



Marriage Matters

The New Year, a Good Time for an Intimacy Checkup

At the beginning of each year, couples often make New Year's resolutions about what they want to do individually. What about what you and your partner can do for your relationship or marriage? When was the last time you and your partner looked at the previous year to assess where your relationship was and where it could go?

The New Year (or even your anniversary date!) is a good time to consider an intimacy checkup. Think of it as preventative maintenance on your marital relationship. Many people spend more time and effort on maintaining their cars or tending to their gardens than they do their relationships!

To better understand where you and your partner are regarding your level of intimacy, set aside some time to sit down together and complete an "intimacy checkup." Below are six areas of intimacy important to maintaining a healthy and stable marriage.

On a scale of one-to-five (with one being "lousy" and five being "outstanding"), rate where you feel you are as a couple. Do this on your own, and then come together to share your scores and thoughts with each other. Give yourselves permission to share openly with each other.

Circle your answer: 1 (lousy) to 5 (outstanding)

ACTIVITY



What do you and your partner enjoy doing together? How do those activities help you build intimacy in the ways described on the checkup? Spend time talking about things you each like to do together and whether those activities give you opportunities to actually talk about your needs, beliefs, values, likes, and dislikes. If you discover some differences, don't worry! Interests change over time and it is OK if you both do not like everything together. Focus on your common interests and find ways to keep each other informed about, and involved in, your other interests.

EMOTIONAL intimacy brings you a feeling of closeness with and trust in your partner. You are able to share feelings and emotions without fear of reprisal or ridicule.	1 2 3 4 5
SOCIAL intimacy occurs between friends who share common activities and learn to work together. This type of intimacy grows out of accepting your personality differences and using them in complementary ways.	1 2 3 4 5
SEXUAL intimacy is achieved through learning your partner's likes and dislikes in lovemaking. It means learning his or her love language and how he or she likes to be romanced.	1 2 3 4 5
INTELLECTUAL intimacy means that you share ideas in depth with each other. You value each other's opinions and can accept differences of opinion.	1 2 3 4 5
RECREATIONAL intimacy involves having fun together. You like to play together and you share many similar interests.	1 2 3 4 5
SPIRITUAL intimacy involves sharing your deep beliefs and values. It also involves your willingness to talk about your similarities and differences together.	1 2 3 4 5

What is your most developed category of intimacy? Where do you want and/or need more growth as a couple? Recognize that areas with a lower rating can mean even greater potential and marital growth possibilities.



This resource supports the following principles of healthy relationships:



Care for self



Choose



Know



Care



Share



Manage



Connect

For more resources, visit www.gafamilies.org and www.nermen.org.

