

# The Successful Spouse



# The Successful Spouse.

We often hear people talk about goals, dreams, and things they want to achieve. But we don't hear "I want to be a Successful Spouse"

Many studies show that the partner you choose to marry is the most important decision you'll make in your lifetime. After all the intent is to spend a lifetime together loving each other, and with that comes support, encouragement, friendship, intimacy and much more.

It sounds like a dream come true to live happily ever after, with the perfect companion. But the reality is a strong relationship takes a lot of work, and by work that means ongoing, active, intentional effort from both individuals.

People change over time, they grow and evolve, and sometimes spouses do not embrace this change. It could be due to simply aging, new interests, new goals, successes in life, failures in life, or many other things... but the bottom line is that when you love someone you want to see them happy in life so providing constant support through every phase is essential.

This work is intended to inspire you to be a successful spouse. Its for you, for your spouse, individually and together.

**To be a successful spouse you must add value to the relationship,  
you must put in an intentional and ongoing effort,  
and honor your individuality and your relationship  
throughout your marital journey.**

General statistics state that about half of marriages end in divorce.  
*Will you choose to be a Successful Spouse in your Marriage?*

# What are the most common causes of divorce?

According to the National Library of Medicine [1], these are the **top 10 most common reasons for divorce**:

- #1: Lack of commitment (75%)
- #2: Infidelity (60%)
- #3: Too much conflict and arguing (58%)
- #4: Getting married too young (45%)
- #5: Financial problems (37%)
- #6: Substance abuse (35%)
- #7: Domestic violence (24%)
- #8: Lack of support from the family (18%)
- #9: Health problems (17%)
- #10: Religious differences (13%)

These reasons can be categorized into 2 buckets:

## **Bucket 1: Communication & Commitment**

#1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #8, #10

## **Bucket 2: Mental health/health issues**

#6, #7, #9

For the purpose our discussion, all “reasons for divorce” in category 1 have the potential to take control of their fate and choose behaviors that could or may result in success. Category 2 requires professional, medical, and often legal assistance, and has a much greater chance of resolution if such professionals are involved.

## Defining a Successful Spouse.

A Successful Spouse chooses to love their spouse every moment of every single day, intentionally. They treat their partner with respect, regardless of if their spouse is present or not. They feel and show deep gratitude and appreciation for their spouse through acts of love, kindness, and service.

### Qualities of a Successful Spouse

- **Partnership mentality**, meaning you view each other as your equal and support each other as such in life.
- **Respectful** which means supporting each others' goals and dreams. Never expecting the other to abandon their morals or push boundaries.
- **Good communicator** who doesn't hold back and creates an environment that facilitates open dialogues.
- **Honest** which speaks to a moral compass of demanding truthfulness in all circumstances.
- **Desire spend time together**, meaning if there is free time, you know your spouse wants to be with you.
- **Pans for the future**, fun or fiscal demonstrating your relationship will remain strong as you experience new things and reach goals together.
- **Prioritizing you**. When there is free time, it's spent with your spouse. When there is a problem, it's addressed with your spouse immediately. When there are decisions to be made, they are discussed in a respectful and collaborative way with your spouse.
- **Good humor**, the ability to make each other laugh will keep spirits high and tensions low.
- **Aims to resolve conflict quickly and respectfully** because a peaceful life is important, and resolving issues is a priority to maintain a healthy balance.
- **Shared Values** – beliefs that guide behavior, interactions, and decisions.
- **Shared health outlook** – research shows couples who exercise together complete and maintain fitness goals at a higher rate than singles
- **Emotional maturity** meaning the ability to manage emotions under any circumstance, staying calm in challenging situations, and taking steps to understand each other when there is conflict.
- **The ability to forgive** because nobody is perfect, so giving you spouse grace then they misstep is important. The ability to forgive pertains to life's daily frustrations and mistakes that are made without malicious intent. Infidelity and malicious dishonesty are not accidents, and the would be considered in another category.
- **Maintains self control** which means considering your spouse in advance of making plans and decisions, avoiding inappropriate behavior with other people, avoiding harmful habits like pornography that can damage your ability to perform intimately with your spouse and remaining loyal both when your spouse is present, and when they are not.
- **Friendship** as in the best friend ever showing love, patience, gratitude and joy to be your spouse.



