

## Instructions to the Couple for Finding Your Imago and Childhood Frustrations/Positive Memories of Childhood Sheets

In the heart figure on the Finding Your Imago sheet, put the positive traits of your male and female caretakers on the top, and put their negative traits on the bottom. Use words such as "kind," "strict," "stern," "hardworking," or phrases such as "always there," "not dependable," or "never there." On the bottom, complete the sentence, "What I wanted and needed most as a child was..." Make this a behavior or attitude such as "... to be loved and admired" or "... to know that I did things right" – as opposed to a thing such as "...a bike."

At the top of the sheet that says childhood Frustrations, list your recurring childhood frustrations, such as "did not get listened to" or "had to stay with my parents constantly." In the second column, list your responses to these frustrations. These should include how you felt and what you did ("screamed and hollered," "went to my room," "went out with my friends"). On the bottom of the page, which is labelled Positive Memories of Childhood, list your positive memories from childhood and, in the column to the right, list how you felt. The instructions are also on the handouts. List as much as you can, and remember to bring these sheets with you to the next session.

## Finding Your Imago

In a relaxed and safe state, recall your childhood memories of your caretakers. It is important that you think as a child and recall your caretakers as they were when you were a child and not as they are today. On the top section of the figure below, list the positive characteristics of each caretaker. On the bottom, list all of the negative characteristics of your caretakers. Use adjectives such as "warm," "strong," "cold," "distant," and/or phrases such as "never there," "always there," "not dependable," "not available emotionally."

(B)

Female +                      Male +

(A)

Female -                      Male -

(C) What I wanted and needed most as a child was \_\_\_\_\_

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## Childhood Frustrations

In the left column below, list any recurring childhood frustrations such as "did not get listened to," "no one knew I was being hurt," "had to take care of parents or siblings." On the right, list how you responded to these frustrations. This should be how you felt AND your behavioral response (i.e., what you did.).

| Frustrations | Response(s) |
|--------------|-------------|
|              | (E)         |

## Positive Memories of Childhood

On the left column below, list your positive memories of childhood. This can be specific memories such as "going to the shore in 1960" or "the annual picnic at grandma's house." On the right, list the feelings you associated with each memory.

| Memories | Feelings |
|----------|----------|
|          | (D)      |