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Renewing Your Marriage Commitment

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With *Valentine's Day* on February 14 fast approaching, this is a special day that you can tell your spouse how much you love and appreciate them. It is also a day that you can renew your marriage commitment and talk about those beliefs and values that you have in common. For a "healthy marriage checkup" rank the items to this assessment separately, then compare your answers. Where you both agree, celebrate! On those answers you ranked differently from your spouse, talk about why that value is important to you. Listening and respecting each other's values will strengthen your marriage and will open new avenues of communication.

Beliefs: *Rank order the beliefs or values that you feel are most important to having a successful marriage.*

- ___ 1. Marriage is an agreement to solve problems together and help each other over life's hurdles.
- ___ 2. Marriage demands "give and take", but mostly giving 100 percent of the time.
- ___ 3. Marriage requires vision of what life can be like for both of you.
- ___ 4. Marriage requires boundaries and respecting each other's privacy and past.
- ___ 5. Marriage requires that you do not keep secrets from each other, especially financial standing and checkbook balances.
- ___ 6. Marriage requires positive communication and listening to each other's concerns.
- ___ 7. Marriage requires staying focused on improving the relationship over the long haul.
- ___ 8. Marriage is love and sharing in the good times, and support for each in the bad times.
- ___ 9. Marriage requires helping each other with household duties and chores.
- ___ 10. Marriage requires being emotionally available when a partner needs love and support.
- ___ 13. Marriage demands that you protect children from marital discord.
- ___ 14. Marriage requires that you never demean or hold your partner in contempt. If that happens, be quick to apologize!
- ___ 15. Marriage requires trust that your partner will forsake all others and will hold you and the relationship in the highest esteem.
- ___ 16. Marriages are not "made in Heaven", but are a gift for life on Earth. A little romance with flowers, gifts, music and love-making are likely to lead to more happiness for both partners.

If you or anyone in your family needs counseling for marriage enrichment or personal counseling to address losses or changes in your life, check out our web site at www.texasicounselors.com. Our rates are affordable.