

There are ten things you should be able to do if you are emotionally healthy:

1. **Openly express both physical and verbal affection to the satisfaction of your spouse.** This means hugs and gentle touch as well as praise.
2. **Empathize with others and focus on their needs and desires—especially those of your spouse.** This means listening, as well as putting yourself in another's shoes.
3. **Communicate honestly and openly in a gracious manner.** This means being able to talk about your feelings.
4. **Confront your spouse or others with complaints in a timely and gracious manner.** In other words, communicating with honesty about something that has gone wrong, rather than being angry, withdrawn, or passive-aggressive.
5. **Receive complaints or corrections without being defensive or hostile.** This means you are open to input from someone else.
6. **Take responsibility for your behavior and apologize, when necessary, with sincerity and grace.** This means accepting that you can be wrong.
7. **Serve and give to others—including your spouse—without expecting anything in return.** This means you are able to do something for others even if it's never reciprocated.
8. **Process anger, offenses, and disappointments in a timely and gracious manner.** Bad things happen. When they do, you can deal with being imperfect people in an imperfect world. You can work through it.
9. **Be vulnerable and reveal weakness without fear or shame.** This means being able to pray with your spouse. It means admitting when you need help.
10. **Be joyful and faith-filled in the midst of difficulty.** This means seeing the good in opportunities, circumstances, and people. It means trusting God rather than becoming cynical, fatalistic, or depressed.

Do these abilities describe you? If not, you may have some emotionally unhealthy areas in your heart.

The Holy Spirit is powerful and can repair the places that are broken inside us. He knows exactly what's wrong. When we understand that we're damaged and give Him permission to fix us, He does. That's exceedingly good news.

If you need to improve your emotional health, ask God to begin healing you. He'll help you grow into a place where you can claim all ten of the abilities above. It will result in a stronger, healthier marriage.

This document is from Jimmy Evans Marriage ministry.