

SIGNS OF A HEALTHY MARRIAGE

Not all that are married are happy in their marriage. So many people that are not happy pretend to be happy. They are just trying to hide and cover up as much as they can the bitterness and the sadness within. And when one partner can no longer take it, he walks out of the marriage, and people wonder why such a “happy home” could fall apart, not knowing they have never been happy in their marriage.

It is a fact that more marriages are ending in divorce earlier than it used to be ten years ago. The statistics available show that more marriages fail now than it used to be 10 - 20 years ago. Family values are being abandoned. Respect for the marriage institution is going down fast. Same-sex marriage, and demand for it is on the increase. More couples now live together as though they were married without a desire to be legally married. The onslaught of the devil on the marriage institution is very intense and needs to be checked by all believers to make sure the devil does not win over their marriages and homes, and see what they can do to educate and help others find the truth and enjoy their marriages too.

Just as there are healthy marriages, so also there are unhealthy marriages. If a marriage is healthy, the couple’s responsibility is to make every effort to keep the marriage healthy and excitingly happy. If it is unhealthy, make every effort to heal it and make it a happy one. To prevent a marriage from failing or losing its steam and excitement is better than trying to patch up an already broken marriage. This is the reason why all interested in having successful marriages should take time to learn and read up all they can on successful marriages and parenting.

Identifying signs of a healthy marriage will enable all in marriage to know when their marriage is slipping into an unhealthy state, and go on to take decisive steps to move it to a healthy state. When the following are the true state of a marriage, then it is healthy:

1. Much fun and little or no quarrels

The first and major sign of a healthy marriage is much fun and happiness, with little or no quarrels. Much quarrels is the evidence that all is not well with a marriage. No quarrels proves that both couple are compatible and understand each other, and are well cultured and mannered in handling their differences without letting it get out of hand. No quarrel is evidence that temperamental management is in place and self control is freely expressed. It is a proof that self has been conquered and brought under subjection to the new creation and the Spirit of God within a man. No quarrel means that reason and love prevail over negative emotions and evil habits and character.

A fun filled home is a healthy and happy home. To make your marriage a healthy one, you have to in partnership with your spouse make every effort to create fun in your marriage and avoid quarrels. It is essential that you make the home peaceful and full of love.

2. Excited about each other

When a couple is excited about each other, it is a sign that their hearts are full of love and that they are able to manage the experiences of marital life to the point that it does not affect their feelings for each other. To enable you experience this state, you need to get rid of bitterness and make up your minds to keep your hearts free from record of wrongs, malice and practice forgiveness all the time in all circumstances. When a heart is not laden with negative burdens like anger, bitterness, resentment and discouragement, love will freely flow like a river whose fountain never dries. Get excited about your spouse and do all within your power to keep the excitement on till death separates you.

3. Loving the company of each other

A healthy marriage is a marriage filled with and overflowing with love. A couple that loves each other, love to be together always. They just love each others company and don't like being apart from each other. Marriage is all about companionship. To be married and yet be irritated by the presence of your partner is a sign that love is dying or has died. Love without a strong emotion is not real. Emotion in marriage without togetherness is a lie. A healthy marriage therefore, is a marriage that the couple loves the company of each other, are at peace in each others presence, and the bonding is so strong that they just love to be with each other, go out and do things together.

4. Enjoying discussion with each other

There are couples that cannot stay together for more than thirty minutes without an argument, quarrel or a fight. In fact, they seem to irritate each other. To have a peaceful discussion without a sharp argument is difficult. A healthy marriage on the other hand is a marriage that is full of love that talking with each other or discussing on a subject is fun. They just love to be with each other and hear each other's voice. They reason and talk sensibly motivated and controlled by love. No matter how delicate the subject may be, or opposing their views may be, they are tactical and wise in discussing it that it does not result in a quarrel or serious argument.

