

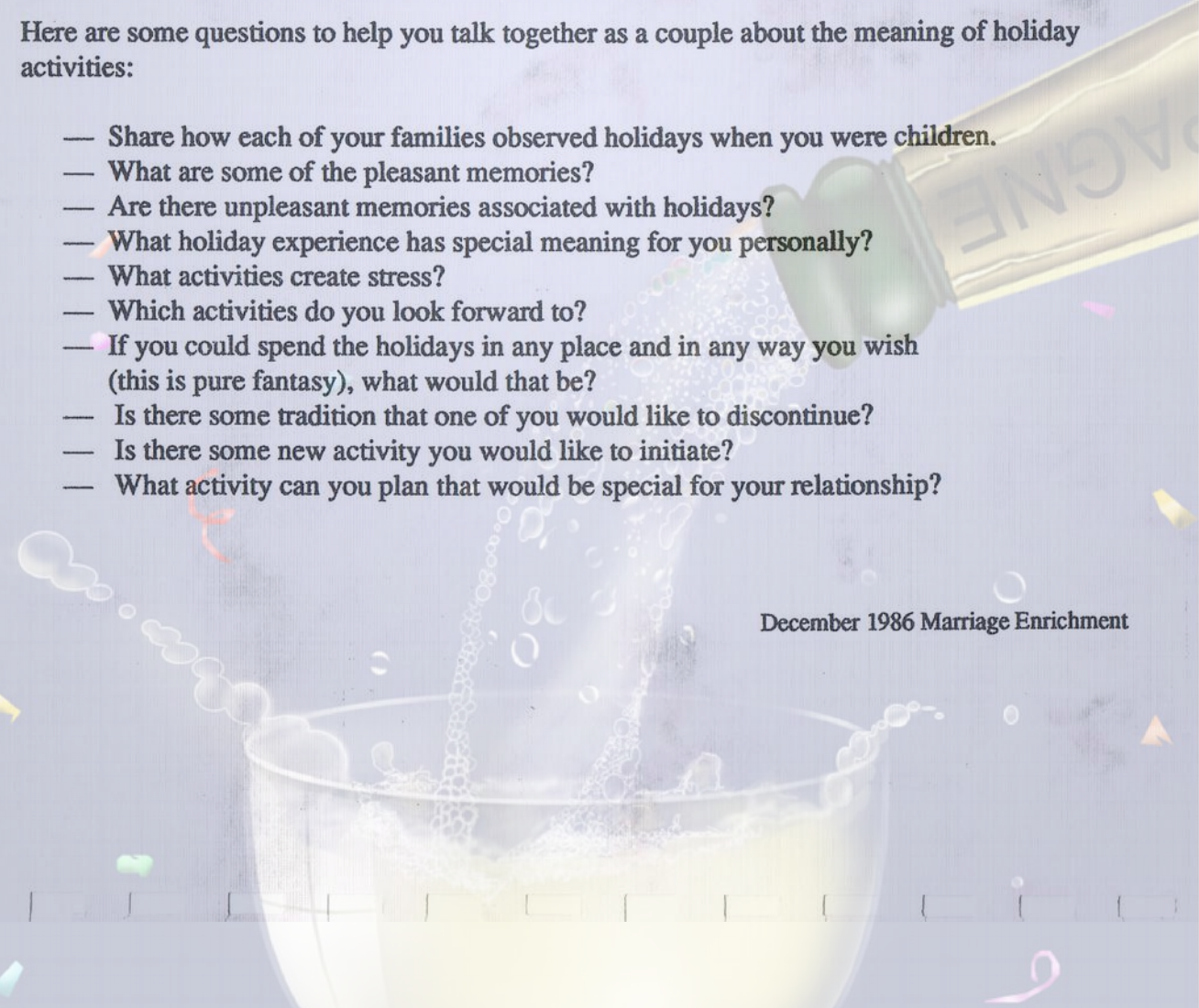


Knee to Knee

CREATING YOUR OWN CELEBRATIONS

Here are some questions to help you talk together as a couple about the meaning of holiday activities:

- Share how each of your families observed holidays when you were children.
- What are some of the pleasant memories?
- Are there unpleasant memories associated with holidays?
- What holiday experience has special meaning for you personally?
- What activities create stress?
- Which activities do you look forward to?
- If you could spend the holidays in any place and in any way you wish (this is pure fantasy), what would that be?
- Is there some tradition that one of you would like to discontinue?
- Is there some new activity you would like to initiate?
- What activity can you plan that would be special for your relationship?



December 1986 Marriage Enrichment

Holiday Celebrations

The background is a light blue gradient. At the top, there are four balloons: purple, yellow, red, and teal. Scattered throughout are small, colorful confetti pieces. In the lower right, a champagne glass is tilted, pouring bubbly liquid into a glass below it. The word 'CHAMPAGNE' is visible on the glass.

1. What are your childhood memories of holidays?

2. Were holidays happy or sad for you?

3. Do you now have any special anxieties about Holidays?

4. If so, how can we address them?

HOLIDAY EXPECTATIONS

Although most of us think of the holidays as a joyous time, in reality they can be stressful to a relationship. A little advance preparation can go a long way toward making this holiday special.

Write your feelings to the following questions. Take some time with your spouse to discuss how you can bring reality in line with your expectations.

1. What are my own personal expectations of what I would like to have happen this holiday season--regarding myself, my mate and other family members?
2. Have I shared these expectations with my mate or are they still part of my "hidden agenda"?
3. What practical steps have I taken to see that my expectations will be met?

Be It Resolved...

The New Year usually inspires the optimists among us to make resolutions for new beginnings, both individually and as a couple. Some helpful tips to achieve success: setting goals that are realistic, telling others who can keep you accountable, not procrastinating and rewarding yourself for success.

With that in mind, answer then discuss the following. Try to reach an agreement on how you envision your relationship functioning this year.

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being highest, how would you rate your marriage this past year?

In what areas were you functioning well as a couple?

In what areas of your relationship would you like to see improvements this year? Be specific...

List at least two New Year's resolutions you personally would be willing to make to benefit your marriage.

How could your partner help you achieve these?

List just one New Year's resolution you wish your mate would make.

How could you help her/him achieve this?

Write on the back any resolutions agreed upon, then refer to them frequently to gauge progress.

"The beginning is the most important part of the work." Plato

SNOWFLAKES

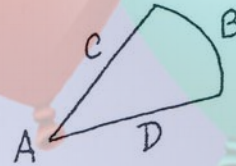
It is said that there are no two identical snowflakes. The same can be said about each of us. We are each a unique being. Follow the directions below to make for your spouse a special snowflake, and as you are working on this project, be thinking of how your spouse is a "one of a kind".

Mount your snowflake creation at the top of your colored sheet of paper. On the bottom half of that paper list at least three to five of those things you thought of that make your spouse so unique.

Don't share this with your sweetheart just now. We will do so later in the day.

Using the diagrams provided follow these snowflake creation directions.

1) Your prefolded circle of paper has four areas where you will be making cuts.



2) Be creative with your cutting. Some examples of cuts follow.

3) Cut the tip of the triangle. (A)



4) Cut along the rounded edge of the triangle. (B)



5) This leaves the two folded edges of the triangle. (C & D)

It is important not to cut completely across the triangle from one folded edge to the other and to leave some of the folded edge on both sides intact.

