

Things You Can Do to Improve Your Relationship

1. Ask your partner something new

Communication is arguably the #1 determining factor of success for every relationship. It's nice to ask how your partner's day went, but it can feel routine when you ask the same thing every day or don't branch out into new topics of conversation. Enhance your relationship and communication by putting in the extra effort to question your significant other on something more specific. By asking new questions (like "How did you feel about that?" or "What do you prefer doing at work instead?"), you'll avoid going through the motions, listen more intently to each other, and have more meaningful discussions.

2. Designate a monthly date night

Between both of your busy schedules and nonstop responsibilities, the most foolproof way to guarantee that you'll make time for each other is to set a night every month dedicated to strengthening your connection and reigniting that spark. Whether you're looking to spice up your relationship or want to do something together that doesn't include Netflix, schedule a date.

3. Say "thank you."

Especially in relationships that have gone on for years and have fallen into routines, we can get so comfortable that we expect our partners to meet all of our needs, whether it's how they treat us or the daily chores they do. Saying a simple "thank you" for cleaning the dishes after dinner or giving you a compliment enforces their good behavior and makes them feel appreciated as well as helps you remember why you love them. It's also important to express appreciation and gratitude for them being in your life and how much they mean to you (and not just what they do for you).

4. Schedule a check-in

Scheduling might not seem very sexy and spontaneous but making sure you're regularly checking in with each other will keep your relationship strong. It can be easy to let annoyance after annoyance build up until it gets to a full-blown fight, so checking in means fewer fights, more communication, and better connection.

5. Remember the small things

Another way to add meaning to your conversation is to truly listen to what your significant other is saying and then bring up those little things again in the future. For example, if your partner mentions a new pair of shoes that they want, take note of it to gift it to them for their birthday coming up, or if your significant other says they want to try a restaurant you haven't been to, suggest it for your next date night or surprise them with takeout. The fact that you pay attention to and remember even the minor details that your partner says will show how much you listen, care, and want them to feel loved. Overall, it's the little things that mean the most.

6. Let go of the past

As a culprit for many potential arguments and the underlying issue for future ones, what happened in the past doesn't always stay there. But it's difficult to move forward in a relationship when you're still thinking about past fights, problems, or issues that you've already resolved.

7. Show your affection

From grabbing your partner's hand at a restaurant to going to bed together at the end of the night, you know how you feel about your partner, but they should be able to feel it as well. Physical touch goes a long way in keeping romance and connection alive in long-term relationships. Try to avoid physical touch routines, meaning the only physical touch in your daily life is a kiss goodbye or a hug hello (though these are also important gestures). In addition to your hellos and goodbyes, hug them unexpectedly, hold their hand in the car or while watching TV, or even just pat them on the arm to feel close. Physical closeness can translate to emotional closeness.

8. Learn your partner's boundaries

Does your partner wish to be left alone when they're upset? Do they mind that you want to text all day long, or do they prefer you call them when you're apart at night? Is there a certain way they prefer to argue or certain topics they're not comfortable discussing with you yet? These questions are simple, but the answers to them will help you understand your partner's boundaries (and stop you from crossing them). Overall, your partner's needs are most likely different from yours, and knowing their boundaries is the best way to respect them. Have conversations to explain your boundaries to each other, but also pay attention and ask questions to understand them better.

9. Laugh together

Relationships are just friendships with exclusivity. Loving each other is crucial and *liking* each other is important too. While the life-partner stuff (like dividing chores) or the romantic stuff (like holding hands) might be top priorities to improve your relationship, remember that the friendship stuff is just as important. Laugh together at least once every day, whether it's sharing a funny story that happened to you at the grocery store, bringing up an inside joke, or watching the show that makes you both laugh out loud. Laughing not only bonds us but also helps us remember that the point of being in a relationship is to enjoy the person we love.

13 WAYS TO SHOW YOUR WIFE HONOR

1. Be a man of God. Don't make her responsible for your life or happiness. Look to Jesus to fulfill that promise. Seek Him first for yourself and your family.

2. Encourage her gifts. Your wife is gifted and talented. Encourage her to pursue what God has for her through those gifts.

3. Respect her opinion. Be the kind of man that wants to know how she feels about things. Ask about what she reads or is receiving teaching from and what she's learning. And when she gives you an opinion about something, honor it and don't demean or dismiss it.

4. Share your heart with her and ask her about hers. When you are together, share what's on your heart and ask her about hers. Be intentional. Pay attention to the condition of your wife's heart by asking her important questions.

5. Use your words wisely and speak kindly to her. Your words can either build her up or tear her down. Use words that build her up and speak them over and over and over again.

