

DUCKLOW'S

# 8 Focus / Refocus QUESTIONS

## BUILDING POSITIVE ATTACHMENTS IN MARRIAGE

Couples need to build Positive Attachment (PA) before solving problems. I say this out of years of marital therapy experience. When we focus our limited energies on seemingly unsolvable problems, we may feel hopeless and want to quit our marriages and cutoff from our family.

Here are 69 ways to say, "I see you," "I respect you," "I like you," "I want to build our marriage with you," "You are important to me." These ideas came from couples in our conferences across the country.

We believe that doing 5 or 10 or more of these positive attachments each day, allows the resources of the marriage to strengthen. Building positive attachments dethrones a problem focus. It emphasizes the best in marriage and builds hope.

As you read these through, I hope that you write your own. Make sure that they are not problem-focused and that they are "doable" on a daily basis.

### **What Women Really Want** (These comments are from wives with their husbands not present.)

1. Give me a "level 1" kiss before we get out of bed in the morning (level 3 is life-saving!).
2. Bring me pussy willows or daffodils some times for no reason.
3. Write me a love note and mail it to me at work.
4. Take full responsibility for a date – organize the baby sitter, the dinner reservations, the works – and then surprise me with it!
5. Cook a dinner for me, including planning and buying the groceries while I read my book.

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6. Touch me in public. Hold my hand or put your arm around my neck.
7. Ask me what CD I would like to hear and put in on. (I still like Kenny G.)
8. Reach over and touch my thigh when we're driving in the car. It shows me that I am attractive to you.
9. Set the mood for lovemaking. Turn down the lights and light the candles.
10. Share the remote control!
11. Tidy the house and be happy doing it.
12. Tell me that you love me with a smile on your face and a hug in your heart.
13. Put your briefcase, laptop and coat away when you come in from work at night.
14. If you're going to stop at the store for something, phone me if there is anything that I want or need.
15. Rub my back with both hands before going to sleep, with full concentration. Not for sex — just for sleep.
16. Look at me intently sometimes when I'm telling you something.
17. Tell me when I look attractive or sexy.
18. Ask me what I'd like to do for a weekend or day with the desire to do what I suggest.

**What Men Really Want** (These comments are from husbands with their wives not present.)

19. Complain that we don't do enough of "it."
20. Wash my back with that 'gravely cloth' thing.
21. Smile and say you're glad to see me when you wake up in the morning.
22. Call me at work without some need-oriented agenda. I just like to hear your voice.
23. Appreciate my affectionate advances. Smile and moan a bit.
24. Ask me about the details of my work. It will only take 5 minutes or so.
25. Massage my shoulders and back like you did when we were dating.
26. Touch me while I drive. Sometimes put your head on my shoulder.
27. Hold me hard when you see that I'm depressed.

28. Tell me to have a good time with my friends and say that you will be waiting for me when I come home.
29. Talk well of me when we are with your parents and family.
30. Tell me that you want me sexually. Don't hint – just say it.
31. Tell me that I'm fun to be around and that you still like my sense of humour.
32. Read the Bible to me when we go to bed at night.
33. When I get anxious, sing to me and pray for me.
34. Watch a football game with me. At least half the game.
35. Tell me I am the best barbecue-er ever. Even if it is not true.
36. Greet me with a cold beer when I come home from work on a Friday night.
37. At the movies, share the armrest.
38. Save the last cookie or last piece of cake for your spouse.
39. Don't hog all the Jeopardy questions on TV.

**Additional affirmations given to us by our clients in marital therapy**

40. Squeeze toothpaste on your partner's toothbrush when you're doing your own.
41. Get your spouse's pajamas out and lay them on the bed.
42. Leave a favorite snack on the seat of your spouse's car.
43. Compliment your mate in front of friends or family.
44. Light a candle in the bedroom.
45. Put down everything to greet your spouse at the end of the day.
46. Fill the gas tank in your mate's car—as a surprise.
47. Light candles with dinner.
48. Make a snack for both of you before bedtime.
49. Turn your socks right-side out before throwing them in the hamper.

50. Be adventurous—meet for lunch at an ethnic restaurant you've never tried.
51. Choose a novel then read it out loud to each other in the evenings.
52. Rent a movie you watched during your courtship days.
53. Buy an "I Love You" card and mail it to your spouse at work.
54. Make plans to re-create your first date.
55. When the dryer buzzes, instead of looking at your mate, volunteer to fold the clothes.
56. When one of you is indoors and the other outside, knock on the window and blow a kiss.
57. Don't put away stuff your spouse might want left out.
58. When you're finished driving, put the seat back to your mate's preferred position.
59. Hold hands instead of holding the remote control.
60. On cold mornings, go ahead and bring in the newspaper.
61. Kiss at stoplights.
62. Hide love notes around the house where your spouse will find them.
63. When you disagree, always acknowledge the possibility that you could be wrong.
64. When stopping for gas while travelling, buy a treat for your partner without buying anything for yourself.
65. Next time you shop for clothes, let your spouse vote on an outfit.
66. Get involved in a new ministry together.
67. Shower together and wash your spouse's back.
68. When your mate lies down on the couch, get him or her a pillow.
69. Get to know your in-laws.

(The above affirmations have been generated from previous marriage weekends with the Ducklows. You are welcome to borrow from this list for your marriage!)