



Encouragement Meeting

Guidelines:

1. Meet in a place and at a time that is quiet and free of interruption.
2. Sit facing each other, close enough to hold hands comfortably.
3. One partner begins by saying, "The most positive thing that happened today was..." Then, the partner continues by saying, "Something I appreciated about you today was..."
4. The partner who speaks first takes 3-5 minutes. The listening partner maintains eye contact to indicate attentiveness and does not interrupt. At the end of 3-5 minutes, the listening partner briefly feeds back the ideas, beliefs, feelings, or values heard, taking care not to challenge.
5. After the partner has given feedback, the process is repeated, with the other partner using the same sentences, "The most positive thing that happened today was...", followed by "Something I appreciated about you today was..." The listening partner provides feedback.

When you are comfortable with this simple encouragement meeting format, additional topics may be used such as:

"The most enjoyable thing I did this week..."

Something I enjoy about you is..."

"Something enjoyable I'm looking forward to doing with you is..."

The encouragement meeting nourishes a marriage relationship by focusing on what is positive. Through the process of identifying your own strengths and things to appreciate about your partner, each of you will experience greater self-esteem and greater respect for your marriage relationship.

Marriages in which encouragement is practiced are characterized by a greater cooperation when a couple is concerned about supporting each other and building mutual self-esteem, tendencies to compete with each other or to struggle for power are replaced by the desire to work together to achieve a sense of belonging and togetherness.