

The two exercises below are meant to build intimacy. You can try them one after the other, or separately.

Soul-Gazing Activity

This is an intense exercise that will help you and your partner connect on a deeper level. It can have a huge impact on your sense of connectedness. Studies show that staring into someone's eyes for just a few minutes can increase intimacy.

To do this exercise, stand facing your partner with approximately 1 foot between you. If you extend your arms and cannot touch your partner's shoulders, you are too far so move closer! Once you are in a comfortable position, gently gaze into your partner's eyes and stay there for 4 minutes.

This sounds simple, but it can be awkward at first, so hang in there! This is not a staring contest, so feel free to blink, but refrain from talking during the exercises. Once 4 minutes have passed, share your experience of the exercise with your partner.

I recommend that you set a timer for 5 minutes so that you have time to get into a comfortable position but still have the full 4 minutes for the activity. Setting a timer can also help you give your partner your undivided attention without being distracted with thoughts about how long has passed.

To witness the power of this exercise, watch this video of six pairs in different stages of their relationship trying it out. You can use the link below or search for the YouTube video "How To Connect With Anyone," and then try it yourself.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xm-T3HCa618>

Extended Embrace

This next exercise is an extension of the one before. This time instead of gazing into one another's eyes, you will give your partner a hug for 4 full minutes. Hugging releases oxytocin, the "love" hormone, and dopamine, the "pleasure" neurotransmitter, which relieve stress, increase pleasure, and improve emotional bonding.

You can try this exercise in a similar fashion to the first – maybe even immediately after- by standing in a comfortable position with a timer set so you can focus on each other rather than keeping track of the time.

Here's another video as an example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GmYfP4kEzBU>

You can also extend this activity into your everyday routine. I recommend trying it right before bed, but you can carve out any time of the day to cuddle if bedtime doesn't work for you. The important thing is to get some one-on-one time, show physical affection, and enhance your intimacy with your partner. Rather than use a timer, you can also choose a song or a playlist to remind you to hold on long enough to feel the full effects of this exercise.