOUT YOU IS THAT YOU ARE SO:

(Remember to give an example for each of these on the list.)

- |                |                 |              |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| » Active       | » Calm          | » Curious    |
| » Adaptable    | » Capable       | » Daring     |
| » Adventurous  | » Caring        | » Dedicated  |
| » Ambitious    | » Cheerful      | » Dependable |
| » Appreciative | » Clever        | » Determined |
| » Artistic     | » Compassionate | » Devoted    |
| » Authentic    | » Confident     | » Easygoing  |
| » Aware        | » Conscientious | » Empathetic |
| » Balanced     | » Considerate   | » Enduring   |
| » Bold         | » Courageous    | » Ethical    |
| » Brave        | » Creative      | » Fair       |

- |                 |                |                  |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| » Feisty        | » Mellow       | » Responsible    |
| » Flexible      | » Musical      | » Self-confident |
| » Forgiving     | » Neat         | » Sensitive      |
| » Friendly      | » Nurturing    | » Sincere        |
| » Fun           | » Observant    | » Smart          |
| » Generous      | » Open-minded  | » Sociable       |
| » Gentle        | » Optimistic   | » Spiritual      |
| » Happy         | » Organized    | » Stable         |
| » Hardworking   | » Patient      | » Strong         |
| » Healthy       | » Peaceful     | » Supportive     |
| » Helpful       | » Perceptive   | » Thoughtful     |
| » Honest        | » Persevering  | » Tolerant       |
| » Humble        | » Practical    | » Trusting       |
| » Humorous      | » Principled   | » Trustworthy    |
| » Insightful    | » Quick-witted | » Truthful       |
| » Intelligent   | » Quiet        | » Understanding  |
| » Interesting   | » Rational     | » Unselfish      |
| » Intuitive     | » Reliable     | » Warm           |
| » Kind          | » Resilient    | » Wise           |
| » Knowledgeable | » Resourceful  | » Witty          |
| » Loyal         | » Respectful   |                  |