

# 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**

**Self-  
Regulate**

BREATHE

**A**

**Assume  
the best**

BELIEVE

**F**

**Focus on  
fondness**

THANK YOU...

**E**

**Empower  
the team**

I WILL...

**S**

**Salutations  
with  
affection**

TOUCH

**Y**

**Yes to bids  
for  
connection**

TURN TOWARD

**N**

**Nurture  
the  
friendship**

HOW/WHAT...

**C**

**Cherish  
your  
differences**

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.

[DebbieCherry.com](http://DebbieCherry.com)

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