# Successful Spouse Essentials Your Mindset

A Successful Spouse has an intentional mindset for success within the marriage. They practice intentional love. That means each day, they choose to love their spouse. No matter what. The first and last thoughts of the day always include those of gratitude for having your spouse by your side.

They choose to give their spouse the benefit of the doubt, and always see the best in them.

A Successful Spouse acts with integrity, regardless of circumstances. This means that even if their spouse is not nearby, kind words are spoken about them. Unwavering commitment is at the heart of this relationship.



**A Successful Spouse makes an ongoing effort to be the best version of themselves to be the ultimate team-mate.** They provide genuine honesty and trust, and their actions are loyal and honorable.

A Successful Spouse puts the relationship above all else, because when their relationship as the nucleus of the family is healthy and strong, they can best help and serve others, including children, parents, family, friends and their community.

A Successful Spouse has an intentionally grateful and positive mindset around their marriage, despite everyday circumstances or challenges.

Please note, support for demonstrated poor behavior, mental illness and addiction should be sought by a certified therapist, or other appropriate healthcare professional.



# Successful Spouse Essentials Friendship

# Successful Spouse Essentials: Friendship

When you know someone deeply, it allows you to understand them better than anyone. You know how to make them laugh, you know how to comfort them, you know their favorite food, and even one small mannerism that may go unnoticed by others can give you deep insight to how they are feeling or what they are thinking.

**Friendship is the foundation for any great relationship.** Genuine love, support, enthusiasm for your best friend. The deeper the friendship, the more solid and successful the marriage. When couples genuinely enjoy time together, that is where the magic in marriage comes into play.



When a couple intentionally reinvigorates their friendship, it helps them achieve a higher level of intimacy and allows them to navigate life's challenges with a team approach. This can look as simple as making sure they check in throughout the day or find other ways to genuinely connect on an ongoing basis. When tensions are high, these couples will try to de-escalate the situation in real-time, looking for ways to compromise or even simply shed light to a grim situation. This behavior helps couples keep the most intense of challenges neutralized, allowing them to navigate around the actual issue versus reacting to each others' emotions.

The reality is many arguments are rooted in fundamental differences, but if both individuals accept each other as they are and respect one another's differences, they will continue to strengthen their friendship over time and conflict resolution will be an agreeable team effort, not combative.



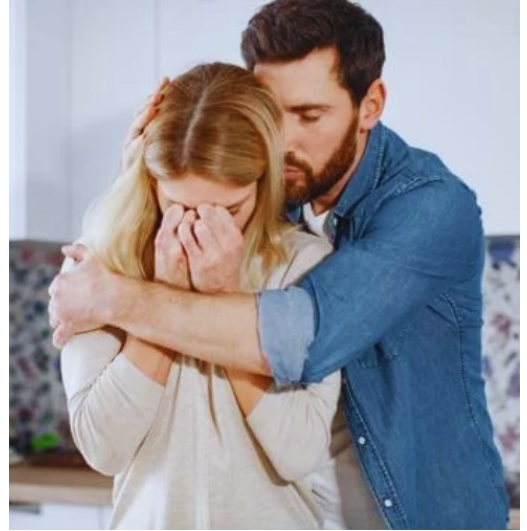


# Successful Spouse Essentials Understanding

# Successful Spouse Essentials: Understanding

One of the more beautiful and selfless things you can do for your spouse is learning to understand them. And never stop.

Life isn't easy, so when the person you love seeks to understand you instead of judging, it truly allows unconditional love to flourish.



Learn to understand the emotions behind the actions. Learn to understand the feelings behind the words. When your spouse blows up it's easy to react emotionally but choose compassion and pause to understand the true issue.

Be constantly curious to understand what excites and pleases your partner, as much as what scares, frustrates or disturbs them.

A deep understanding of each other strengthens everything, your intimacy, your trust, your friendship, your joyful moments, your sense of togetherness. You are individuals, and that will always be important, but a deep understanding of each will strengthen your bond as time progresses.

Never stop learning about each other. Never stop listening, clarifying, observing.

Give each other grace, give each other the benefit of the doubt, and don't pass judgement based on circumstances or assumptions – keep your communication lines open and strong. A successful spouse is always honest and makes an effort to understand the other.



# Successful Spouse Essentials Trust

If there is no trust, there is nothing.