6. Be affectionate towards her

7. Don't discuss her weaknesses with others. You are "one flesh." When you talk poorly about your wife to others, you may as well be saying it about yourself too. Don't demean her to other people.

8. Show interest in her projects or passions. The simple truth is that she probably has projects and passions that don't exactly excite you. But you can show her honor by being interested in talking about or listening to what interests her. You just might find it strengthens your appreciation for her, and your intimacy (emotional and physical).

9. Speak highly of her in front of and to your children. Teach your children to respect their mom by thanking and complimenting her in front of them. Don't forget to show physical affection when they're around to see. It's good for them and good for your relationship.

10. Remember special days. Don't forget moments like birthday's, anniversary's, and other days special to your wife.

11. Tell her what she means to you. When was the last time you told her how much she means to you and what you love about her? You cannot tell her enough how grateful you are for her.

12. Do not compare her to other women. Don't point out how another woman looks, dresses, or treats her husband or children. Comparing her to other women is the fastest way to demotivate and wound your wife. She's your wife, not someone else's. Be loyal to her, and don't compare her.

13. Do not treat her as a servant. Your wife isn't your servant. You are both "heirs together of the grace of God," remember? Look for ways to serve her.

13 WAYS TO HONOR YOUR HUSBAND

1. Give him your undivided attention. If he's speaking to you, stop everything you're doing and look him in the eye when you both are communicating.

2. Ask him about his day & show genuine interest. Simple questions like "How was your day" can mean a lot and is a great way to show respect to your husband.

3. be affectionate towards him

4. Ask for his opinion. Regardless if it's about big decisions or small, ask him what he thinks about it and listen to him intently.

5. Encourage him. When was the last time you told him he's doing an amazing job? Men need to be constantly reminded (women too!) about all the amazing things they do.

6. Treat him well. Nothing worse than seeing spouses making jokes about their "significant" ones! If there is humiliation, there is no room for love here. Say kind things about him.

7. Admit when you're wrong. Don't let silly pride take a toll on your relationship with him. "I am sorry" can be the magic word, and it will help him feel your respect for him too.

8. Thank him. "Thank you" is such a simple phrase, but it means the world to people who hear it. Say it with genuine care and a heart full of compassion and understanding.

9. Support his ideas. Show him respect and love by supporting him and helping him develop the ideas further. Nothing can stop a couple who are rooting for each other and inspiring each other along the way!

10. Accept him as he is. No one is perfect. We all have flaws and virtues, but you will show respect and love to your husband by accepting him as he is and by not trying to change him.

11. Acknowledge him as a parent. There are different types when it comes to parenting. Some are stricter and more disciplined, while others are softer with kids.

12. See him the way you want him to be. Treat him even better than he deserves. You can't change him by telling him what's wrong. But if you show him love and care and support, you will encourage him to grow and change himself.

13. Be there when he fails and falls. Allowing him to fail is good for both of you. Nothing shows respect to your husband more than helping him get up and encouraging him to try again.

The worst thing a woman can do is tell the man what he did wrong and why he failed. Let him figure it out, and you support him and help him get back on his feet after he falls and learns the lesson.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- 1. Keep expectations realistic.** No one can be everything we might want them to be. Healthy relationships mean accepting people as they are and not trying to change them. Your spouse was never meant to fulfill you. Only God
- 2. Talk with each other.** It can't be said enough: communication is essential to healthy relationships.

- Take the time. Really be there.
- Genuinely listen. Do not interrupt or plan what you're going to say next. Try to fully understand their perspective.
- Ask questions. Show you are interested. Ask about their experiences, feelings, opinions, and interests.
- Share information.

3. **Be flexible.** It is natural to feel uneasy about changes. Healthy relationships allow for change and growth.

4. **Fight fair.** Most relationships have some conflict. It only means you disagree about something; it does not have to mean you don't like each other.

Cool down before talking. The conversation will be more productive if you have it when your emotions have cooled off a little, so you don't say something you may regret later.

Use "I statements." Share how you feel and what you want without assigning blame or motives. E.g. "When you don't call me, I start to feel like you don't care about me" vs. "You never call me when you're away. I guess I'm the only one who cares about this relationship."

Take responsibility for mistakes. Apologize if you have done something wrong; it goes a long way toward setting things right again.

- Recognize some problems are not easily solved. Not all differences or difficulties can be resolved. You are different people, and your values, beliefs, habits, and personality may not always be in alignment.

5. **Be affirming.** According to relationship researcher John Gottman, happy couples have a ratio of 5 positive interactions or feelings for every 1 negative interaction or feeling. Express warmth and affection!

6. **Emphasize their Good Points**

7. **Pray for each other**

8. **Be Thankful for each other**