6. RITUAL OF APPRECIATIONS

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

**Truth #6: Negativity Is Invisible Abuse**

Negativity is toxic to your relationship.

We define negativity as any words, tone of voice, facial expressions, or behaviours your partner says feel negative to them. No growth can happen in a relationship that is full of negativity.

So if you want you and your partner to grow, you need to detox your relationship of all negativity. There are two main things that help end all negativity.

* Shift from judgment to curiosity. This can be as simple as looking at your partner as though you’re only just meeting them (and to make it fun you can even plan on arriving at a bar separately and introduce yourselves as though you’ve never met before).
* Share what you appreciate about each other. When first starting to do this, you’ll find it’s much easier to complain about what you don’t like. The Ritual of Appreciations is a crucial component of a relationship shifting into health. With it you can identify what you truly cherish about your partner. It’s time for you to focus on the good so you can make your relationship great!

1. List your partner’s physical characteristics, personality traits, behaviors, and global affirmations (e.g., they are terrific, thoughtful, fantastic) that you appreciate, love, admire, and cherish.

2. End each day sharing three things you appreciate about each other before going to bed. And commit to doing this Ritual of Appreciations for one week. Remember, no repetitions allowed. You can start with the Appreciations you wrote on your list. But also pay attention to your partner each day from the perspective of what you appreciate about them.

The point of this exercise is to shift your focus from what you don’t like, to what you do. As your focus shifts, you’ll both start seeing more and more of the things you like— and each of you will be inspired to do more for your relationship. Once you’ve completed your week, you can continue giving Appreciations. Why not? It feels great, doesn’t it?

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| |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | PHYSICAL CHARECTERISTICS | PERSONALITY TRAITS | BEHAVIOURS | GLOBAL AFFIRMATIONS | | Your blue eyes | Funny | Read to Amanda every night | You’re terrific! | | Freckles on your nose | Compassionate | Making me coffee in the morning | I can’t believe I’m married  to you! | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |

**Remember: Energy follows attention. The more you focus on the good, the more good there will be to focus on.**