



# THRIVING TOGETHER:

Nurturing healthy RELATIONSHIPS & MARRIAGES and while  
serving the church

WARREN & SONYA JACOBS





# THRIVING TOGETHER:

Nurturing healthy RELATIONSHIPS & MARRIAGES and while  
serving the church

The Lord is not asking you to sacrifice your marriage at the altar of ministry.



**This quote changed  
our marriage ❤️**



**Craig Groeschel** 🔒 🌐 · Follow

Never neglect your marriage. ❤️

## The Problems Marriages Face

What are the top problems facing marriages according to the *Marriage Health in America* study?

The findings largely align with other studies of marriage health, including reports from the National Marriage Project, the Gottman Institute, and Pew Research. Across all four segments of the survey, the ten highest reported marriage problems included:

1. *Sexual issues/lack of sexual intimacy*
2. *Stress*
3. *Busy schedules/Not enough 1:1 time*
4. *Health/Medical issues*
5. *Financial issues/Income struggles*
6. *Lack of emotional intimacy/Deep connection*
7. *Mental health/Depression/Anxiety/PTSD*
8. *Communication problems (general)*
9. *Work-life balance/Career*
10. *Loneliness/Loveless marriage/Growing apart*

# CHALLENGES

## **- Constant availability expectations:**

Beyond the “Fish bowl”... Ministry often demands long hours, frequent evening and weekend commitments, and being “on call” for crises. Holidays are just different!

## **- Neglect of the marriage:**

The spouse can feel neglected or resentful when the church receives more attention than the family. “What I’m doing is more important than what you’re doing.”

## **- Difficulty setting boundaries:**

Many ministers struggle to say “no,” leading to burnout and emotional distance at home.

CONNECTION IS KEY

# FOUR PILLARS OF CONNECTION

- Emotional
- Mental
- Physical
- Spiritual

# EMOTIONAL

We were built for connection

”Let us make them in our image”

“It is not good for you to be alone, I will make a partner for you”

“They were both naked and they felt no shame”

GENESIS 1 & 2

# EMOTIONAL

True emotional intimacy requires **vulnerability, safety, attunement, and emotional presence**. When couples consciously work through fear, communicate authentically, and create a space where both can be seen and accepted, emotional closeness deepens naturally.

# FIVE ROADBLOCKS TO EMOTIONAL INTIMACY FOR COUPLES

1. Fear of vulnerability
2. Unresolved past wounds
3. Poor communication habits
4. Emotional unavailability or burnout
5. Power struggles and lack of emotional safety

# MENTAL

## PILLARS OF CONNECTION

- Hobbies, politics
- Plans and projects
- Work
- Goals, strategizing together, planning for the future

# MENTAL

## PILLARS OF CONNECTION

- Casting a vision for your marriage

  
**-Our Marriage Vision-**  
-RESOURCES ADAPTED FROM WINSHAPE MARRIAGE-

To have a successful marriage, it's critical to know what you and your spouse are collectively working toward. When you create a specific vision for your marriage, then it drives your choices and reactions individually and as a couple. Put simply, what do you want your marriage to look like in the next 5-10 years, and what will it take to get there? We'll walk you through answering these questions with the following four steps.

Step 1  
**Imagine your ideal future.**

- Individually, take a few moments to think about the question, "What do I want our marriage to look like one year from today?" Keep your answer to yourself for now.
- Then, use the boxes on the following two pages (one for you, one for your spouse) to draw a visual representation of your ideal future. This could be a picture, symbols, or a diagram. Remember to focus on the ideas you're expressing, not the artistic quality of your drawing.

 ENJOY YOUR MARRIAGE

 ENJOY YOUR MARRIAGE

uture

on for  
words,  
these  
nd.

rity
ity
ality
hy
/
ality
ion
ity

# MENTAL

## PILLARS OF CONNECTION

- Weekly working date

### Weekly/Monthly Working Date

#### Living life intentionally

Gentle Reminder... this is not a time to resolve conflict

Calendar notes for our family: (travel, doctor's appts, games, events, holiday, birthday, etc.)

Husband

Wife:

Children:

Deadlines that need attention: (Vehicle needs, taxes, bill payments, forms, registrations, etc.)

Any financial concerns?

Any major events happening at work or home?

Meals we will sit down at the table as a family and eat together:

Date plan for couple (dinner, lunch, coffee, etc):

Hopeful Intimacy Schedule : )

Intentional one on one time with the kids:

Family Fun :

How can I be helpful to you?

How can I pray for you?

# PHYSICAL

## PILLARS OF CONNECTION

- Sexual and nonsexual touch

# PHYSICAL

## PILLARS OF CONNECTION

- Sexual and nonsexual touch
- Body language and tone

# PHYSICAL

## PILLARS OF CONNECTION

- Sexual and nonsexual touch
- Body language and tone
- Unique seasons for physical connection

# PHYSICAL

## PILLARS OF CONNECTION

- Sexual and nonsexual touch
- Body language and tone
- Unique seasons for physical connection
- A gift for procreation and pleasure

WE NEED TO COMMUNICATE OUR  
NEEDS TO BE ABLE TO MEET EACH  
OTHERS NEEDS

# SPIRITUAL

## PILLARS OF CONNECTION

- Shared book or study, Podcasts
- Bible reading plan
- Serve together
- Worship together
- Fasting together

# SPIRITUAL

## PILLARS OF CONNECTION

- Prayer
  - “Help” prayer (at the point of need)
  - “Blessing” prayer (early in the morning)
  - “Comfort” prayer (before sleep)

# BOUNDARIES

- Reserve Cognitive space. Bring your best at home.
- If it is your day off, it is your day off. You are modeling for those you lead. Make it clear that unless there is a valid emergency (which you will need to define), the situation can wait until the next working day.
- Don't make your spouse compete for your attention to ministry
- Gary chapman story: schedule...

# BOUNDARIES

Foster Healthy boundaries:

Connect your spouse to your ministry

- ask them to pray for your ministry & give them specific things to pray about
- Tell them about what goes on in your daily routine
- Ask their opinion when you're trying to make decisions in your ministry.

# BOUNDARIES

Fight unhealthy boundaries:

- Never be alone with the opposite sex. Never. That means lunch, dinner, etc.
- PRIVACY creates intimacy


# HOW AND WHEN TO GET HELP

# HOW AND WHEN TO GET HELP

Among those in *unhealthy marriage* relationships, only 14% sought a moderate amount of help or more, while among those in a marriage crisis state, **only 17% sought a moderate amount of help** or more.

The greatest presentation  
of the gospel we can make  
is not what we do on  
Sunday mornings but what  
we do every day of the  
week in our homes.

**MARK LEE**





Information  
leads to transformation  
when there's  
Application



Resource page

