

Six Warning Signs of a “Drifting” Marriage

By Dave Willis

I recently sat down with a couple who have been married for a long time, but recently some relational “drift” in their marriage had slowly sent them in opposite directions like two ships that are each just slightly off course. Over time, that slight drift caused a huge gap between them. This couple had the abrupt wakeup call of an emotional affair that threatened to end their marriage if immediate action wasn’t taken.

Any marriage left on autopilot will eventually start drifting in the wrong direction. It’s important to correct the course the moment you recognize the sometimes subtle signs that you’re drifting apart. Here are six warning signs that some unhealthy drifting may be happening in your marriage:

In no particular order...

1. You each spend more of your free time doing individual activities than you spend doing activities together.

There’s certainly nothing wrong with having some hobbies you enjoy independently, BUT when the majority of your free time is wrapped up in activities that don’t include your spouse, that’s a huge red flag that relational drift is leading you in the wrong direction. Find some shared activities you both enjoy doing together, and it could make a huge difference in your marriage.

2. You have “his friends” and “her friends” but not “our friends.”

Again, hanging out with some friends without your spouse isn’t always a bad thing, BUT when your primary social interactions don’t include your spouse, you’re might be subtly sabotaging your marriage. Find some “couple friends” that you both enjoy hanging out with together. Include your spouse as much as possible.

3. You don’t have much physical affection outside the bedroom.

A lack of sex can be its own warning sign, but we’ve found many couples who are drifting may still be have sex frequently. A better indicator of “drift” happens with the amount of affection happening outside of the bedroom. When you rarely cuddle, hold hands, put your arm around his/her shoulder, etc., that’s usually a warning sign.

4. You find yourself hiding things from your spouse.

This can start subtly and seem innocent at first, but this is a HUGE red flag from

the moment it begins. If you find yourself hiding purchases, text messages or anything else from your spouse, please bring it out into the open. A marriage can't survive without complete transparency and trust. If you're doing, saying, texting, spending ANYTHING that you hope your spouse doesn't find out about, you're drifting towards a crash if you don't correct the course.

5. You get more excited about your career or your hobbies than you get about your marriage.

Whenever our best energies, thoughts and goals are geared towards pursuits outside of our marriage and family, our marriage and family will tend to get our leftovers instead of our best efforts. It's good to work hard and even to have some hobbies, but when those endeavors eclipse our marriage in terms of our excitement or commitment, then we're drifting in the wrong direction.

6. You and your spouse rarely or never talk about your dreams together for the future.

When you get into the daily grind of work or raising kids and don't make an intentional effort to keep dreaming new dreams together for the future, you'll slowly start drifting towards a future without each other. Keep working together to meet new goals and dreaming together about creating new adventures and experiences together. Those are some of the keys to a lifelong love with each other and creating a legacy through your love that will endure for generations to come!

For more information go to: <http://sixseeds.patheos.com/davewillis>.

