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How Well Do You Know Your Partner?

By Dave Turo-Shields, ACSW, LCSW

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For my birthday last year my wife made up a beautifully framed picture of my name, and then underneath it she listed 32 positive qualities I possess. Needless to say, it was one of the finest gifts I have ever received. Some of the qualities even taught me about me. After that wonderful gift, my wife, son and daughter (kids are 6 and 4 years old) put together a similar "Greatest Daddy" list for Father's Day last year that warms my heart to this day. It lists both behaviors and personal traits of me as a father.

Today's topic is around this very thing... how well do you know your partner and how well are you known by your partner? Usually there's a passionate fire early in the relationship,

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which brings a desire to know everything about your new partner that there is to know. This is wonderful and a great way in which to become acquainted with one another. All good beginnings usually have many question and answer sessions. As you come to know each other at deeper and deeper levels, you become close friends.

There's a dangerous myth (maybe more than one!) floating around about couples. It's once you know all there is about him or her, that's all there is to know. The truth is that you grow, adapt and change all the time. We all do. Unfortunately, unless you and your partner take time to know one another as you

grow over time, you lose touch with who your partner is. This leads to a sense of disconnection, and the distance which follows, can cost you your friendship. A couple's friendship is vital to the long-term survival and quality of the relationship.

Today is a primer for becoming re-acquainted with each other. It's not for scuffing, only for fun. Take time to answer each of the questions below and set a date... yeah, that's right – A DATE, and plan to share your answers with each other over a nice evening out somewhere.

1. If my partner suddenly inherited a decent fortune what would they want to do?
2. What does my partner value most in life?
3. What are my partner's religious beliefs?
4. What does my partner worry about the most?
5. What are my partner's 3 most favorite movies and rock groups?
6. Can my partner list the relatives I like the least?
7. Does my partner know who my best friends are?
8. Could your partner tell you in detail what his/her first reaction was to you when you met?
9. Can your partner tell you what you stress over the most?

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10. Is your partner your best friend?

The fall from friendship to disillusionment usually begins 2–3 years after marriage. Folks often are bewildered, saying, "What happened?" My wife and I can tell you from experience, both personal and professional, that a big part of what happens is what doesn't happen after that first year or two together. Once you feel you know all there is to know about your partner, conversations slow down and become more challenging. You stop asking questions, or you stop giving meaningful answers. This is when the "work" of marriage begins. It takes effort and interest to continue to ask, even when you think you already know the answer!

The great part is that you are not static, unchanging individuals. Your interests change as well as friendships; some friendships fade away and other new ones begin and flourish.

New hobbies are discovered. Children may be added to make a family. Now the center of the relationship revolves around the babies. Babies teach you things you could have never learned had they not come along. You experience a new level of sacrifice, sleep for one! And you discover how you thought about parenting may really be different than how you are actually doing it.

See, you are always in a state of growth. The same questions asked today may bring fresh responses as you each grow. Continue to build your relationship into one of the best friendships you have. I may call it "work" but it's the best work you can do for the happiness of the relationship.

~~ @@ ~~Dave Turo–Shields, ACSW, LCSW is an author, university faculty member, success coach and veteran psychotherapist whose passion is guiding others to their own success in life. For weekly doses of the web's HOTTEST success tips, sign up for Dave's powerful "Feeling Great!" ezine at <http://www.Overcoming–Depression.com>~~ @@ ~~

Mommie Moments - Getting Your Partner to Help

By Heather J. Tait

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It is very easy for a Mom to take on a large part of the responsibilities of raising a child even when she

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has a loyal and dedicated partner. There are several things you manage, nursing, cleaning, laundry, cooking, and caring and playing with your little ones. Not to mention any other miscellaneous tasks that may come up. Between naps may be the only private time a mother receives during a busy day. Allowing your partner to assist and asking for their help can really help alleviate any exhaustion.

A common misconception is assuming your partner knows that you need help. Often as long as the tasks and responsibilities are taken care of, your partner assumes that everything is under control. They may even assume that you are not experiencing any form of exhaustion at all. The key here is to communicate with your partner some of your daily tasks. This allows them to get a better idea of what your typical day is like.

Allow your partner to be more involved with the caretaking of your little ones. While they are together try to minimize jumping in to fix the situation when challenges between the two arise. Allowing your partner to problem solve when situations occur only increases your partner's confidence in handling matters. It also allows them to strengthen their already loving bond with their child.

If you need help doing housework or any other chores, don't be afraid to ask your partner for help. Make your needs known to your partner so that there is no miscommunication. You just may discover that your partner will actually appreciate being asked to be more involved with daily activities.

Being open about your needs prevents resentments from occurring and alleviates tension for both parties. Remember that your partner doesn't know your thoughts unless you express them.

Artist and Inspirational Writer Heather J. Tait began her career as a professional artist back in 1997 in Morgan Hill, CA. Her work and articles are displayed internationally. She is also the founder of Silence Speaks International Artist Association and the Editor of Intrigue Magazine. She has also been inducted into the 2004–2005 Who's Who Among American Women. Email: contact@silencespeaks.com Silence Speaks <http://www.silencespeaks.com>

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