



## **Six Qualities of Healthy Couples that Stay Together:**

**1- Love** - This may seem cliché or obvious but it cannot be ignored. The exciting sensation that may lead one to declare "I am in love!" early on in a relationship is often much different than the deeper loving attachment experienced in a healthy long term relationship. In relationships that last, both parties take the time to cultivate love just like someone would take care of a flower garden. Love needs to be nurtured, tilled and watered, figuratively speaking, in order to continue to blossom over and over year after year. Healthy couples keep fresh in their minds the qualities and reasons why they love the other person particularly during the tough times that come up along the way in any long term relationship.

**2 - Honesty/Trust/Loyalty** - These three are interrelated but all critical factors in healthy relationships. Simply put, for a relationship to be healthy there has to be that sense from both parties involved that neither party is going to betray the other. With that concern off the table, it is easier to work on the other qualities.

**3 - Communication** - Healthy couples have to be able to communicate openly and freely. When communication stops, that is one of the telltale signs of a relationship on the decline. Where there is healthy communication, there is always hope for resolving disagreements. Without communication, disagreements devolve into resentments

**4 - Forgiveness** - The old cliché says - "A marriage is the partnership of two good forgivers" - It is inevitable in relationships that your partner will hurt your feelings or be insensitive at one time or another, even if it is by accident. Holding on to grudges is a sure fire relationship killer

**5 - Socialization/Recreation/Friendship** - Healthy couples enjoy spending time with each other. In healthy relationships that last, there is still that desire to keep the conversation going and to share one another's ongoing life experiences. Sharing some likes and dislikes and hobbies can be so important. When two people in a relationship are constantly in separate rooms, watching separate TV shows every day that is a bad sign. Healthy couples make sure not to neglect "date night" at least once in a while, whether it's watching a movie together or going out to eat or any other shared enjoyable activity

**6 - Intimacy** - Friendship is great but for a relationship to really be a relationship there needs to be a degree of intimacy which involves closeness, familiarity and affection that lasts as long as the relationship does.

## **Questions for Self-Examination:**

**Which of the above are areas of strength in your relationship?**

**Which of the above do you need to work on?**

**What else not listed above has worked for you?**