

Tracking Success by Doing “The Daily Double”

Here’s something you can do for your relationship today. It’s called *The Daily Double*. You earn two points today by doing two positive things on the positive list below, while avoiding doing any of the negative behaviors from the list at the end.

Let’s up the ante and go for the *Thirty Day Challenge*. Do *The Daily Double* for 30 days straight. If you slip up and do one of the negative behaviors in the box at the end of this article, start over again at Day 1 until you have 30 consecutive *Daily Doubles*. Be sure to track your accomplishments every day.

Why do this practice? Your brain **cannot** be appreciative and simultaneously be angry, fearful or resentful. It’s like trying to breathe in and out at the same time – you can’t do it.

The more you practice being appreciative and take positive action, the more you crowd out fear and resentment.

So, put this list where you can review it daily. Keep a fresh reminder and do your part to create a better connection.

This simple (but not easy) exercise will definitely make a positive impact on your connection with each other. This is the marriage equivalent of an out of shape person getting into shape. It won’t happen without effort!

Even better, you are the one in control of whether or not you do *The Daily Double* for thirty days. You can’t blame your partner if you don’t do it. Actually you can blame your partner, but it’s you opting out.

Twenty-Four Ways to be Positive

I listened to difficult comments and kept my cool.

I was able to recap what I was hearing in a conversation.

I expressed compassion in a difficult situation.

When I felt I needed to solve a problem, I first asked my partner if they wanted advice.

I used some appropriate humor, which my partner appreciated.

I asked several questions before butting in with my reactions.

I took several relaxing breaths instead of negatively commenting on an annoying habit.

I expressed appreciation at least twice today.

I took this further and expressed why I was appreciative of what my partner did.

I took a time out to stop a downward spiraling argument.

I apologized for my part in a bad situation or conversation.

I went out of my way to do something nice for my partner.

I had kind and loving thoughts about my partner today.

When I had negative thoughts about my partner, I shifted to thinking of what I appreciated.

I emailed my partner at least one appreciation today.

I texted my partner at least one appreciation today.

I said both “please” and “thank you” today.

I made better eye contact today.

I kept my voice tone positive during a difficult discussion.

I told my partner how I would like them to respond to me before talking about a difficult topic. For example, “I just want you to listen with concern. No advice needed, just support.”

I looked for something positive in my partner today then expressed it.

I asked a series of questions about my partner’s perspectives and reality. I genuinely was curious.

I took the initiative doing something I know my partner would value.

I expressed empathy for my partner’s feelings or experience.

Important note to self: I thought about how I aspired to **be** before having a difficult discussion. For example, *be curious about my partner’s perspective, be patient, be calm, be assertive, be concise, be considerate, be understanding, etc.*

Focusing on how you aspire to be is an exceptionally good way to have better discussions immediately.

If you do something positive today that’s not on the list, write it down and count it – and congratulate yourself. You’re tracking your success!

Today I practiced being:

Affectionate

Kind

Generous

Supportive

Caring

Curious and asking good questions vs telling or preaching

Understanding vs pushing my perspective

Thoughtful and considerate

Grateful for things I usually take for granted

Today I avoided these negative behaviors

Sarcasm

Cold shoulders

Saying “never”

Interrupting

Name calling

Blaming/accusing

Guilt and shaming

Being resentfully compliant

Raising my voice inappropriately

Being vague about what I wanted

Criticizing what my partner wanted

Changing the topic during a difficult discussion

Asking blaming questions like, “Why do you always...?”

Psychoanalyzing my partner during a difficult discussion