

10 Ways to Survive and Thrive in a Difficult Marriage

First, it's important that we understand that the concepts of "difficult marriage" and "good marriage" can be compatible. The fact is, the best relationships involve challenge because challenge is typically a prerequisite for experiencing the best.

If your marriage does not involve challenge (and even conflict) then you are, in all likelihood, barely scraping the surface of what is possible in terms of a life-charged relationship.

Here at All Pro Dad, we understand that life is always a work in progress. And so are the best marriages. Use these 10 ways to survive (and thrive) in a difficult marriage as you work out your commitment to create the best relationships possible.

Think "leading from the front with the heart of a servant," and take it from there:

1. Understand that the word *commitment* is the most important element in the meaning of love. Great relationships are predicated on long-term faithfulness. Time is not just a great healer; time also provides the space we need to work things out.

2. Take a look at this [Biology 101 definition of *life*](#), and apply it to your marriage. Life is that which distinguishes something vital and functional from something that is dead. Life is a force associated with animation or vigor. Life is a state characterized by metabolism, growth, the ability to react, reproduction and constant adaptation via internal change.

3. Tweak your perception. Real life is challenging, and life

without challenge is, by definition, lifeless. All of us enjoy a little calm. But try viewing difficulties in your marriage as opportunities to grow. Perception can be reality.

4. Consider the fact that there are always two alternatives to every situation. We can either elevate the experience or make it worse. Your response sets the trajectory and sets into motion what is possible.

5. Connect with a support group. Your wife and you both need to be surrounded by deliberate encouragement and loving accountability. To find that, you need to surround your marriage with couples who are in strong relationships.

6. Commit to positive change—yourself. The only person you can change in a marriage is yourself. Positive personal growth can be the catalyst for positive change in the relationship.

7. Hold yourself accountable. Do you want your spouse to change? Change yourself first. When we are willing to be the change, we imagine we have already opened the gate for positive change in our spouse.

8. Never blame. Resist the urge to blame your wife for difficulties, even when you know you're doing your best. The assignment of blame is always a step backward.

9. Always affirm. Don't lie—because insincerity always falls flat. However, when we find positives and then follow them with heartfelt affirmation, we demonstrate both compassion and belief. Belief is a strong asset to a marriage.

10. Love with increasing eloquence. Always aim to raise your own game. When we love our wives with creativity and energy, we're doing the best kind of leadership available. It's called leading from the front with the heart of a servant.

for every father. Their aim is to interlock the hearts of the fathers with their children and, as a byproduct, the hearts of the children with their dads. At , dads in any stage of fatherhood can find helpful resources to aid in their parenting. Resources include daily emails, blogs, Top 10 lists, articles, printable tools, videos and eBooks. From , fathers can join the highly engaged All Pro Dad social media communities on **Facebook**, **Twitter**, **YouTube** and **Instagram**.