

## Fondness and Admiration Challenge

**Instructions:** The following checklist contains items that are Relationship Enhancing thoughts that can replace the Distress-Maintaining thoughts that lead to Distance and Isolation Cascade. Take this checklist to work with you and do the tasks suggested in *italics*. Do one a day. Try to genuinely think and rehearse these positive thoughts about your partner and your relationship.

### Week 1.

- I am genuinely fond of my partner. *List one characteristic you find endearing or lovable.*
- I can easily speak of the good times in our marriage. *Pick one great time and write a paragraph about it.*
- I can easily remember romantic, special times in our marriage. *Pick one such time and think about it.*
- I am physically attracted to my partner. *Think of one physical attribute that you like.*
- My partner has specific qualities that make me proud. *Write down one characteristic that makes you proud.*

### Week 2.

- I feel a genuine sense of “we” as opposed to “I” in this marriage. *Think of one thing that you both have in common.*
- We have the same general beliefs and values. *Describe one belief that you both share.*
- We have common goals. *List two such goals.*
- My spouse is my best friend. *What secret about you does your spouse know?*
- I get lots of support in this marriage. *Think of a time that you got really good support.*

### Week 3.

- My home is a place to come to get support and reduce stress. *List a time when your spouse helped you reduce stress.*
- I can easily recall the first time we met. *Describe it on paper.*
- I remember many details about deciding to get married. *Describe it in a paragraph.*
- I can recall our wedding and honeymoon. *Describe one thing about them that you enjoyed.*
- We divide up household chores in a fair way. *Describe one way that you do this on a regular basis.*

### Week 4.

- We have planned things and have a sense of control over our lives together. *Describe one thing that you both planned together.*
- I am proud of this marriage. *What are you proud of?*
- I am proud of my family. *Be specific about a time that you felt this pride.*

- There are some things I don't like about my partner, but I can live with them. *What are these minor faults?*
- This marriage is a lot better than most I have seen. *Think of a marriage that you know is awful.*

**Week 5.**

- I was lucky to meet my spouse. *List one benefit of being married to your spouse.*
- Marriage is sometimes a struggle, but it's worth it. *Think of one difficult time you have weathered together.*
- There is a lot of affection between us. *Plan a surprise gift for your partner tonight.*
- We are genuinely interested in each other. *Think of something to do or to talk about together that would be interesting.*
- We find one another to be good companions. *Plan an outing together.*

**Week 6.**

- There is lots of good loving in this marriage. *Think of a special trip you took together.*
- My partner is an interesting person. *Plan something to ask your partner about that interests both of you.*
- We respond well to one another. *Write a love letter to your spouse and mail it.*
- If I had it to do over again, I would marry the same person. *Plan an anniversary or other getaway.*
- There is lots of mutual respect in our marriage. *Take a class together (sailing, ballroom dancing etc)*

**Week 7.**

- Sex is usually quite satisfying in this marriage. *Plan an evening of massage.*
- We have come a long way together. *Think of all you have accomplished as a team.*
- I think we can weather any storm together. *Reminisce about having made it through a hard time.*
- We enjoy each others sense of humor. *Rent a comedy video. Watch it together.*
- My mate can be very cute. *Get very dressed up for an elegant evening together.*