

TENDERNESS POTENTIAL INVENTORY

Credit for this idea goes to David and Vera Mace, who created The Marriage Potential Inventory (at bettermarriages.com), a series of statements about various desirable aspects of a marriage. Couples are encouraged to periodically rate themselves on how well they fulfill those aspects in their own marriage, as a way to measure their progress over time. We've adapted it to reflect the aspects of Loving Tenderly, and call it the Tenderness Potential Inventory (at tenderly.com)

Rate yourselves as a couple (separately, then share) on a scale of one to ten, with one being "rarely" and ten being "always." It will highlight positive results and will also highlight areas of special growth potential. Repeat to check your progress.

1. Because we share them, we usually know the feelings each other has been feeling lately.
2. With each other, we usually turn criticism into requests.
3. When we feel angry with each other, we feel free to talk about it with each other, but we gentle it by sharing the underlying, more vulnerable feelings in order to create empathy rather than defensiveness.
4. We agree that blame is particularly toxic to our closeness and we do our best to avoid it.
5. We quickly trade mutual apologies when we slip into non-tender behavior with each other.
6. When we are seeking to resolve a conflict between us, we share responsibility for the conflict.
7. Our primary focus is on our own and each other's feelings when we seek to resolve a conflict between us.
8. In resolving a conflict together, we acknowledge that each other's point of view is as valid as our own.
9. In seeking a solution to a conflict between us, our goal is that it must satisfy both of us.
10. We often take opportunities to celebrate our romance and nurture our closeness.
11. (Optional but highly recommended.) We reconnect often with a slow dance to a sweet and tender love song.
12. We affectionately reach out often when we are together, and find many "excuses" to share a kiss.
13. We regularly take time together to share extraordinary closeness through each other's exquisitely tender touch.
14. We regularly take opportunities to grow our closeness together through readings, marriage enrichment activities and other resources.

♥ From *Loving Tenderly*, at www.tenderly.com ♥