

# *Mini-Retreats for Couples*

*Often, time spent with your spouse or partner is filled with chores. It's easy to lose touch with the special quality this relationship brings to your life. Take time for Mini-Retreats as a couple and enjoy the sense of renewal it brings to your relationship.*

*Try beginning a date with one of the following Mini-Retreats, or share one at the beginning or end of your weekend. You can even create your own special Mini-Retreat together. Incorporate them into your relationship on a regular basis and you will enjoy an increased connection, sense of peace, relaxation and depth between the two of you.*



# Hug

*So often we hug without really paying attention. Enjoying a long hug together can be a very special experience.*



30 SECONDS-  
2 MINUTES



## *Begin*

- Pay attention to your breathing.

## *Retreat*

- Embrace your partner.
- Pay attention to the sensations in your own body.
- Notice all the areas where your bodies make contact as you embrace each other.
- Notice the warmth of your partner's body.
- Notice her/his hair touching your skin.
- Continue paying attention to your breathing.
- As you breathe in, receive your partner's embrace and love. As you breathe out, relax and let go of any stored tension in your body.

## *Complete*

- Gently release your partner.
- Thank each other either silently or verbally.
- Share your experience with each other.

Linda was going through a lot of change and felt both excited and scared at the same time. When she noticed her tension, it helped to physically connect with her child and husband. Whenever she exchanged hugs with her loved ones, she also consciously embraced change.

“WE NEED FOUR HUGS A DAY FOR SURVIVAL. WE NEED EIGHT HUGS A DAY FOR MAINTENANCE. WE NEED 12 HUGS A DAY FOR GROWTH.”

*~ Virginia Satir*

# Acknowledgement Shower

*It is easy to take each other for granted, especially if you have been together for a long time. Make time regularly to appreciate each other.*



3-10 MINUTES

## *Begin*

- Decide who is giving the acknowledgement shower first.

## *Retreat*

- Tell your partner what you appreciate about her/him. Be specific. Talk about the qualities you see in your partner.
- Share what attracted you when you first met.
- Share the little quirks that you love about your partner.
- Notice any feelings of vulnerability as you affirm your partner.
- Be gentle with yourself and your partner if this is unfamiliar territory.

## *Complete*

- As the receiver of the acknowledgement shower, thank your partner.
- Reverse roles and repeat.

Remember, to develop and sustain any healthy relationship, positive statements need to override negative statements.<sup>8</sup> This Mini-Retreat is a great way to maintain a positive balance.

“THE MORE YOU PRAISE AND CELEBRATE YOUR LIFE, THE MORE THERE IS IN LIFE TO CELEBRATE.” ~ Oprah Winfrey

# Eye Gazing

*We often feel reluctant to look someone straight in the eye. We speak to each other while we look around and sometimes even interpret eye contact as an intrusion or invasion of privacy.*

*Explore a new kind of eye contact: soft vision, where you allow yourself to be seen and receive your partner's gaze through your eyes, rather than focusing your attention outward.*



2-10 MINUTES



## Begin

- Take a moment to relax.
- Sit across from each other, close your eyes and notice the support of your chair and the ground underneath your feet.
- Notice your breath flowing in and out of your body naturally. When you feel settled, let your partner know and wait for her/him to settle.

## Retreat

- Open your eyes and simply look into each other's eyes.
- Rather than looking at your partner, allow your partner to enter you through your eyes, as if they were gateways to your heart.
- Focus on receiving your partner's gaze.
- This might initially feel uncomfortable. You might feel the urge to giggle, say something, blink or look away. Simply stay with your partner's gaze.

## Complete

- Find a way to thank each other in silence, such as a bow or a hug.