It's a harsh reality, but that is the TRUTH. If you are a successful spouse, you've laid the foundation for strong trust in your relationship.



There is never any benefit to lying to your spouse. On the flip side, if your spouse shames you or becomes angry when you tell the truth – people by nature want to avoid conflict and that creates an unsafe environment for honesty.

So how do you handle a situation where your spouse is honest, and they disappoint you? Thank your spouse for being honest. Then have a calm discussion around the information they shared. If you can't do that right away, take a little time to digest the information and revisit the topic when you are both calm.

**Mutual trust means your spouse can always count on you, and you can always count on them.**

Trust is knowing your spouse will be loyal and honest with you. It's knowing your spouse has your best interest at heart. Trust can be easily broken, and often times it can't be repaired.



# Successful Spouse Essentials Playfulness

Many studies have shown that couples who are more playful in their relationships tend to experience:

- More positive emotions
- Be more satisfied with their union
- Feel closer to one another



While not all forms of playfulness will yield positive results, there are many that do. The most beneficial in terms of strengthening a relationship fall under the category of other-directed playfulness, which means the interaction between you and your spouse is directly meant for each other by way of nicknames, words or actions that you know will cheer and laughter to the other.

While sex may not be categorized as playful for some, playfulness in a relationship can serve as a strong aphrodisiac. Some researchers would argue that consensual forms of sex around erotic BDSM (bondage, discipline, dominance and submission) and roleplay are an expression of playfulness.

**Expressing desires and needs in a way that feels fun and accepting can be a great way to cultivate playfulness with your spouse.**

Ultimately, jokes, sex, games or whatever lighthearted fun you and your spouse enjoy is yours, and as long as you are enjoying joyful moments together, your bond will continue to grow.



# Successful Spouse Essentials Experiences

# Successful Spouse Essentials: Experiences

There are many experiences that can help bring you closer to your spouse. These experiences don't have to take a lot of time or cost much money. They can include things like having a weekly date night, having lunch together a couple times a week, taking a shower together, going to church together, taking a walk together... the theme here is "together" ... whatever that is for you, it's together.

**To be successful spouse, you need to be present and that requires you prioritize spending time together.**

It requires that you put an equal effort into making these experiences happen. It's not polite to expect your spouse to produce the ideas and make the plans for everything. Showing you care means taking initiative and putting in some time and effort to choose an experience that you think you and your spouse will enjoy.

Physical touch like kissing and hugging are great ways to express love for each other. Sex is also a powerful experience that can enhance your intimacy and is shown to be especially important for men to aid their ability to nurture an emotional connection.

If you are spending time together, the experience you choose is secondary. Each experience gives you an opportunity to connect, grow, and make new memories. Choosing to be a successful spouse has a direct correlation with the time you invest in spending time with your spouse.







# Successful Spouse Essentials Prioritization

Love is not the only required ingredient for a happy marriage. **If you want to be a successful spouse, make sure your spouse feels like your number one priority.** They need to feel heard, noticed, and valued.



Think about the time you spend with your spouse.

- Who comes first, your spouse, kids, family, friends, hobbies, work?
- Are you always working, even when you are home?
- Do you show interest in your spouse's life outside of your home together?
- Are you making sure to spend quality time together?

Here are some suggestions to help you become successful in prioritizing your spouse:

1. Express love every day by saying “I love you” or through thoughtful gestures.
2. Always kiss your spouse hello and goodbye.
3. Ask your spouse what you can do to make them feel like they are your priority.
4. Show interest and ask questions about your spouses' life.
5. Express appreciation for the things they do.
6. Show affection through hugs, cuddles, and thoughtful gestures.
7. Show up when your spouse needs you. Be dependable.
8. Share your plans and whereabouts with your spouse.
9. Put down your device when having a conversation with your spouse.
10. Plan date nights.

**People always make time for the people that are important to them.**



# Successful Spouse Essentials Health

There are many health benefits that can be obtained within a healthy marriage.

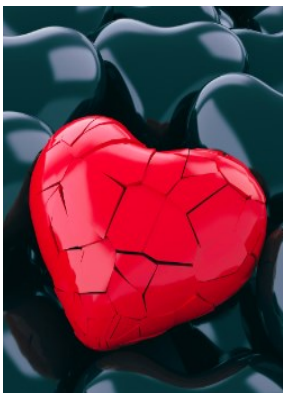
According to researchers at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, married women are 20% less likely to die from heart disease, cirrhosis of the liver or suicide; and married men are 2-3 times less likely to die of these causes than single men.

