

## What are my Interests, Talents and Skills?

*("...and how do they affect my relationship?")*



Interests are those activities, concerns and involvements that draw our attention, excite us and are often a driving force in our lives. Our interests are those activities that we often *love to do*. The things we are interested in are often sources of fun in our lives or we may simply enjoy these activities because we are talented or skillful at them. These kinds of activities bring internal rewards because they are expressions of our authentic self and they add to our self-esteem. While none of us would want to give up our interests, when it comes to our relationship our interests sometimes leave our partner behind. And the degree to which we are involved in our interests can sometimes add to feelings of hurt and abandonment in our partner.

There are many ways to work out some of the issues that may result from our occupation with our interests. One of the necessary conditions is awareness and dialogue. Take a little while to think about your interests, talents and skills then answer the following questions. When you are done, share your answers with your partner.

1. What are my personal interests?  
*(What do I like to do, what am I good at, what are my hobbies, what excites me and draws my attention?)*
2. Do any of my interests leave my partner behind or left out? If yes, which ones?
3. Do any of my interests create a source of conflict in our relationship?  
*(Does my partner complain about my interests or is my partner supportive and encouraging?)*
4. Which of my interests contribute in a positive way to the quality of our relationship?
5. What is one thing I could do that might eliminate or reduce the problem that arises out of my personal interests?