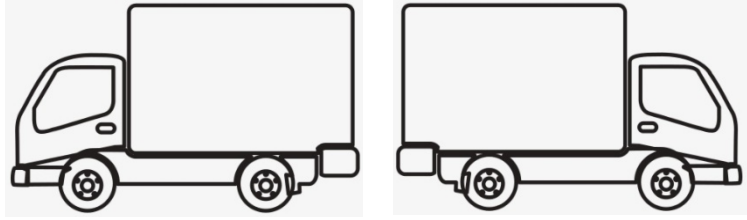


## Preparing to Transition as a Couple A Tale of Two Trucks

*What is this about?*

If you are getting ready to move, you are probably beginning to sort through your

belongings. Some things go in the trash, some go in a giveaway or sell pile, some things get set aside to pack and take with you. If you are facing a different kind of transition in your life and are not physically moving, transitions often cause people to inventory their lives, so to speak. Changes in life can provide you with a unique time to think through what habits, belongings, or routines are helpful to your relationship as a couple and which ones might be harmful. There might also be some *good* habits or qualities that were useful in the past but are not going to be helpful, possible, or necessary for the current or upcoming season of life.



This “two trucks” exercise is a chance for the two of you to think through the “things” you want to take with you in your upcoming transition and the things you want to leave behind. These “things” could be habits (*e.g.*, we do a date night once a month), belongings (*e.g.*, let’s be sure to take our wedding pictures and that comfy love seat!), character qualities (*e.g.*, we are keeping faithfulness at the center of our marriage), or ways of relating (*e.g.*, we want to leave hurtful sarcasm behind).

*What do we do?*

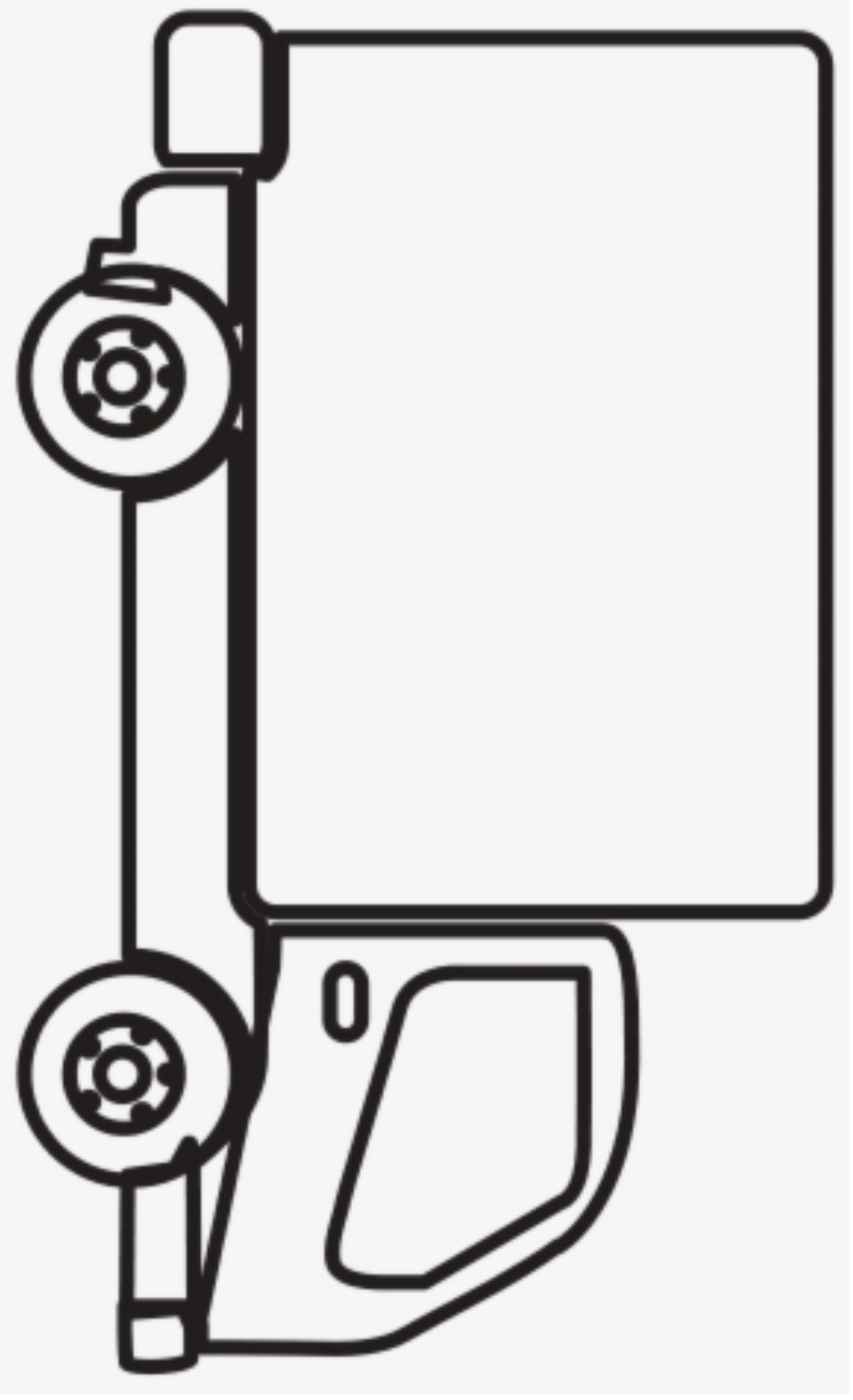
1. Jot down ideas in the blank spaces in the back of each truck. The dump truck represents items, habits, or ways of relating to each other that you want to leave behind. Your transition provides a fresh start to let go of what might have been hurting your marriage! The moving truck represents items, habits, or ways of relating that you want to take with you. What has worked in your relationship that you want to keep up? Do this individually first. Remember there are no wrong answers! Be creative and think as widely as you can.
2. Compare notes and discuss each other’s lists together. Was there anything that surprised you about what your partner put in each truck? Was there anything that surprised you as you brainstormed for yourself? Why did you decide to include what you did (or didn’t)?
3. Combine your “two truck” lists. What things are you agreeing together as a couple to definitely take and to definitely *not* take with you? What impact will it have on your relationship if you do or don’t take those things along on your transition?
4. Make a plan. Discuss how you will help each other to form those new habits. Think as practically and specifically as possible. Is there anything that might get in the way of taking/leaving the things you decided on? How will you overcome those barriers?

*What did we learn?*

This exercise invited you to grow your virtues of wisdom, creativity, hope, discipline, and responsibility. During a period in your life in which most things probably feel uncertain and out of control, you get to imagine and commit to a better future as a couple!

**Reflect:** What did you learn about yourself as you completed this exercise? What did you learn about your partner? What is the main thing you want to remember from completing this exercise that will help your relationship?

# The Dump Truck



# **The Moving Truck**