Other studies cite that married people:

- Live longer
- Have fewer strokes
- Have fewer heart attacks
- Are less likely to have advanced cancer when diagnosed, and are more likely to survive
- Are more likely to survive major operations



Reasons for the improved health can not be isolated to one factor, but managing stress is a large component. Married people share the burden of maintaining a household, managing finances, raising children, and dealing with life's challenges together which in turn reduces their stress levels exponentially over a single person who doesn't have a team mate to help.



While healthy marriage have positive impact on both partners, a negative marriage can have severe consequences. Studies have shown that marriages that involve hostility and negativity towards one another have a much greater instance of compromised immune systems. Other studies show that lack of spousal support has a much greater impact on women causing increased inflammation.

*Being a successful spouse is sticking together even when times are tough!*

## The health benefits to a happy marriage are profound!

The psychologist John Gottman, a renowned pioneer in the field of marriage research stated:

“The benefits are better physical health, more resistance to infection, fewer infections, and a reduced likelihood of dying from cancer, from heart disease, from all major killers. The other health benefit is longevity: People live longer if they are in marital relationships, particularly if they are in good, satisfying relationships.”

Married people produce less cortisol, which is the body’s reaction to stress. High levels of cortisol impairs the functionality of your immune system. Marriage provides social support, where single people can experience loneliness, isolation, and depression. Research links loneliness with inflammation, and chronic inflammation is associated with heart disease, arthritis, autoimmune disease and cancers. While single people have meaningful relationships, marriage provides more opportunity for closeness therefore supporting the health link between a happy marriage and reduced inflammation. Happily married people have less anxiety disorders, less phobias, less depression, and less psychosis.

This is reversed when a relationship is negative or on its way to dissolving.

### 5 tips to keep your marriage happy and healthy:

1. Complement one another frequently.
2. Don’t reject your spouse when they are reaching out, be there when they need you.
3. Create things that are personal to you, jokes, nicknames, special habits.
4. Talk every day.
5. Say I love you often.

In a study of 25,000 patients in England, they found that among people having a heart attack, those who were married had a 14% better likelihood of survival, and they left the hospital on average 2 days earlier than unmarried patients.

While some relationships exist without it, research shows that sex can play a big role in your overall health. **Sex improves mental health and mood** because your body releases natural feel-good hormones including endorphins, oxytocin, and dopamine. Other benefits to having sex include:

- Reduced cardiovascular disease
- Reduced stress/better stress management
- Boost in self-esteem
- Lower rates of depression
- Boost in cognitive function
- Exercise/burns calories
- Lowers risk of heart attack
- Better sleep
- Reduces risk of prostate cancer in men
- Better memory
- Lower blood pressure
- Pain management
- Increased intimacy/sense of well-being
- Reduces incontinence/stronger pelvic floor



Unfortunately, studies also show that as our lives got busier over time, comparing the frequency of sex in the 1990's to that of the 2020's for example, married couples have sex less often.

Studies unanimously agree that sex within a marriage is important for overall well-being and health so it can be argued that being a successful spouse in the areas of prioritization, experiences, and health all encourage you and your spouse schedule some sexy time at least once a week to realize some major health benefits!

**If you and your spouse struggle in this area a sex therapist can help you understand factors that led to a sexless marriage and help you and your partner find ways to connect with one another. If you and your partner are content with having sex every quarter, once a year, or not at all, then that's OK! Everyone is different!**

In a world that is consumed with instant gratification and disposable relationships, we celebrate the successful spouse. We aim to help you discover all the secrets to unlock your lasting, loving partnership.



True commitment is choosing each other over and over again, because ultimately what makes relationships work is the decision to make them work.

