

Avenues for Intimate Connection

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- Aesthetic Intimacy: Sharing experiences of beauty—music, nature, art, theater, dance, etc.
- Communication Intimacy: Connecting through talking. Keeping communication channels open. Listening to and valuing your spouse's ideas. Being loving, compassionate, respectful, truthful, and open in your communication.
- Conflict Intimacy: Facing and working through differences together. Using resolution of conflict to grow closer.
- Creative Intimacy: Experiencing closeness through acts of creating together. Sharing expressions of love in creative ways.
- Crisis Intimacy: Developing closeness in dealing with problems and pain. Standing together in tragedies. Responding unitedly to pressures of life such as working through problems, raising a family, aging, etc.
- Emotional Intimacy: Feeling connected at an emotional level. Being in tune with each other's emotions. Being able to share significant meanings and feelings with each other, including negative feelings.
- Financial Intimacy: Working together to balance differing attitudes about money. Developing a unified plan for budgeting, spending, and saving. Having shared financial goals.
- Forgiveness Intimacy: Asking for and/or granting forgiveness to each other. Apologizing. Asking your spouse, "What can I do to be a better husband/wife?"
- Friendship Intimacy: Feeling a close connection and regard for one another as friends.
- Humor Intimacy: Sharing through laughing together. Having jokes between the two of you that only you share. Making each other laugh. Enjoying the funny side of life.
- Intellectual Intimacy: Experiencing closeness through sharing ideas. Feeling mutual respect for each other's intellectual capacities and viewpoints. Sharing mind-stretching experiences. Reading, discussing, studying together.
- Parenting Intimacy: Sharing the responsibilities of raising your children, including providing for their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. Includes working together in teaching and disciplining them as well as loving them and worrying about their welfare.
- Physical Intimacy: Closeness and sharing through physical touch. Experiencing your physical relationship (including sexual intimacy) with joy, fun, and a sense of becoming one. Being open and honest with each other in terms of desires and responses.
- Recreational Intimacy: Experiencing closeness and connection through fun and play. Helping each other rejuvenate through stress-relieving and enjoyable recreation together.
- Service Intimacy: Sharing in acts of service together. Growing closer as a couple as you experience the joy that comes from giving to others.
- Spiritual Intimacy: Discovering and sharing values, religious views, spiritual feelings, etc.
- Work Intimacy: Experiencing closeness through sharing common tasks, such as maintaining a house and yard, raising a family, earning a living, participating in community affairs, etc.
- _____ Intimacy:

Review the list and identify the top 2-5 aspects of intimacy that are strengths for you as a couple. Also, note 2-3 areas in which you would like improvement or growth. Share your reflections with each other in an open, non-defensive way. In the areas where you both desire improvement, discuss specific steps which can be taken to increase closeness in your relationship. Most successful couples develop a few core areas of intimacy that help keep their relationship strong.