

Secure Couplehood

RESEARCH-BACKED HABITS TO GROW CLOSER

S

**Summarize
before you
respond**

I HEAR...

E

**Empathize
with
feelings**

I CAN SEE...

E

**Express
emotions,
not blame**

I FEEL...

N

**Name
specific
needs**

I NEED...

S

**Stop old
stories and
regulate**

BREATHE

A

**Assume
positive
intent**

BELIEVE

F

**Feel the
fondness
& forgive**

GRATEFUL

E

**Exit the
defensive
roles**

I WILL...

S

**Show
affection
daily**

GREETINGS

Y

**Yes to
bids for
connection**

ENGAGE

N

**Nurture
the
friendship**

CURIOSITY

C

**Cherish
each
other**

I LOVE...

Over the past 20+ years of counseling couples — and after studying hundreds of relationship books, research findings, and leading therapeutic models such as the Gottman Method, Emotionally Focused Therapy, Imago Relationship Therapy, and attachment science — I have distilled the patterns that consistently make the greatest difference. These 12 habits represent the most powerful practices for building emotional safety, clear communication, and enduring closeness.

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– This resource is for educational purposes only and is not a substitute for therapy. –