

6 R's That Can Help Revive Your Marriage

Initially, George balked at the idea of 6 “R” words for a stronger marriage. “Making relationships work,” George insisted, “is about nothing more than ‘listening to your gut.’”

He continued, “Checklists can throw you right off. My preacher told me that legalism leads to bondage, and the last thing I want to do is to stifle my marriage.” Bravely said, George.

But how's that working for you? So does that mean you're utilizing that freedom to shower your beloved with all kinds of imaginative attention? Are you leveraging that flexibility to grab any creative idea that pops up in your head and run with it? Is your love unfettered by the constraints of checklists, Top Tens, brainstorming and other people's experience?

“Well,” George answered, sheepishly, “that's why we're meeting for breakfast this morning. I'm kind of stuck in the marriage department. My gut tells me that Linda and I are drifting apart.”

George has all the good intentions in the world. He loves Linda. He is faithful, respectful and shares responsibility when it comes to the children, but he senses this inexorable slipping away when it comes to a heart-level connection with his wife.

He's right, it's not a checklist that's going to make a marriage stronger. It's a man driven by love and commitment to put some great ideas into practice.

I shared the following 6 “R” words with George. “They're not a checklist,” I told him, “so much as a series of intentions.”

But they are a series of intentions that must be put into practice.

1. Recommit. Commitment works best as a daily initiative. Like most things that are good for us, commitment to our spouse benefits from being re-upped every morning. We all tend to default to *me first* if we're not intentional. So we recommend beginning each new day with a deliberate act of kindness to get the ball rolling. It's not about us.

2. Refresh. Sometimes it's as simple as refreshing the screen on a computer to get all the data up-to-date. Other times, refresh is more like changing a clogged filter in the HVAC or throwing out a tray of ice that's all fused together. No matter how we approach refreshing, it's always about sweeping away the cobwebs and making sure our love and our attention to our spouse is constantly reimagining and moving away from what is stale and mundane.

3. Remember. We recommend huddling up together with your wife and reading your wedding vows again. We love to see couples recapture the raw thrill of anticipation for sharing the same room, building a life together. Remember what made you ask her out in the first place. Now determine what it is that would motivate you to ask her out again ... and do it.

4. Renovate. Sometimes things wear out. Is your conversational life boring? Have you forgotten how to have fun? Get creative and make something happen. Have you stopped dreaming together? Build some new dreams.

5. Romance. Sometimes it's our romance that needs renovation. When did you last give her flowers? Have you swept her off her feet recently? Do you flirt? Do you tell her how much she gets under your skin? Have you ever thought about trying once again to win her love all over again?

6. Recalibrate. You may have been married just a couple of years or you may be 40 years in. Regardless, you have changed

physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually, and so has she. What worked when you were dating may need updating, reconstructing, reimagining and recalibrating today. Maybe you need to dial it down; maybe you need to dial it up. One thing's for sure—all our settings could use some thoughtful readjusting.

How could you recalibrate your marriage for the better?

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