

4 UNDERRATED WAYS TO PRIORITIZE YOUR MARRIAGE

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*When you think of prioritizing your marriage, what comes to mind? Most say - date nights and quality time. Yes; it's a great answer. Continuing to date each other and devoting intentional time to connect is crucial to nurturing intimacy and friendship. However, this isn't the **only** way. There are other – often underrated – ways to prioritize your marriage every day.*

1. Set boundaries.

Boundaries protect your marriage from external factors that have the potential to disrupt or damage the equilibrium of your relationship. You might set boundaries on how much time you devote to things or people outside your relationship to ensure you don't drift apart. Create boundaries that help you manage the physical, mental, or emotional energy you expend so you have enough left in the tank for your spouse. Establish boundaries that protect privacy in your relationship. Agree on what's okay to share with others and what should stay between the two of you. While boundaries are not always absolute, they provide a baseline that helps you put your marriage first – or return to it if things have gotten out of balance.

2. Consult with each other.

When you're married, the way you make decisions changes. There are two of you to consider. Choices that used to only affect you now have an impact on your marriage as well. While trivial decisions don't have to require checking in, those that affect your life together definitely do. Consulting with each other first shows consideration for your partner, and allows you to hear their perspective. If it differs from your view, you have the chance to get aligned to put your marriage first.

3. Address issues head-on.

It's not easy dealing with conflict in marriage. It can be uncomfortable, awkward, and just plain hard. After all, it often requires you to let your guard down and take responsibility for your triggers, feelings, and actions, some of which you might not feel great about. The more comfortable choice is to avoid facing the problem. Of course, avoidance will eventually cause negative effects. Also, working through conflict in a healthy way leads to feeling more connected.

4. Remember that you're a team.

It seems simple enough, but in the midst of a disagreement or conflict, it's easy to feel like it's you against your spouse. Unfortunately, if you let this feeling lead you, you'll end up making choices or acting in ways that don't put your marriage first. But, leaning into a team mentality helps you approach problems in a more collaborative way. You'll be more open to your partner's perspective and in a mindset to compromise, which means you're much more likely to reach a resolution you're both happy with.

Prioritizing your marriage might seem like something you always have to strive for, and in some ways that's true. Putting in the effort and keeping it top of mind helps avoid complacency. However, it's also possible to weave the mindset throughout your relationship by remembering to do these simple things. They may seem pretty basic, but their positive impact on your marriage can be huge.