



# Appreciation...the gift of value

Relationships most often end up on the rocks not because of infidelity or abuse but because one or both partners stop feeling valued and appreciated. 2014 statistics show that the risk of separation is highest about 8 years into the marriage; clearly coinciding with the stage when many couples experience the added stress of raising young children and juggling increased responsibility. *“So much to do and no one even notices.”* is a common sentiment. Maybe you know the feeling?

### Speak up early and often

Women are particularly at risk of letting things go along until they reach breaking point and declare, *“I can’t do this any longer!”* This often comes as a surprise to everyone around and truth be known, if you have a tendency to use the cold shoulder technique or silent treatment, you may say very little when you’re upset, which only adds to confusion.

**It’s okay to share how you feel.** Avoid blaming or shaming and honestly state how you feel. *“Lately, I feel like I’m working harder than ever and like there’s nothing in it for me.”* If you’re honest and willing to put on your problem-solving hat, things can change.

### Value add your relationships

Feelings of appreciation increase when you know you’re valued for who you are, not just what you do. Prioritise regular time with your partner by having date nights, celebrating relationship milestones and spending a few extra minutes in the morning or at night simply chatting. If you don’t have a partner, spend time with other friends. Linger over the bedtime story with the kids and really feel those goodnight cuddles, giving them time to let you know that you really are the best! In time they’ll be able to do more to help. Declare a ‘me time’ hour when you need it and soak in the bath or meet a friend for a walk and talk. If you let it, your busy life will squeeze out those moments that really matter, but the cost is too great. Acknowledge how you feel, accept that the early years with family are full years and be proactive to give yourself and others the gift of appreciation.

- ✓ Feeling unappreciated often leads to resentment and relationship breakdown, if left unchecked.
- ✓ Acknowledge how you feel, avoiding blame and shame.
- ✓ Appreciation is a gift you give to yourself and others.

***“When you meet people, show real appreciation, then genuine curiosity.”***

Martha Beck

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