

## **“3-2-1-1” Communication Exercise**

*This communication exercise will, if practiced regularly, cultivate companionship and intimacy on various levels - spiritual, intellectual, emotional, even romantic. Good communication is not only an overflow of a good heart and marriage, but grows a good heart and marriage. God works through our words - they are a means of grace (Eph 4:29-30). Therefore a good communication exercise like this must be an essential ingredient added when rebuilding marital intimacy and maintaining marital intimacy, Each spouse takes a turn. Each turn takes seven minutes. This means that it will cost you only 15 minutes a day to do this assignment. Surely everyone can find time to sit down 4-5 times a week for 15 minutes to sow deeper intimacy and companionship in their marriage. Ask your spouse when the best time would be to participate in this together. Most couples will find it best after dinner about 8 or 8:30pm, before they become too tired. (Children can be instructed to have a quiet reading time for this 15 minutes if their bed time is later, older children can read to younger during this time if necessary.), Other couples will have to be creative because of shift work or other issues, but try to plan success by placing the 3211 assignment in a place where it can more often be completed without distraction and without being too tired. Be strategic and prayerful. May the Lord bless your efforts for His glory, be patient in obedience.*

A. For three minutes one spouse shares uninterrupted with the other spouse the following:

1. Share a few things you are thankful for concerning this particular week or a few specific characteristics/attributes about the Lord that you give praise for today.
2. Share something you heard from the Word lately that challenged or encouraged you in obedience.
3. Share something that you really appreciate or value about this person.
4. Share a few specific concerns and a prayer request regarding your personal growth.

Fill the entire three minutes.

B. Then for two minutes the other spouse must, as best as he/she can share back what was shared in the three minutes. Try to reflect back, as best you can, not only what was said, but how it was said. This is not a time for this spouse to correct or argue a statement that was made during the three minutes. It is simply an exercise to help this spouse learn to listen carefully, and the other spouse to feel heard.

C. Then for one minute the first person can add or embellish anything to what was already shared. He/she could clarify or correct anything the second person said.

D. Finally for one more minute, the second person prays over the things the first person has shared.

(Now reverse it so that the second person becomes the first and the first becomes the second)