

Ten Things You Can Do To Have A Healthy Marriage

Lesson 23



It takes work to have a healthy marriage, but it is possible. Just like good nutrition and regular exercise can help you to have a healthy body, there are things you can do to have a healthy marriage.

Here are 10 tips you can use to strengthen your marriage:

1) Spend Time with Each Other.

- Married partners need time with each other in order to grow strong together. Plan regularly scheduled [date nights](#) and weekend activities.
- If a getaway is not immediately possible, then make it a goal toward which you will work.
- By spending time with your partner, you will better understand your differences and how to negotiate the problems they may cause.
- Forget the “quality vs. quantity time” discussion—[healthy marriages](#) need both.
- **Read: (Ephesians 5:33)**

2) Learn to Negotiate Conflict.

- Conflict is a normal part of a relationship.
- There is a point, however, when it can increase in intensity and become emotionally and sometimes physically unsafe.
- Working out problems in a relationship starts with understanding what your issues are and how to discuss them.
- There are many resources available to help you learn how to [deal with conflict](#).
- Using these resources can go a long way in preserving how safe you and your partner feel.
- **Read: (Ephesians 4:2-3)**

3) Show Respect for Each Other at All Times.

- When a couple fails to respect each other, they often slip into negative habits.
- Research shows that nothing can damage a relationship quicker than criticisms and put-downs.
- Treating your partner as you would like to be treated will do a lot to [strengthen the bond between you](#).
- Paying your partner a compliment is a quick and easy way to show him or her respect.
- When you are tempted to complain to someone about one of your partner's flaws, ask yourself how you would feel if he or she did that to you.
- **Read: (Matthew 7:12)**

4) Learn About Yourself First.

- Many partners enter into relationships without knowing enough about themselves.
- As a result, they can also have difficulty learning about their partners.
- Learning about yourself will better equip you to grow as an individual and a partner.
- Regardless of how long you've been together, there are always more things you can learn about him or her.
- What are his dreams for the future? What is her worst fear? What is the way he or she best gives or receives love?
- Imagine the intimacy and bond you will share over a lifetime together if you commit to discovering new things about one another!
- **Read: (Matthew 7:5)**

5) Discern Intimacy.

- Marital intimacy can open your relationship to a whole new level of enjoyment and closeness.
- It is important, however, to remember that intimacy does not always mean sexuality. An often forgotten aspect of intimacy is the emotional type.
- An example of [emotional intimacy](#) is creating a safe space for your partner to share his or her emotions without fear of you being judgmental or making light of them.
- Learn the difference between emotional and physical intimacy and when each one is most appropriate.
- Offering your partner one type when they really need the other can create problems in your relationship.
- **Read: (Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:12)**

6) Explore Common Interests.

- Couples thrive when they share similar interests.
- That doesn't necessarily mean each partner will enjoy every activity, but it opens up the opportunity for greater sharing and compromise.
- Doing things separately is not bad; however, common interests are important to healthy marriages.
- A common interest may be cooking or eating new foods together, going for walks or playing cards.
- The goal is to have something outside of your family that you both enjoy.
- **Read: (Romans 15:5-6)**

7) Create a Spiritual Connection.

- Many couples grow closer when they share some form of spiritual connection.
- This can be done in many different ways:
 - For example, it may be achieved through an affiliation with a church by attending worship services together or participating in a local fellowship / community group with other Christians.
 - By reading a devotional or passage of Scripture together and discussing its meaning.
 - Spending time to routinely pray together for each other and your family can be a very rewarding experience and powerful way to build and strengthen your relationship.
- The old saying, "Couples that pray together stay together."
- **Read: (Philippians 2:1-2; James 5:16)**

8) Improve Your Communication Skills.

- The ability to talk and [listen](#) to each other is one key to a healthy marriage.
- You should never assume your partner knows what you are thinking or feeling.
- Tell your spouse what is going on and, as a spouse, know when to simply listen.
- Learning to really hear your partner is a skill that may require practice.
- There are many resources available like books, marriage education workshops and online courses.
- All these options can help couples learn how to communicate more effectively.
- **Read: (James 1:19-20; Proverbs 10:19; Proverbs 17:27)**

9) Forgive Each Other.

- If he or she hasn't already, your partner is going to do something that hurts, frustrates or upsets you.
- Guess what—you are going to do the same thing! Sometimes it might even be on purpose, after an argument or misunderstanding.
- Forgiveness is a tricky but important virtue in a marriage, especially since no one is perfect.
- Try to allow your partner some room to make a few mistakes because you will also make some of your own.
- When you make a mistake, act quickly to apologize and fix problems.
- Doing so will help to encourage [forgiveness](#) and strengthen your marriage.
- Scripture is very straight-forward about the issue of forgiveness.
- **Read: (Colossians 3:13; Matthew 6:14-15; Matthew 18:21-22; 1 Peter 4:8)**

10) Look for the Best in Each Other.

- When you met your partner, you fell in love with some of his or her wonderful qualities.
- Over time, however, your view of those qualities may have changed.
- For example, he may have been really good at saving money when you met. Now you just think he's cheap!
- Give each other the benefit of the doubt and create a list of all the things you love about your partner.
- It will help you to fall in love all over again!
- **Read: (Philippians 2:3-4; Romans 15:1-2)**