



Exercise 1: “I Appreciate...”

The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work

by John M. Gottman, PH.D., and Nan Silver

From the list below, circle three items that you think are characteristic of your partner. If there are more than three, circle just three. (You can choose to 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. Even if you can recall only one instance when your partner displayed this characteristic, you can circle it.

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|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1. Loving | 21. Affectionate |
| 2. Sensitive | 22. Organized |
| 3. Brave | 23. Resourceful |
| 4. Intelligent | 24. Athletic |
| 5. Thoughtful | 25. Cheerful |
| 6. Generous | 26. Coordinated |
| 7. Loyal | 27. Graceful |
| 8. Truthful | 28. Elegant |
| 9. Strong | 29. Gracious |
| 10. Energetic | 30. Playful |
| 11. Sexy | 31. Caring |
| 12. Decisive | 32. A Great Friend |
| 13. Creative | 33. Exciting |
| 14. Imaginative | 34. Thrifty |
| 15. Fun 5 | 35. Flexible |
| 16. Attracting | 36. Full of Plans |
| 17. Interesting | 37. Shy |
| 18. Supportive | 38. Vulnerable |
| 19. Funny | 39. Committed |
| 20. Considerate | 40. Involved |



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|-----------------|---------------------|
| 41. Expressive | 56. Lusty |
| 42. Active | 57. Witty |
| 43. Careful | 58. Relaxed |
| 44. Reserved | 59. Beautiful |
| 45. Adventurous | 60. Handsome |
| 46. Receptive | 61. Calm |
| 47. Reliable | 62. A Great Partner |
| 48. Responsible | 63. A great Parent |
| 49. Dependable | 64. Protective |
| 50. Nurturing | 65. Tender |
| 51. Warm | 66. Sweet |
| 52. Virile | 67. Powerful |
| 53. Kind | 68. Lively |
| 54. Gentle | 69. Understating |
| 55. Practical | 70. Totally Silly |

For each item you checked, briefly think of an actual incident that illustrates this characteristic of your partner. Write the characteristic and the incident in your notebook or journal as follows:

1. Characteristic _____
Incident _____
2. Characteristic _____
Incident _____
3. Characteristic _____
Incident _____

Now, share your list with your partner. Let him or her know what it is about these traits that you value so highly.