

How To Lose A Mate In 4 Weeks

Week 3 – Creative Conflict

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There are numerous reasons for conflict in marriage. Probably the biggest reason folks have marriage problems, however, stems from the fact that married couples often don't know how to create a great marriage. We are inundated with material from secular sources that offer advice steeped in humanism and selfishness. Many times we didn't have a good parental example. And the media gives us the idea that everything will work out if we simply love each other. Today we will focus on a few things that can help strengthen your marriage and help you work thru conflict.

LEARNING APPLICATION

1. Pray Together.

What are some of the reasons we don't pray together?
How critical do you believe Prayer is to your marriage? Why or why not?
What do you do if your spouse doesn't want to pray with you?

Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain (Psalm 127:1).

2. Don't Try To Change Your Spouse, Focus On Changing You.

How have you tried to change your spouse over the years?
How do you feel your spouse has tried to change you over the years?
When you're in conflict, do you often focus on how your spouse should change or do you ask God to show you how you need to change?

Comment: Studies show that even if one person in the marriage will follow this guideline, the marriage will get better and problems will lessen.

Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, "Let me take the speck out of your eye," when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye (Matthew 7:3-5).

3. Don't Take Your Marriage For Granted.

What are some ways we take each other for granted in marriage?
What are some suggestions you might have for not taking each other for granted?
Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men (Colossians 3:23).

4. Talk.

Why is conversation and communication so important in marriage?
Men – Why do you usually struggle with communicating and listening to your wife?
Women – What things do you do that discourage communication from your husband?

Comment: It's good to have enjoyable talks every day about things that matter to each of you. During those talks, be willing to gently bring up frustrations or issues that bother you.

5. Be More Romantic.

What is the greatest hindrance to being more romantic, going on dates and having fun together?
What are some ways you can plan around the hindrances?

Come, my lover, let us go to the countryside, let us spend the night in the villages. Let us go early to the vineyards to see if the vines have budded, if their blossoms have opened, and if the pomegranates are in bloom--there I will give you my love (Song of Songs 7:11-12).

INTERCESSORY PRAYER – Confess your struggles with any of the above listed guidelines with another person and then pray for God's grace to put one or two of them into practice in the coming week.

FELLOWSHIP – Share a time of fellowship to build relationships within the group.

EVANGELISM – As you close, pray for an opportunity to share the message of Christ's grace with the lost people you work with or associate with in your neighborhood and community...

I found this article of practical helps that I thought I would pass along this week as well. It's not from a religious source, but the content is certainly good advice.

Five Ways to Avoid Marital Conflict

Practical tips to ensure that your home life runs smoothly.

- 1. Post a family calendar in your kitchen or home office.** List all appointments, social engagements, family events, and so on. Check it together at the same time every day or week. To keep romance alive, ADHD coach Nancy Ratey suggests scheduling at least one couple-only vacation a year, and one night a week as “date night.”
- 2. Create “time cushions.”** Always allow 30 minutes longer than you think you’ll need to get out the door. That way, you won’t be late — even if you forget something and have to run back inside, or have to finish a task before leaving the house.
- 3. Break down big projects into small tasks.** Set a deadline for each task, as well as an overall deadline. If you’re redecorating your living room, for example, set dates for picking out paint and fabric, finishing the painting, hanging the curtains, and so on. Record your progress in a notebook. For example, “Called plumber on Saturday. Awaiting a call back.”
- 4. Plan on procrastination.** If you or your spouse works best under pressure, be sure to keep your calendar clear in the days leading up to the deadline for a big project.
- 5. Keep track of daily activities.** For one week, the partner with ADHD should write down everything he or she does each day and how long it took to do it. This will make it easier to estimate accurately just how long it takes to get things done.

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