

## **Conversations for Quarantined Couples**

*(Or Love in the time of Coronavirus)*

While these conversation starters refer to marriage frequently, they can be used by couples who are not married as well.

Living on an Oasis

Your Sacred Story

**Turning to One Another**

Laughing Together

Caring for the Soul of Your Marriage

Your Marriage as a Lighthouse

### **Turning to One Another**

*How do I look?*

*Tell me about your day.*

*You won't believe what Mary said today!*

*Come sit with me!*

*Let's try out this class together!*

*My feet are killing me.*

All of these are bids for attention or bait for connection. According to marriage guru, Dr. John Gottman, when your beloved makes a bid for attention, the couples that stay together turn towards one another 86% of the time. The bid is accepted. Attention given. Gottman's research found that in relationships that don't last, bids for attention are not as successful, and couples turn to face one another only 33% of the time.

Paying attention to one another and literally facing one another are the habits of people in strong relationships. Too many things (phones, computers, work, children, worries, bills, housework) can get in the way and distract couples from giving each other ample and clear attention.

See if you can identify a bid for attention from your spouse, and practice physically turning to reply and/or demonstrate your interest and concern. Notice how your attention is received, and note what is competing for your attention – is it really more important than your beloved? A reluctance or lack of interest in turning toward one another suggests that something or someone is creating a wedge between a couple. *“Those whom God has joined together let no one put asunder.”* (Book of Common Prayer, The Celebration and Blessing of Holy Matrimony)

Conversation:

What have I done in the last few weeks that made you feel cared for and loved?

Is anything keeping you awake at night that you haven't told me about?

Can you think of time when you felt I was really listening to you?

I love it when you...

*Pay **attention** to what you hear; the measure you give will be the measure you get, and still more will be given you. Mark 4:24*