

## COUPLESHIP

"To cheat oneself out of love is the most terrible deception, it is an eternal loss for which there is no reparation, either in time or in eternity."  
Kierkegaard

There are basically two kinds of couples.

1. The Spirited or Centered Couple express satisfaction about the relationship. The partners feel happy and fulfilled. Their coupleship not only works, it thrives.

2. The Spiritually Dead or Estranged Couple express dissatisfaction about the relationship. The partners feel lonely, hurt and angry. Their coupleship remains unfulfilled.

The centered couples know about intimacy. There are some essential ingredients of intimacy.

You do not need to be totally self-sacrificing or self-effacing. You do not need to surrender your life to another. You can give generously, freely and joyfully. You can also choose to give to yourself, generously, freely and joyfully.

...You know you are okay and self-satisfied with your own esteem and goodness. From a position of self-esteem, you can recognize that you are enhanced by the partner you love because the partner brings you "okayness" and gives it a special luster.

...You are able to openly tell your partner how important he/she is to you and invite your partner to share more aspects of your life.

...You will be able to plan for a future together and make a firm commitment to each other. You will be able to stay committed and alive with a sense of humor through the setbacks and the problems and the inevitable hard times.

...You will be able to accept your partner's shortcomings and faults and not demand change.

...After the rush of early passion, you will want to be committed to growing and changing and keeping the passion alive.

Troubled couples believe many myths:

1. Having an affair can help a faltering marriage.
2. It's important to keep a marriage together for the sake of the children.
3. When two people rarely argue or fight, that's a sign of a happy marriage.