

Twelve Important Rules To Nurture Your Marriage

1. **Continue to grow and learn “line upon line, and precept upon precept.”** You are, and will continue to be an unfinished work until the day you pass to the other side. Never be satisfied with who you are or what you know today [in a manner of speaking]. (2 Ne. 28:30; Isa. 28:9-10)
2. **Love one another and cleave unto each other, “and none else”.** Remember that “love is a verb”; it requires work, sacrifice, forgiveness, patience, understanding, and selfless service. When “love the verb” is honored, “love the feeling” will be plentiful.
3. **Learn to be completely unselfish,** put your spouse first, do all in your power to help your spouse be happy and at peace. Speak softly to each other, particularly during disagreements.
4. **Be all that you can be for one another.** There were certain things about you that you each fell in love with. Those things should only grow. But it takes two. Hold a family counsel to decide what those things are for you that you want to maintain and build upon. You should discuss continuing education, appearance, work, household cleanliness, child rearing, discipline, and so forth.
5. **Develop a true partnership.** You will each be responsible for certain things in your marriage. True partners always fulfill their end of the “bargain.” They also step in and help each other where possible during crisis or occasional need. Hold “inventory sessions” as often as needed to address minor course corrections. Never make important decisions alone and learn to search for a solution you can both agree with. Set financial goals early and have the discipline to adhere to your plan.
6. **“Be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine.”** (Doctrine & Covenants 38:27) A less effective, unified decision is better than a divided decision where one approach is superior. We are commanded to be one, as the Father and our Savior are one.
7. **Set lofty goals,** personally and as a couple. Fully live to receive the privileges you were born to receive. Never be satisfied with less. Follow a process similar to this one: a) write it down clearly and precisely, b) develop a blueprint or a roadmap you can follow to achieve your goal, c) identify obstacles in advance; develop solutions to these obstacles in advance so that they won't derail you, d) set up check points along the way to measure your progress, e) ask yourself the important question, “is it worth it to me”, f) visualize yourself achieving your goal, together with *feeling* the emotion and satisfaction of having achieved it. Remember, “what ever the mind of man can conceive and believe, it can achieve.”
8. **Develop good living, structural and organizational habits.** Missionaries are required to adhere to a schedule of arising at 6:30am and going to bed at 10:30pm. They are busy throughout. This follows the scripture: “Cease to be idle; cease to be unclean; . . . cease to sleep longer than is needful; retire to thy bed early, that ye may not be weary; arise early, that your bodies and minds may be invigorated.” (Doctrine and Covenants 88:124)
9. **Develop spiritually all your life.** Pray “morning, noon, and night” personally. Pray every evening as a couple. Hold family prayer morning and night. Always have personal and family scripture reading. Hold weekly family home evenings. Remember, you are building your eternal family unit, not a group of friends. Let these habits be sacrosanct in your home. Pray with such depth that you learn to talk with God and to have a two-way conversation. Develop your faith through strict obedience to the Lord's commandments. Fulfill church callings with intensity, creativity, and devotion. Seek the Lord's help; seek to do His will and to perform your calling the way HE would have you do it, not how YOU would do it. You are on HIS errand.
10. **Develop your own unique family culture.** Discuss the things you each liked about your own upbringing and family habits. Blend them together and agree upon your own approach.
11. **Date and play together often.** Keep your love alive through spending quantity and quality time together.
12. **Keep our Savior, Jesus Christ, at the center of your relationship.** Worship Him, love Him, be true and faithful to Him, and you will always, as a by product, be true and faithful to each other. Strive to be disciples of Jesus Christ. (3 Ne. 5:13)

Elder M. Russell Ballard

“Brothers and sisters, what can we do to improve our family finances? May I suggest three important keys that will help us. They are *attitude*, *planning*, and *self-discipline*.

“The first key is to have a positive attitude toward ourselves.

“Attitude is an important part of the foundation upon which we build a productive life. In appraising our present attitude, we might ask: ‘Am I working to become my best self? Do I set worthy and attainable goals? Do I look toward the positive in life? Am I alert to ways that I can render more and better service? Am I doing more than is required of me?’ . . .

“Some people who lived through the Great Depression and the period following, when the government bestowed gratuities upon the people, developed a feeling that the world owed them a living. In that climate, the First Presidency said in 1936: ‘The aim of the Church is to help the people to help themselves.

Work is to be re-enthroned as the ruling principle of the lives of our Church membership.’ (In Conference Report, Oct. 1936, p. 3.) . . .

“The love for work needs to be reenthroned in our lives. Every family should have a plan for work that touches the lives of each family member so that this eternal principle will be ingrained in their lives. . . .

“Brothers and sisters, let us discuss the second key, *planning*, which means to think out beforehand how we intend to reach our goals in life. Do we all have a plan to increase our value where we are employed? Have we taken the time to write down specific goals, and have we designed a plan of action to become more effective and productive? . . .

“The third key is to practice *self-discipline* both at our work and as we attempt to reduce our expenses in our homes. Regarding the latter, Church leaders should set the example by seeing that stake and ward financial requests are kept to a minimum. Members should—

“1. Avoid debt-pooling where exorbitant fees are charged. We may want to consolidate debts using a bank or credit union loan that can be repaid at a sensible interest rate over a reasonable length of time. We may need to stop using our credit cards.

“2. Exercise self-discipline by telling ourselves ‘We can’t afford it’ and refusing to take on further credit obligations.

“An argument was overheard one day. One spouse said, while scolding the other for extravagant spending, ‘How many times do I have to tell you that spending money before you get it is economically . . . unsound?’

“ ‘Oh,’ said the other spouse, ‘I don’t know about that. This way, if you don’t get the money, at least you have something to show for it.’

“Please be patient and carefully control your purchases so that you will not become enslaved to your creditors.

“3. Make a budget and stick to it.

“4. Cut expenses by distinguishing between wants and needs. Economize by controlling the use of goods, services, and energy.

“5. Increase homemaking skills and have family members complete home and car repairs, when feasible.

“6. Invest wisely. Avoid speculations and get-rich-quick schemes.

“Brothers and sisters, every one of us has the potential to improve and increase his earning capacity. We are far better off if we can improve and become more valuable on our full-time jobs than if we attempt to hold two jobs or to have mothers leave home to join the work force.

“When we learn to expect more success than failure in life, we soon will develop an attitude of success.

“‘Nothing succeeds like success.’

“Remember—a positive attitude, a well-thought-out plan, and consistent self-discipline can help us improve our circumstances. Applying these keys in our daily work will help produce more income, and practicing them in our homes will help reduce expenses. When we combine these principles with keeping the commandments of God, we can learn to become better managers of our time and resources and become financially secure” (in Conference Report Apr. 1981, 115–18; or *Ensign*, May 1981, 85–87).