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INDIVIDUAL & COUPLES PSYCHOTHERAPY

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### DAILY TEMPERATURE READING

Sometimes when a couple becomes disconnected from one another, they may experience some awkwardness and difficulty in reconnecting. Doing the Couples Dialogue is the ideal way to reestablish rapport, but sometimes a couple may need to walk together before they can run together.

The *Daily Temperature Reading* outlined herein can be a pleasant way to gradually reconnect with one another with topics that aren't overly threatening. Obviously it needs to be done daily and some thought and preparation are required. Saying, "I don't know" or "I can't think of anything to say," may simply be an excuse to avoid reconnecting. Make a commitment to do it daily and then **DO IT!!!**

Here are the five ingredients:

1. **Appreciation**: We all need to feel loved, appreciated and valued each day. Use an "I" message and say something like, "I really appreciate your taking the time to go out of your way and find the store that had the 60 inch shoelaces I needed for my hiking boots." It's wise to be very specific about what you appreciate and to express it in a tone of voice that communicates genuineness and sincerity.
2. Share some new **Knowledge or Information**. It could be an item you read in that day's newspaper, a magazine or a book. You might say, "I was amazed to read today that \_\_\_."
3. Express **Puzzlement** at some behavior of your spouse. Say "I'm curious about \_\_\_" or "I'm puzzled by \_\_\_."
4. **Complaints with Requests for Change**: Use "I" message. For example, "I feel uncomfortable when you do or say \_\_\_." I'd really like you to do or say \_\_\_." Ideally, use a positive "I" message rather than a negative "you" message. Say "I really feel loved when you take out the garbage without me reminding you to do it," instead of "You never take out the garbage unless I ask you to do it."
5. **Wishes, Hopes, and Dreams**: This is a fun one but it may require some introspection to connect with my hidden wishes, hopes and dreams. Some examples are: "I wish we'd have a date night once each week." "My hope is that

we grow in love and enjoy our old age together.” “My lifelong dream is for the two of us to spend a two week vacation in Hawaii.”

Feel free to add or delete to this format. You might want to add some form of humor or a joke. Other possible topics are God, Death, Sex or Money. The most important thing is to enjoy your time and to not argue about the content. Remember! **ENJOY** your time together. Take the time to connect with one another every day. Marriage is like a house built on sand. It has to be rebuilt every day.