3. MISSES AND WISHES

Adapted from “[Making Marriage Simple](http://makingmarriagesimple.com/)” by Harville Hendrix & Helen laKelly Hunt

**Truth #3: Conflict Is Growth Trying to Happen**

The conflict you’re experiencing is normal. You are not alone. Every couple on the planet struggles at times. Whew! What a relief.

Conflict has a message. Something new is trying to emerge in your relationship. The more you can identify what is trying to emerge in your relationship, the easier it will be to create. And this exercise is going to help you do just that.

1. Write down the things you loved about your relationship when you first met, and miss now.
2. Next write down something you’ve been longing to feel in your relationship—something you’ve possibly never felt before.
3. Take turns sharing items from each list. As you do, it’s natural for memories to come up. Share those too.

For example, if one of your wishes is that you’d love to travel more often, this might lead you to a memory of a wonderful trip you took together early in your relationship. Sharing that memory— and even cuddling while you do it—will get your brain to release the love hormone oxytocin, which is responsible for the wonderful feelings you had when you were in the Romantic Love phase of your relationship.

You can also make a list of things you want to create in your relationship and hang it on the fridge. Some of these may be relatively small (like being more affectionate with each other or having friends over more), and some might be larger (like going on a second honeymoon).

Having your relationship wishes in plain sight will remind you to focus on creating them.

MISSES AND WISHES exercise

**MISS**

I Loved When We … Example (general): … had candlelight dinners together.

Example (specific ): … went on a spontaneous trip to Melbourne for the weekend.

**WISH**

I Wish We Could … Example (general): … have more spontaneous sex.

Example (specific): … go to a play together.

**Remember: By stretching to give your partner what they need, you grow new skills.**