

COUPLES EXERCISES

Soul Gazing – For Deep Connection

Face your partner in a seated position. Move so close to one another that your knees are nearly touching, and look into each other's eyes. Hold eye contact for three to five minutes. You can blink, but refrain from talking. Simply look into one another's eyes, even if it's awkward at first. If the silence is uncomfortable, choose a song that is pleasant to both of you or meaningful in terms of your relationship and hold eye contact until the song ends. (Gray, 2014).

Extended Cuddle Time – To Cuddle More

This exercise is intended to be practiced right before bed, but you can carve out any time of the day to cuddle if bedtime does not work for you. The important thing is to get some one-on-one time, show physical affection, and enhance your intimacy with your partner. If you have trouble doing this regularly, cuddling to a music playlist may help.

Breath-Forehead Connection – Refocus On Each Other

To begin, either lie down on your side by your partner or sit upright with your partner. Face each other and gently put your foreheads together. Make sure your chins are tilted down so you are not bumping noses and stay in this position for a few breaths. Breathe at least seven slow, deep breaths in sync with your partner. If you and your partner are enjoying the exercise, feel free to prolong it – take 20 breaths together, or 30, or simply breathe together for a set amount of time.

Uninterrupted Listening – To Feel Heard, Understood & Cared For

Set a timer for this exercise (about three to five minutes) and let your partner talk as the time goes off. They can talk about anything – work, you, the kids, stress. While they are speaking, your job is to only listen. Do not speak at all until the timer goes off but feel free to give your partner non-verbal encouragement or empathy through body language, facial expressions, or meaningful looks. When the timer goes off, switch roles and try the exercise again. If one of you is much talkative than the other, this is totally normal.

Weekly Meeting – Time To Connect

Schedule a non-negotiable chunk of time (30 minutes is a good default) once a week for you and your partner to talk about how you both are doing, your relationship as a couple, any unfinished arguments or grievances, or any needs that are not being met - no kids allowed and without distractions. You can start the exercise with questions like: How do you feel about us today? Is there anything you feel incomplete about from this past week that you would like to talk about? How can I make you feel more loved in the coming days?

Five Things... Go! Exercise – Engage & Share Memories

Come up with a theme for each time you practice this exercise – something like “what I appreciate in you,” or ““What are five things that you love that I have done for you lately?” – and list five things each within this theme. One partner may go first and list all five things, or you and your partner could alternate saying one of your five things at a time. When you have both finished sharing your list, you can talk about your items, show each other appreciation, ask follow-up questions, or come up with more items together.