5. Deep thirst for each other

When a marriage is healthy, there will be an unending longing for each other. When the desire to be with each other begins to weaken, it means that something has gone wrong somewhere along the line. Every married couple should make great effort to make sure that their marriage is kept vibrant and exciting to the point that everything within them will be longing for each other. For when there is no longing, love has started to die or has died and needs to be resurrected or revived immediately.

6. Temperamental control – not allowing anger and negative emotions to control one

A healthy marriage is a marriage where self-control is constantly practiced, anger, malice, bitterness, quarrelling, wrong and abusive words are hardly used. When a man's temper is under control, peace reigns and happiness is promoted. But, when people are too carnal and express annoyance without restraint, all kinds of evil rage, that home can never know real peace. All negative emotions must be brought under control by all for marriage to really be peaceful and happy. That is why the Bible teaches that it is not for boys and girls but for the mature. The mature are those who by reason of practice, have

trained themselves to restrain from doing what they know is not right and is capable of breaching the peace and producing violent words and actions in the home. Maturity is not only in age and finance but in manifesting self-control. It is all about self-discipline and temperamental control. Work on your life and help your spouse do the same and you will know real peace and happiness in your marriage.

7. Settling differences amicably without a fight

Differences of opinion and methods will always come. It is the way and manner these differences are tackled that brings a strain on the marriage or strengthens the love in the heart of the couple for each other.

Fight fair. Don't expect to agree on everything. An important part of resolving conflicts is being respectful of your partner's feelings, even when you are arguing. Let your partner know you value what he or she is saying, even if you don't agree. Try to avoid criticizing, ridiculing, dismissing or rejecting your partner or what he or she is saying. If you're feeling frustrated and feel as if your anger is taking over, take a time out from the conversation and agree to resume it at a specific time later. Note--If you ever feel as if you may physically hurt your partner, walk away and seek help immediately.

Learn to compromise. Compromise is important in any relationship, but it's especially important in a marriage. If you disagree on an issue, discuss the problem calmly. Allow each person to explain his or her point of view, and look for ways to meet each other in the middle. A healthy marriage is a marriage that knows how to, and are in the habit of settling differences amicably without fights. Work towards that.

8. Keeping no record of wrongs against each other

Practice forgiveness. There may be times when your partner makes a mistake or says or does something hurtful—whether intentionally or unintentionally. While it's okay to be angry, it's also important to then let go of the anger and move on. If you constantly bring up past hurts, it's difficult to have a mutually loving relationship.

Forgiveness is the closing of a case. It is the conclusion of a matter. A matter that has been treated and settled by the giving and receiving of forgiveness should not be resurrected again - it should not be brought up again. For anyone who does that does not wish peace to reign in that marriage. Keep no record of wrongs, and keep forgiving as God in Christ Jesus forgives you daily.

CONCLUSION

To have and maintain a healthy marital relationship:

- 1.** Change personal habits that are irritating to your spouse.
- 2.** Do not dwell on your past mistakes or that of your spouse, but look ahead to ways of avoiding similar situations in the future.
- 3.** Always remember that you have the ability to forgive and receive forgiveness from one another, and that forgiveness is the healing balm of every relationship.

4. Be proud of each other's achievements, and give realistic praise when necessary.
5. Be interested in and respect each other's work.
6. Share in decision making.
7. Share and make monotonous work interesting, such as household chores.
8. Have realistic hopes linked to attainable goals.
9. Take responsibility for your decisions and behavior.
10. Share a healthy philosophy of life with clear ideals. Live by the word of God.
11. Work towards growing in friendship and respect as well as love for each other.
12. Share many interests and activities together.
13. Enjoy each other's company.
14. Practice trusting and be trustworthy, be interpersonally honest yet tactful.
15. Be interdependent.
16. Restrict your use of sarcasm, nagging, embarrassment and complaining.
17. Enjoy talking and listening to one another, even when discussing areas of conflict.
18. Work on keeping your temperament and emotions under control.