



Manage

The Rough Spots And Keep Your

*Marriage
Together*

Checklist



Keep this checklist close at hand. Review it and think about the choices you have in each of the situations you might encounter during your marriage. Then, check off the behaviors you'll choose to help resolve the challenging situation. This will greatly enhance your relationship.

1. Growing Apart: What you'll do

- ☐ Share your feelings about what's happening with you.
- ☐ Mention you miss having dinner together each day.
- ☐ Be flexible with your partner, as their work schedule may be an issue.
- ☐ Make it clear you miss spending time together.
- ☐ Plan a specific "date" to spend time together doing something you both enjoy.

2. Disagreement About Handling the Kids: Actions you'll take

- ☐ Share your feelings. State you want to work together because you strive to be a team.
- ☐ Ask questions. Inquire about what methods your partner prefers to use when raising the kids. Listen carefully.
- ☐ Agree with your partner when it's genuine. Then share tactfully when you disagree with them and why.
- ☐ Be truthful and ask for what you want. Honestly state what you find upsetting about some of your partner's parenting techniques. Then, ask for what you want.
- ☐ Agree to avoid disagreeing in front of the kids and be a unified team.
- ☐ Suggest attending a local parenting seminar together.

3. Different Ideas about Budgeting and Money: How you'll resolve them

- ☐ State your concerns. Start out by saying, "I'd like to talk about two things related to our money situation. I'm concerned about ____."
- ☐ Avoid bringing up finances when you're frustrated or angry. Be diplomatic, calm, and pleasant when broaching the subject.
- ☐ Keep an eye on your tone of voice.
- ☐ Find out your partner's viewpoints. They may have a specific plan in mind for the future, which dictates their current money behaviors.
- ☐ Read a good book on personal finance.
- ☐ Mention your goals for the future. During a money discussion, connect your family's goals to how you're currently handling your money.
- ☐ Take responsibility for money mistakes you've made in the past.

4. There's a Workaholic in the Family: How you'll manage it

If you're working too much:

- ☐ Cap the number of hours you'll work in a day or a week and stick to it.
- ☐ Establish a rule of no calls or texts at least a few evenings a week.
- ☐ Apologize and explain yourself. Share your work plans for the next 3-6 months.

If your partner is working too much:

- ☐ Openly acknowledge how you feel about all their extra work hours. Use "I" statements.
- ☐ Give them a heads up regarding special occasions. Allow your partner plenty of lead time if an event is coming up which you want them to attend.
- ☐ Mention you realize their work schedule is crammed, but you'd really like them to take part in a special event next week or next month.
- ☐ Ask how your partner feels about their work schedule.
- ☐ Clarify you want things to change and mention you want them to be home more often.

5. Arguing Has Become a Common Way of Relating: Ways you'll respond

- ☐ Use a quiet and calm tone when you speak.
- ☐ Do something to disrupt the pattern of arguing. Change your behavior.
- ☐ Decide to be the one who "gives in." Keep in mind your goal is to keep your marriage together.
- ☐ Apologize when necessary. You want others to accept your apologies, so accept theirs too. We all make mistakes. Be mature enough to say you're sorry and accept those words from others.
- ☐ Forgive.
- ☐ Avoid holding grudges. Grudges are a huge obstacle to a harmonious relationship. Besides, nothing positive will come from holding a grudge.
- ☐ Diplomatically discuss long-term wounds you've been distressed about.

6. Substance Abuse is Getting in the Way of Family Harmony: How you can help

- ☐ Look honestly at your own use of substances. If you're using illicit drugs, consider the idea that perhaps you could make different choices.
- ☐ Review the side effects of any prescriptions you're taking with your doctor to determine whether any of your relationship-disrupting behaviors could be a result of any medicines.
- ☐ Consider your nicotine habits, alcohol use, and anything else you're ingesting which could affect your emotional state.
- ☐ Speak to your spouse about their substance use. Then, tactfully state your concerns when they're not under the influence.

- ☐ Use appropriate voice tone with “I” statements and factually cite one or two recent situations when their behavior was hurtful, upsetting, or embarrassing to you.
- ☐ Seek drug or alcohol treatment and recovery when necessary. If you believe you’re caught in an unhealthy cycle of substance use, get professional help immediately.

7. Lack of Interest in Your Sexual Relationship: What will you do?

- ☐ Recognize the importance of the sexual connection between you and your partner. It’s a simple fact: the sexual relationship holds a very special place between you.
- ☐ Acknowledge sexual appetites vary. Even if you aren’t interested in lovemaking now, remind yourself your partner may be.
- ☐ Talk about it. As a couple, it’s imperative you can discuss sex.
- ☐ Explore how you feel about your lovemaking: what do you like and what does your partner prefer?
- ☐ Think about what you’d like to share with your partner and know about your partner related to your sexual relationship.
- ☐ Plan a “date night” to prime your sexual appetite.
- ☐ Be spontaneous once in a while. Take the lead to initiate sex at times when your partner least expects it.
- ☐ Develop awareness of your partner’s everyday life. Take notice of what your life is like and what your partner’s life is like.

8. Other Difficult Times That Happen Occasionally: How to handle it

When there's a death in the family, how will you react and keep your relationship close?

- ☐ Recognize everyone deals with death differently.
- ☐ Give your partner some space. They might want time to be alone. Take the time for yourself too, if you desire.
- ☐ Keep the lines of communication open with your spouse.
- ☐ Avoid getting angry. If your spouse expresses grief in a different way than you do, it's okay. Ask for understanding from your spouse, if necessary.
- ☐ Take the time to do things together as a couple regularly.
- ☐ Allow time to spend with family and friends.

If you or your spouse experiences a job loss, what will you do?

- ☐ Talk about it. If you're the one who lost your job, share your thoughts and feelings verbally. Let your partner know you want to talk about your anger and fears.
- ☐ When your partner suffers a job loss, go to them and state how you feel. Then, if they haven't told you yet, inquire about what they think and how they feel about the situation.
- ☐ Offer and accept support. Demonstrate you're there for your spouse.
- ☐ State your willingness to help. Ask what you can do to ease your partner's stress. Offer to go back to work or increase your work hours for a while.
- ☐ Discover free ways to have fun together at home during the week.