

# Ways to Show Commitment



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Content on this side is intended for the educator's reference. The information on the back can be photocopied and shared with clients.

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**Objective:** Clients will identify ways they and their partner demonstrate their commitment to each other and to the relationship.

**Audience:** This tool is applicable to clients in a couple relationship and who view their relationship as committed or who are considering making a major commitment (e.g., moving in together, getting married).

**Estimated Time:** 10-20 minutes

**Educator Instructions:** Review the instructions on the tool. Encourage your clients to reflect on each statement and discuss what they *specifically* do well (e.g., what does that involve or look like?). Ask them to describe the areas they marked as "Things I would like to do better." Challenge your clients to be specific in identifying *how* they would like to improve their expressions of commitment by sharing clear examples. Be sure to remind your clients that they should focus on what they *individually* do and can do.

**Discussion Starter:** It takes more than loving feelings to have a healthy relationship, it also requires commitment. Some of us are pretty good at showing commitment to our partners, but there are always some things we could do a little better. Also, partners sometimes have different opinions about what they consider "good" or "okay." For this activity, I want you to focus on what *you* do and what *you* could do better, not what your partner could do better. In relationships, we each make individual choices that can either help or hurt the relationship. So, let's focus on the choices you want to make.

**Follow-up:** In future conversations, ask how their actions and behaviors have changed. Are they showing commitment in the ways they indicated? How has this helped the relationship?



HEALTHY  
RELATIONSHIP  
& MARRIAGE  
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Adapted from: Marshall, J. P., & Goddard, H. W. The Marriage Garden. University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service.

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It takes more than loving feelings to have a healthy relationship. It also takes commitment. Commitment means you will keep on treating your partner with respect, even if you are upset or angry. Commitment also means that you promise to support your partner now and in the future. How couples show commitment in a relationship can differ depending on past and present experiences and expectations.

Below is a list of actions that show commitment to a relationship. For each statement, decide whether it's something you do well or something you would like to do better.

I Already Do Well	I Would Like To Do Better	Committed Actions
		I make time to do things with my partner.
		I remember things that are important to my partner.
		I don't flirt with anyone but my partner.
		I celebrate traditions that are important to my partner.
		I keep promises that I make to my partner.
		I try to make our time together special.
		I pay more attention to my partner's good qualities instead of things I don't like.
		I make a point of remembering the good times we have shared.
		I do not share my partner's secrets with other people.
		I do not share details of our relationship with other people.
		I speak kindly about my partner to other people.
		I make the effort to understand my partner's needs and dreams.
		I take time to think of ways I could make our relationship stronger.
		I let my partner know that I value our relationship.
		I tell my partner that I want our relationship to last.

For the things you already do well, what are some specific examples and times you have done these things?

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For those things you would like to do better, what are some specific ways you could improve? What could you work on?

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What are the things your partner does well? Share this with your partner.

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***The grass grows greener....on the side of the fence you water the most.  
Make choices that show your commitment to your relationship.***