--Dr. John Gottman  
The Gottman Institute





# Successful Spouse Essentials Resources



For more inspiration, check out these resources:

### **The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work: A Practical Guide from the Country's Foremost Relationship Expert (Book)**

by John Gottman PhD

### The Gottman Institute Couples Products

<https://www.gottman.com/product-category/couples-products/>

### These psychologists say that the secret to your success is who you marry

By Ruth Umoh FREE

### Who You Marry Determines Your Success

By Emily Lyons FREE

### Warren Buffett says the most important decision you'll ever make has nothing to do with your money or career

By Kathleen Elkins FREE

### Marrying the Right Person Makes You More Successful, According to Science

By Jeff Haden FREE

### Supportive Relationships Linked to Willingness to Pursue Opportunities

By Patrick Monahan FREE

### Spouse's personality influences career success, study finds

By Gerry Everding FREE

### **25 Awe-Inspiring Qualities of a Good Husband**

<https://www.marriage.com/advice/relationship/qualities-of-a-good-husband/> FREE

### If You Can't Find a Spouse Who Supports Your Career, Stay Single

By Avivah Wittenberg-Cox FREE

The Successful Spouse is constantly eager to learn more about their spouse and apply that knowledge to actions within the relationship. Here are a few tools to help.

#### **Gottman Relationship Quiz**

[https://gottmanconnect.com/site/quiz?utm\\_source=tgi-blog&utm\\_medium=topbanner&utm\\_campaign=free-gc-quiz-desk](https://gottmanconnect.com/site/quiz?utm_source=tgi-blog&utm_medium=topbanner&utm_campaign=free-gc-quiz-desk)

#### **The Love Language® Quiz**

<https://5lovelanguages.com/quizzes/love-language>

#### **Brilliance Couples Values Assessment**

[https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/70cf226f-059e-4351-90fb-cf83999cc6f0/Brilliance%20Coaching%20and%20Consulting\\_Cou-1a857a4.pdf](https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/70cf226f-059e-4351-90fb-cf83999cc6f0/Brilliance%20Coaching%20and%20Consulting_Cou-1a857a4.pdf)

#### **Is BDSM for your relationship?**

<https://bdsmtest.org/>

#### **Why You're Having Less Sex with Your Partner — and How to Get Back Into It**

<https://www.healthline.com/health/healthy-sex/sexless-marriage>

#### **Happy, Healthy and Wedded? How the Transition to Marriage Affects Mental and Physical Health**

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8888778/>

# COUPLES RELATIONSHIP VALUES ASSESSMENT



This exercise will help identify the top relational actions that you would like to receive from your partner and discover your partners relational needs. Use this exercise to guide a dialogue that leads to a deeper understanding of yourself and each other, focusing on how you can better meet the needs within your relationship.

## THE ASSIGNMENT

Print 2 copies of this document, one for you and one for your partner. Rank the relationship values in order of priority, from 1 being what's most important to you (My Needs). Then rank the relationship values based on what you believe is most important to your partner (My Partners Needs). Once you've completed your worksheets, discuss the results with your partner. Use specific examples of what would be meaningful to you. The goal is to better understand what you and your partner need from each other and identify adjustments you can make in your behavior or communication that might strengthen the relationship. For example: I feel acceptance when you....  
**Stay in a positive mindset. Do not judge. Focus on the present and what you want/need moving forward.**

My Needs	RELATIONSHIP VALUES	My Partners Needs
	<b>ACCEPTANCE</b> Receiving information good or bad, with compassion, love and consideration. No matter what I share with my partner, I feel heard and loved.	
	<b>AFFECTION</b> My partner shows me they care about me through physical touch.	
	<b>APPRECIATION</b> My partner expresses gratitude for my presence in their life, and for what I contribute to the relationship.	
	<b>APPROVAL</b> My partner communicates praise and speaks highly of me both privately and publicly.	
	<b>ATTENTION</b> My partner makes me feel like I am a priority and communicates their interest and attraction.	
	<b>EMPATHY</b> My partner comforts and consoles me when I need kind words or affection.	
	<b>ENCOURAGEMENT</b> My partner positively contributes <u>in</u> celebrating and encouraging me to reach my goals.	
	<b>RESPECT</b> My partner knows my worth, values me, and treats me accordingly.	
	<b>SECURITY</b> My partner gives me the confidence that this relationship will be free from any physical or emotional harm or misconduct.	
	<b>SUPPORT</b> My partner willingly and proactively helps me carry the burden of everyday life (finances, planning, home management/chores, raising children, family obligations – however you define this category).	

# The Successful Spouse Series

Coming  
SOON

2025

For more information or to  
schedule a coaching session, visit:

<http://yourbrilliancecoaching.com>