

DUCKLOW'S

# APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY -- QUESTIONS FOR COUPLES

**“WHATEVER IS TRUE, WHATEVER IS NOBLE, WHATEVER IS RIGHT, WHATEVER IS PURE, WHATEVER IS LOVELY, WHATEVER IS ADMIRABLE — IF ANYTHING IS EXCELLENT OR PRAISEWORTHY — THINK ABOUT SUCH THINGS.” (PHILIPPIANS 4:8)**

Appreciative Inquiry is a theory of change that is used in parenting, marriage as well as lots of businesses and organizations. Unlike theories of strategic planning that focus on correcting faults, Appreciative Inquiry looks towards what is best about what already exists.

It is important in marriage counselling where couples have forgotten how to give attention, affection and approval. And it is important in simple neighbourliness and parenting as well as in teaching.

Couples have found that they grow in their relationships more truthfully in a way that problem-correcting counselling does not permit. Venting hurts is most often a rehearsal for the next conflict or problem. Appreciative Inquiry is a positive rehearsal for positive change.

Here are some questions I typically ask my couple clients to help them focus on what is true, noble and right in their partnership.

1. How are you contributing to ingenious solutions in your marriage by being yourself? And what about your spouse?
2. How are you excellent for your spouse? (How is your spouse “good value” for you?)
3. What one valuable thing are you doing to protect and care for your family while still doing your life and work?

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4. Can you describe together a positive practice that you consider important to add excellence in your marriage? (Note, you might not be doing this right now though you could in the future.)
5. What do you currently regard to be the most enduring and secure thing about your marriage?
6. Describe the skills you use to solve problems and resolve conflict within your partnership?
7. How is being “carnal” or “in flesh” important to you and your partner?
8. What are some key factors that keep you in sexually and emotionally faithful?
9. How is conflict essential to making a good marriage for you and your partner?
10. What do you imagine that you will say has been the best of your marriage 5 years from this month?
11. How does your spouse most love to be loved? How do you most love to be loved?
12. Assuming time and money are not current obstacles, what one great thing would you love to do again with your partner?

Note: this is not positive thinking as in ignoring life’s problems; it is upward focusing about the problems. It is solution focused rather than blame / responsibility focused.