

## Shrink Rap: Save your marriage: Part 4

How fond are you of your partner? How much do you really LIKE them? We all have our personality flaws and quirks, but can you overlook them in your partner? Do you appreciate who they are as a person?

In Principle #1: Enhance Your Love Maps, you learned a lot about your partner's goals, aspirations, and history. Using their story, reflecting positively on their experiences, deepens your bonding and attachment.

The next step, according to Dr. Gottman's book "The Seven Principles of Making Marriage Work," is Principal #2: "Nurturing Your Fondness and Admiration." Fondness and admiration are antidotes for contempt. If you maintain a sense of respect for your partner, then when you disagree about something you will be more likely to be open to their opinions and views.

To cultivate fondness and admiration, look for the qualities and actions you can appreciate. Let your partner know that you are grateful for those things; offer a kind "thank-you." Another way to cultivate fondness is to talk positively about your partner and your history together as a couple. Think about what makes you treasure and cherish your partner. Complete the following sentence: "I appreciate . . ." Talking about the good things in your partner and your relationship has enormous power to heighten the romance and positive feelings between you.

Turn towards one another instead of away; this is Principal #3. "Turning Toward" is very easy. It only takes a small gesture to lead to another, and another. Giving positive feedback, answering questions, asking for assistance, giving undivided attention, a touch, or time together, are all acts of turning 'toward.' Being glad to see one another, sharing common interests, having a laugh, watching a show together and engaging in conversation about it, and treating your partner as you would your very best friend, are all ways to 'turn towards.'

Joyfully recall how you first developed a desire for your partner. Talk about it with your partner and laugh together. Practice looking for things to appreciate, and opportunities to 'turn towards' instead of away from your partner.

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