

Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work

By John Gottman

Principle 1: Enhance your Love Map

- Emotionally intelligent couples are intimately familiar with each other's world
- Pay attention to what is going on with partner and what is important to him or her
- Share your inner world and stories with each other
- Who is important in partner's life, Recent important events, Upcoming events, current stressors, hopes and aspirations

Principle 2: Nurture your Fondness and Admiration

- Remember why you got together and why you love each other
- Put a positive spin on your history together
- Maintain respect and focus on positive qualities of spouse. This provide an antidote to contempt
- Tell one another what you appreciate about each other

Principle 3: Turn Toward Each Other Instead of Away

- Be intentional about connection with each other in the small moments of life
- Make deposits in the love bank
- Romance is kept alive by keeping the flame lit through small daily acts of kindness
- Reunite at the end of the day and talk about how the day went. Listen and be supportive. Take your spouse's side.

Principle 4: Let your Partner Influence you

- Happiest marriages are those who treat each other with respect and do not resist sharing power and decision making
- Avoid criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling
- It is especially important for men to allow their wives to influence them - **emotionally intelligent husbands – Chapter 6**

Principle 5: Solve your Solvable Problems

- Make the startup of conflict soft rather than harsh
- Use repair attempts
- Monitor your physiology for signs of distress

- Tolerate each other's imperfections
- Keep focused on the particular issue or situation
- Comes down to having good manners

Principle 6: Overcome gridlock

- The goal of ending gridlock is not to solve the problem, but to move from gridlock to dialogue
- Gridlock is a sign on an unmet dream that isn't being addressed or respected
- Understand the historical roots – key decisions
- Try to support each other's dream and goals
- Listen carefully to the meaning attached to the issue for both parties
- Define core areas you cannot agree on
- Define areas of flexibility
- Devise a compromise that honors both dreams, even if temporary
- Acknowledge what you appreciate about each other

Principle 7: Create Shared Meaning

- Create an atmosphere that encourages each person to talk honestly with his or her convictions
- Speak candidly and respectfully with each other
- Share your family stories that shaped your values
- Look for ways to honor both person's values, philosophies, and dreams. Honor your differences.
- Create family rituals that are meaningful to both of you
- Make time for just the two of you on a regular basis, such as date nights.
- Talk about your various roles and how you feel about them
- Talk about your deepest goals, individual and collective
- Consider writing a mission statement
- What are your shared symbols?

The Magic five hours – The time spent on your marriage that makes all the difference

- 1. Partings – Learn one thing about what is happening in spouses life that day**
- 2. Reunions – Have a stress reducing conversation at the end of each workday**
- 3. Admiration and appreciation – Find some way every day to communicate genuine affection and appreciation toward your spouse**
- 4. Affection – Kiss, hold, grab, and touch each other when you are together.**
- 5. Weekly date – Relax, have fun, ask about each other's thoughts and feelings, discuss concerns of life and of marriage. Read Date Night Conversations**