

by nurturing our resentment for what is missing in our partner. We think to ourselves that many people can easily hold a candle to our partner, and in our mind we magnify the negative qualities our partner has and we minimize the positive qualities. We think and communicate that other people out there—real or imagined—can easily compare with, and even outdo, our partner.

On the next page are 99 ways you can cherish your partner (there are actually a million ways, but that would be a very long book).

Exercise HOW MUCH DO YOU ACTUALLY CHERISH YOUR PARTNER?

Instructions: Imagine a life-sized cutout portrait of your partner. Now imagine covering the portrait with sticky notes that tell the story of all you've accomplished and enjoyed together. It can be all the fun times, the comforts, the small silly things, the dreams, the frustrations that you've conquered. Just consider your whole story and what living this life together so far has given you.

Now read the prompts below. Each one is a reason to communicate that you cherish your partner. They are simple yes-or-no answers and there are so many of them for a reason. Thinking about ways to cherish your partner will give power to your connection. Also, we listed so many because it's not likely that each and every one will resonate for you—but for the ones that *do* resonate (hopefully a lot of them!), make a commitment to tell your partner that you cherish this quality in them. Don't be like the Swedish farmer who loved his wife so much that one day he almost told her. Create a ritual time—maybe once a week—for cherishing your partner out loud. If you'd like to download and print these exercises go to workman.com/eightdates.

I TOLD YOU THAT I CHERISH YOU BECAUSE

- 1 We have played together and had fun together.
 YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 2 We have laughed together easily. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 3 We have traveled well together. YES NO TELL PARTNER

- 4 No one in the world can replace you.
 YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 5 We have been able to comfort each other. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 6 We have worked out our finances with each other.
 YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 7 We have learned to truly trust each other. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 8 You have supported a personal dream of mine. YES
 NO TELL PARTNER
- 9 You have been a great provider. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 10 We had some great adventures together. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 11 We have had some great road trips. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 12 We have enjoyed learning together. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 13 You know me well. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 14 I love the way you experience nature. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 15 We enjoyed singing together. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 16 We have done things together that I could never have
done with anyone else. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 17 You have been trustworthy. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 18 We have helped heal each other after experiencing a loss
or setback. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 19 We parented a child together. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 20 You are worth more to me than riches and jewels.
 YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 21 You have been loyal. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 22 I love how spontaneous you can be. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 23 You have taught me a lot. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 24 You accept me in spite of my faults. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 25 You have understood some of my personal goals.
 YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 26 We played music so well together. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 27 I respect your wisdom. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 28 We have been a great team. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 29 I love the way you welcome guests. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 30 I love how organized and efficient you can be. YES
 NO TELL PARTNER
- 31 We enjoyed listening to the same music together.
 YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 32 I admire so many of your skills. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 33 You have loved or helped some of my relatives. YES
 NO TELL PARTNER
- 34 I admire how brave you have been at times. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 35 I respect your values. YES NO TELL PARTNER

- 36 You understand my sense of humor. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 37 You have taken my side against someone who attacked me. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 38 We enjoy sex together. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 39 You always look great. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 40 I really appreciate the times when you have covered for me when I have been down. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 41 I can really count on you when the chips are down.
 YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 42 We loved a pet together. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 43 We fell in love with each other. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 44 You can make me feel safe. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 45 We loved a child together. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 46 You are a kind person. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 47 You have forgiven me. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 48 We helped a friend in need together. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 49 I love how romantic you are. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 50 You are actually attracted to me. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 51 I love your mind. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 52 You are generous. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 53 We have worked out some major conflicts between us.
 YES NO TELL PARTNER

- 54 We took care of a relative together. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 55 I respect the way you treated a friend. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 56 I felt loved and cared for by you. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 57 I love the way you look in the shower. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 58 You helped build a home of solace and peace. YES
 NO TELL PARTNER
- 59 You are a thoughtful person. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 60 We developed similar ethical values together. YES
 NO TELL PARTNER
- 61 You loved my mother. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 62 You have comforted me when I was afraid. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 63 We have had some really romantic trips and dates.
 YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 64 Our values and beliefs have meshed. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 65 I respect your intelligence. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 66 You have supported me against enemies I have had.
 YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 67 I love the way you have at times really listened to me.
 YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 68 You are a great parent. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 69 When I was sick you took care of me. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER

