



Love Gives Appreciation

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REMEMBERING THE LITTLE THINGS

First Memories

Think back to your dating years or the early stages of your relationship. Remember the “little things” that your partner did for you. What were some of those small gestures that made you feel special? Did he drive out of the way just so he could see you or bring you flowers for no reason at all? Did she fix your favorite snack or call just to hear your voice? Reminisce about those small gestures of early romance. Try to think of all the sweet, “sappy” things you did for one another as you began your relationship.

- *When we were first dating, I remember when you...*
- *I know it was a small thing, but I remember how you...*

Looking Deeper

Talk on a little deeper level but still with celebration as your goal. Think again about those early gestures of romance and how you expressed your love in such small, but meaningful, ways. Take the next few moments to appreciate one another for those “small things.”

Let your partner know what those demonstrations of love meant to you. Try these sentence starters:

- *When you _____, I was especially thankful because...*
- *I know it was a small thing, but I was so appreciative because...*
- *Thank you for the times that you...*



BE VULNERABLE AND GRATEFUL

Great Date Experience: Love Gives Appreciation

Appreciation of your partner means giving acknowledgment for the things they do, recognition for what they have achieved, and thanks for effort given. It means going out of your way to praise your partner for what they do that's *right*, rather than what they do *wrong*.

When love gives **appreciation**, it means verbally telling someone, "Thank you." The most meaningful words of **appreciation** are specific. Appreciative words that really hit the mark are *detailed* and *precise*.

Take the next few moments and consider some of the things that your partner has done for you in recent days. Notice the small things. Carefully think about the daily routine and the activities that you might take for granted. Consider the actions and efforts that are done *right* and are going well. Now tell your partner how those actions make a positive impact on you. Be specific. Give details.

For example:

Thank you so much for fixing lunch for me the other morning. Your help meant a lot to me because it made all the difference in my morning. I felt really supported. Plus, the sandwich was delicious!

Now it's your turn:

- *Thank you so much for...*
- *I felt...*
- *It meant a lot to me because...*

Celebrate receiving appreciation:

After your partner shares their story, be sure to celebrate with them. Don't minimize or dismiss any experience of **appreciation**. It's one of the ways that we all feel loved.

Your celebrations might sound like:

- *That's terrific, Sweetheart! I'm glad you felt appreciated that day.*
- *Wow! I know that was important for you. I'm happy for you.*

Give the gift of appreciation:

Round out your entrée with a celebration of your partner's accomplishments. Privately consider these questions and then celebrate these **trophy moments** together.

- *What is the most important thing that you have DONE with your life this far?*
- *What personal achievement brings you the most pride?*
- *What is one goal that you've set, reached, and are now proud to say, "I did it!"*



Share one or more of your *trophy moments* with your partner:

- *One of the most important accomplishments that I have done so far is...*
- *The personal achievement that brings me the most pride is...*
- *I am proud to say that I set and reached the goal of...*

Now take the time to celebrate with one another. Make sure you do not dismiss your partner's accomplishments. Don't minimize or trivialize your partner's achievements. Celebrate their moments with genuine care. Your words of celebration might sound like:

- *Yeah! I know that was a big deal for you. I'm happy you can look back on that with pride.*
- *That's terrific. I am thrilled that you were able to accomplish something that meant a lot to you.*
- *I appreciate how much that means to you, and I'm glad you reached your goal!*

APPRECIATION IN ACTION

Let's make it real!

End your great date experience with a written expression of your appreciation. Take a small piece of paper, even a napkin will do. Now take a few minutes to privately write how grateful you feel about your partner or how you plan to be more appreciative.

These thoughts may get you started:

- *Recently, I have been very impressed when you...*
- *I don't ever want to take for granted the way you...*
- *I want to be more appreciative to you because...*

After writing your response, hold hands with one another and read the responses aloud to your partner. Be sure to say, "Thank you," for your partner's gift of **appreciation!**

