## making our marriage stronger

From Preparing Couples for Love and Marriage by Cameron Lee and James L. Furrow. Copyright © 2013 by Abingdon Press

My name:	

Couples often complain that after the wedding and honeymoon are over, they stop courting each other and begin taking their relationship for granted. This exercise will help you keep your marriage strong, by identifying the things you like most about your relationship now, and planning how you will maintain them for the future.

- 1. Think about the positive things your partner does in your relationship. For example, what does he or she do to...
  - show interest in your thoughts, feelings, and opinions?
  - show that he or she cares and is thinking about you?
  - express appreciation for what you do?
  - express physical affection?
  - express concern when you're feeling low?
  - communicate that he or she accepts you for who you are?
  - · keep things fun or humorous?

In the space below, list the positive behaviors that are most important to you:

- 2. Think of two stories that illustrate these or other similar positive things your partner has done for you. Use the space below to jot a few notes to yourself about the key points of each story:
  - Notes for story 1
  - Notes for story 2

## making our marriage stronger (continued)

3.	Now take turns telling each other your stories. Keep the conversation positive. Don't insert any
	criticisms or complaints; just tell stories about the things you like and would want to see more of
	in your relationship.

4. When you've finished telling your stories, answer this question together: what positive things are you already doing for your relationship that you want to keep doing—or even do more of—after you're married? List at least two or three of them below:

5. Now, make a plan. What, concretely, will you do to make sure these things stay in your relationship? Don't be vague; describe what you will do in enough detail that somebody else would be able to understand it and do it himself or herself. In the space below, write down at least two concrete behaviors to which you will commit to make your marriage stronger.