








The Emotional Bank Account

John Gottman coined the term 'emotional bank account' as it relates to couples. Gottman believes that couples who 'turn toward' each other, rather than away from each other, are building an emotional savings account.

He refers to the 'little things' that couples do for each other as deposits in the emotional bank account. This savings account acts as a buffer to protect your relationship during difficult times.

Gottman and others believe that successful couples who stay together have between 5-20 more positive interactions than negative.

Complete the following activity:

-  Sit down with your partner/spouse and discuss the little things in your relationship that mean a lot to you. Be specific. Tell him/her about the things you appreciate, what you enjoy, your favorite ways to spend time together and so on.
-  Use this information to make daily deposits to the emotional bank account.
-  Consider ways you can build these ideas into date night.
-  Surprise her/him occasionally by initiating one of the favorites you discussed.
-  When your partner/spouse does these little things, acknowledge it – say thank you for...
-  If you want/need something specific, tell your partner/spouse – mind-reading is not a skill that most of us practice. For example, "I would really appreciate a shoulder rub."
-  Look for things you can do for each other – without keeping score.