

Myron Doc Downing PhD

Author | Therapist | Coach | Seminar Leader | BA, MSW, PhD

HOW TO STAY IN LOVE

THE LOVE PROCESS

Exercise

A QUESTION A DAY

A Communication Exercise for Couples

As you learned in my last blog, Love is not a product of an accident, “falling in love.” Love is a product of Communications. For so many couples, the problem is that they do not know how to share on a deep emotional level. As a result, their sharing soon becomes superficial or stops completely.

Love is not an event.

Love is a process

You can learn the Love Process by sharing intense, emotionally intimate information together and find mutual acceptance. The love feelings will then be able to grow. The following methods are designed to facilitate this increased sharing.

METHOD 1: In the order suggested, you and your mate take one question each day from the list below. Take time during the day, when each of you is alone, and write your answers/reflections in a special notebook. Do not rush through the question. Expand to as many experiences as you can on the subject. That evening, when the house is quiet, exchange notebooks and read what your mate has written. Sit quietly with what you have read, allowing time for contemplation. Then discuss what each of you has learned.

METHOD 2: Choose a time when the house is quiet or else go with your mate to a small restaurant. **Take one question** from the list below, in the order suggested. Give each person 5-10 minutes to monologue, allowing space for silence and contemplation where needed. After the first person has had their time to speak, then the listener becomes the speaker. Again, the time is set for 5-10 minutes. Allow for pauses and time to reflect. After both of you have had your turns, discuss together what you have learned about each other. Do NOT rush through the question. Expand to as many experiences as you can on that subject.

Remember that, in both methods, feelings need to be expressed and accepted if they are to change. **BE SURE** to remember >> To listen does not mean I agree. > Acceptance does not mean approval > And > Difference does not make wrong, it makes interesting (if you disagree with what you heard, instead of making a judgment, simply say "Isn't that interesting.") Do not forget to paraphrase so the other person will know that you are hearing them the way they intended it.

As you write and/or discuss what you have written, perhaps you will think of more questions. Add them to the end of the list. When you have finished the list, start over again. This time, you may want to try the alternate method. In either case, do what works best for you.

1. What was the happiest or best thing(s) that happened to me as a child? How do I feel about it and how does it affect us now?
2. What was the unhappiest or worst thing(s) that happened to me as a child? How do I feel about that today and how does that affect us now?
3. What things do you do, to, for, or with me that make me feel loved?
4. What things do you do that I find hard to accept? Am I trying to accept you as you really are?
5. What do you do that makes me feel close to you? What do you do that makes me not feel close to you? How does that make me feel when I'm not close to you?
6. How do I feel about my parents? Which one do I see me most like and in what ways?
7. How do I feel about your parents? Which one do I see you most like and in what ways?
8. When I am not open and honest with you, what do I tell myself will happen if I am open with you? In what ways do I need to change so I will be open with you?
9. What does "loving" mean to me and how do I feel about "loving" and being loved?
10. What makes me feel like I am not Number One with you? How do I feel when I am NOT Number One with you?
11. What are (child's name) most endearing or loveable qualities and how does that make me feel?
12. What was my strongest feeling today? How do I feel about it? What did I do with it? When do I feel most alive?
13. What are the non-verbal messages that I think I am getting from you? How does that make me feel? How do I react to them?
14. What effect do you have on me liking myself? In what ways? How does that make me feel?
15. How do my feelings about myself affect our relationship? What are some of my feelings about myself that affect our relationship in negative ways? In what ways do they affect us?
16. If we could start our relationship over, what would I do differently? What would I not do differently? What boundaries would I set for myself? What boundaries would I set for you?
17. When is it hard for me to reach out and love you? How does that make me feel?
18. What am I feeling when I put up a wall between us? How do I do it?
19. What do I want out of our relationship that I am not getting?

20. What part of our sex life do I find hardest to talk about? How does this make me feel?
21. As a child, what did I learn about anger from what people said or from what people did (didn't) do?
22. What are the important things that will change for me if you should die this year? How does that make me feel? What would I do differently in another relationship?
23. How would I change myself if I could? (The I Shoulds/Shouldn'ts) How does that make me feel?
24. How would I change you if I could? (The You Shoulds/Shouldn'ts) How does that make me feel?
25. How do I feel and how do I react when you seem angry or short-tempered with me?
26. Which areas in my life do I feel most easily hurt by what people say/do? In which areas do I feel most powerless or vulnerable?
27. What does sex mean to me and how do I feel about it?
28. What are the things that you do that please me most? How does this make me feel?
29. How do I feel about our sex life? How would I change our sex life if I could?
30. What are the dreams or fantasies that I have for the two of us? What dreams or fantasies do I find hardest to share with you?
31. How do I feel and what does it mean to me when we fight?
32. What do I believe about God? How do I feel about God?
33. When we fight, I wish you would or wouldn't do...(finish sentence). What I wish I would do differently when we fight is...(finish sentence).
34. How do I feel about the way my parents raised me? What did they do right/wrong? How do I think that affects me today?
35. What qualities, behaviors and attributes do I want (child's name) to have when he/she is twenty-one? What am I doing with our child/children to help him/her achieve these things?
36. What do you do that makes me feel accepted by you? What do you do that makes me feel you don't accept me?
37. What does your anger mean to me and how do I react to it inside?
38. *Add more questions as you think about them...*
- 39.
- 40.
- 41.

You can contact Dr. Downing at his

Email: DocDowning103@gmail.com

Website: DocDPhD.com