- 70 When I most doubted myself, you were in my corner.
 YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 71 You have supported my own personal goals. YES
 NO TELL PARTNER
- 72 I love the fact that you are not arrogant. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 73 You have stood up for me when someone criticized me in public. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 74 We gave birth to a child together. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 75 We created a home together. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 76 We had many of the same goals in life. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 77 I appreciate the fact that you are not a snob. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 78 I am very attracted to you. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 79 We have been together for so long. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 80 We worked together to create community. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 81 I am grateful that I can feel proud of you. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 82 We have overcome adversity together. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 83 I appreciate the fact that I can really be myself with you.
 YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 84 You've always supported my own development. YES
 NO TELL PARTNER
- 85 I love how nice you are to strangers. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 86 I really cherish the way you have helped me grieve.
 YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 87 I really appreciate that we have worshipped or prayed together. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 88 I feel confident that we can get through any turmoil together. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 89 I appreciate that I can always talk to you when I feel down. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 90 I love how honest you have been. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 91 I respect that fact that you work very hard. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 92 I love the fact that you can laugh at yourself. YES
 NO TELL PARTNER
- 93 We have celebrated successes together. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 94 You are one of my best friends. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 95 I love that you are not at all phony. YES NO
 TELL PARTNER
- 96 There have been times when I have felt lost and you helped me find my way. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 97 I love our spiritual connection. YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 98 You have been strong at times when I have felt very weak.
 YES NO TELL PARTNER
- 99 I feel that we can be proud of what we have built together in life. YES NO TELL PARTNER

*Speed Dating***CHAPTER SUMMARY**

- » Trust is cherishing each other and showing your partner that you can be counted on.
- » Everyday commitment, which is what trust is comprised of, means:
 - ~ You invest emotionally everything you have in this relationship.
 - ~ You choose to resist possibilities with other people that will break trust in your marriage and you maintain boundaries with all relationships outside your marriage for the same reason.
 - ~ If things are not going well, you give voice to your feelings and needs to your partner, rather than complaining to someone else.
 - ~ You accept your partner as he or she is, despite flaws.
 - ~ You cherish what you have and nurture gratitude.
 - ~ You never threaten to leave the relationship.
 - ~ You care about your partner's pain as much or even more than your own.
- » People break trust in a relationship by:
 - ~ Not making their partner a priority
 - ~ Not keeping promises
 - ~ Not being there when their partner is hurting or sick
 - ~ Lying, having secrets, infidelity
- » These are the important questions we ask of each other when it comes to trust, loyalty, and commitment:
 - ~ Can I trust you?
 - ~ Will you be there for me if I need you?
 - ~ Will you be faithful to me?
 - ~ Will you be there if I'm hurting?
 - ~ How important am I to you?

The Date: TRUST & COMMITMENT

CONVERSATION TOPIC

- » What does trust and commitment look like in our relationship? How can we make each other feel safe? What are our agreements about trust and commitment?

PREPARATION

- » Read this chapter and note any parts that particularly resonate for you. Define what trust and commitment mean to you. Think about what trust and commitment looked like in your family of origin. Name the little ways you and your partner show commitment to each other.

SUGGESTIONS

- » One partner can coordinate this date. You can decide who will be trusted to make the arrangements for this particular date or you can flip a coin. You can choose to surprise your partner with the location of this date, asking them to "trust you." If you really want to take it to the next level you can blindfold your partner on the walk or car ride to your chosen location.

LOCATION

- » Find an elevated location with a great view. This could be a tall building, a bridge, a hill, etc. Ideally there will be a bench or other comfortable spot where you and your partner can sit while talking through the open-ended questions. If possible, make this first date location somewhere that is meaningful