



"Thanks"/"Wish" List

- I. **BACKGROUND** — This exercise is designed for couples and families to promote communication — especially concerning "sensitive" topics. A major benefit is to learn to share your wishes in a positive way.
- II. **BEGIN BY LISTING AT LEAST SIX AREAS OF GENUINE "THANKS"** — you have about this relationship, i.e., husband and wife prepare list or parent and children prepare lists. (Be specific, looking particularly for things you may have come to take for granted.)

*Examples: I'm grateful for your diligence as a provider for our family.
I'm thankful for your faithfulness and loyalty as a wife.
I'm thankful for the way you show you care with words and touch.
I appreciate your sensitivity to other feelings.*

"Thanks" List

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 4. |
| 2. | 5. |
| 3. | 6. |

- III. **NEXT, LIST UP TO SIX "WISHES"** — you might like to see concerning improvements and changes in this relationship. (Be specific and positive as you look for major items of importance to you.)

*Examples: I'm hoping you can become more comfortable initiating affection.
I'd like to see all cursing and abusive language stop.
I wish we would not criticize one another in front of others — particularly our children. I'd hope that you might speak respectfully to those in authority.*

"Wish" List

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1. | 4. |
| 2. | 5. |
| 3. | 6. |



IV. SHARE YOUR LISTS WITH ONE ANOTHER — Take time together which is private and un-rushed

- In sharing your "Thanks" lists be genuine, showing interest, emotion and good eye contact.
- In sharing your "Wish" lists be positive, encouraging and looking to the future with hope.

Examples: It would be important to me if _____
It would mean a lot to me if _____
I'm looking forward to the time when _____

- This sharing of "wishes" helps avoid the destructive cycle of:
 - Having expectations and anticipations (i.e. wishes) of another person.
 - Not communicating these wishes.
 - Bui, becoming hurt or angry when these expectations aren't met!! This isn't fair to either of the parties.
- Exchange lists if it will help you remember some of your partner's "Wishes".

V. PRACTICE PRAISE — Not Nagging — for the Next Month

- Make no further mention of the "Wishes" during the next month (to do so would be to approach "nagging" and actually hinder progress.)
- Make consistent effort to share praise for your "Thanks" List — plus other appreciations that come to mind.
- Look for opportunities to share praise and appreciation
 - Privately with one another during daily conversations and private times
 - Publicly when in the company of others — like family members, children or friends
 - In writing with special notes, cards or gift