

We become attracted to another person because we see things where we are like each other and also because we experience differences that we appreciate.

During the phase when we fall in love we tend to put similarities and differences we *like* in the *foreground*, and the ones we do *not* like in the *background*, or we even suppress these completely.

When the infatuation phase starts to fade out, the personality aspects of our partner that we have *not* wanted to see start to "show up". If the relationship does not follow the ideal path from infatuation to true love, these negative traits will start to dominate one's emotions in a destructive way.

Each one of you, print this page out and fill in *your* version of the **Similarity / Dissimilarity-matrix:**

1. <u>Similarities I like:</u>	2. <u>Dissimilarities I appreciate:</u>
3. <u>Similarities I dislike / that irritate me:</u>	4. <u>Dissimilarities I loathe:</u>

When you have finalized your own version, sit down together and compare your matrixes. Reflect and discuss. You will learn new things, both about yourselves and about each other!

<p>1. <u>Similarities I like:</u></p> <p>Here are the aspects of your partner that makes him/her so attractive to you, things that you always have wished for from a partner. These traits/qualities make it easy for you to identify yourself with him/her. Most probably, it was much in this quadrant that was the reason you were attracted to each other and became a couple.</p> <p><i>Actively and often expressing your appreciation for these aspects of your partner will reinforce your love for each other.</i></p>	<p>2. <u>Dissimilarities I appreciate:</u></p> <p>Here you will find what you experienced most intensely when you fell in love, that which felt wonderful, exciting, and seductive when you met each other. This quadrant also represents the "holes" in your own personality: abilities, qualities, personal traits that you either would benefit developing more in yourself, or traits that you have repressed seeing in yourself, instead projecting them onto your partner.</p> <p><i>This inner process of your own personal development will be reinforced, the more you express your appreciation of these qualities in your partner.</i></p>
<p>3. <u>Similarities I dislike / that irritate me:</u></p> <p>Here are the traits you probably do not accept in yourself, or that you have repressed from your conscious mind all together.</p> <p><i>Within this area you would probably benefit from pursuing your own personal development. You can support this inner process by a humble attitude, by accepting your own shortcomings, and by developing your ability for self-observation.</i></p>	<p>4. <u>Dissimilarities I loathe:</u></p> <p>Here are the things that may jeopardize your relationship over time, if the things are numerous and if you do not work with them actively. You need to talk openly about them, which requires that you first <u>accept</u> them as being <u>differences</u> and not characterize them as being disgusting or the like. Accepting does not mean liking, or even tolerating, just accepting them <u>for now</u> for what they are - differences.</p> <p><i>An open-minded, honest and patient dialogue about the traits/qualities in this quadrant will give your partner a fair chance to do something about them, and/or will give both of you a fair chance in finding solutions together to the concrete problems these differences may cause.</i></p>