

Living Out the Dreams of Your Wedding Day Making Fun a Priority

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Show of hands; how many of us can remember the last time you and your husband shared a belly laugh? Do you anticipate the time you are spending together to be filled with joy and peace or merely an interchange of the necessities of marriage (the bills, the kids the job)?

As a counselor and life coach, younger and veteran marrieds alike are finding it harder to re-discover those “lighter times” that lift our countenance. As much as this happens “naturally” during courtship, as the marriage progresses, it is wise to be purposeful in our efforts to invest in intentional fun.

If this speaks to you, take a moment to reflect on the activities that you mutually enjoyed as you were discovering one another. Yes I know you are going to want to say “just being together” or “whatever we did was fun”. You were on a journey of discovery and authentic explorers make this a lifetime passion. Is now the time to recommit to be intentional about seeking joy, fun and laughter as a regular part of your marriage?

Most women I talk to relate that at the end of the day the regular duties of life suck the energy out of them and they are too exhausted for any kind of intimacy with their spouses. Suggestion: re-court your husband by planning two evenings a week whereby you conserve your energy for him. Be intentional about setting aside a “date night” that both of you can anticipate with joy. Mutually set up your ground rules; (for example no talk about paying bills, or job stress. There will be other times during your week set aside for grown-up stuff). In your planned date night, be flexible enough to allow for spontaneity. . If “intimacy happens” rejoice but don’t make that the “end game”. The point is planned, regular and deliberate connection to your husband.

Philip Hurley in his book “His needs-Her needs” discusses five (5) intimacy needs important to men and women. Our men typically desire healthy (and regular) sexuality and sharing recreational time with their spouse. For us, affection and meaningful conversation rise to the top of most of our lists. As we are more aware of each others needs, hopefully

we are in a better position to respond in a way our husbands find meaningful. As men and women both have a strong need for emotional intimacy, it is wise to understand how our spouse can receive and look forward to it. Don't assume he defines it the same way you do.

In addition, discover a recreational activity or hobby you both can enjoy and look forward to doing together. For years, my husband and I have made exercise a priority in our lives. Early in our marriage, we jogged and prepared for 5K races (we were more participants than racers). The point was not "running fast" but achieving together. With tender knees, we have transitioned to 4 mile walks together resulting in some of our best times of communication, intimacy, laughter and fun. We truly look forward to these times together. You might consider biking, bird watching, taking a class together, or planning a trip (my husband and I have dreamed of a trip to Italy which we plan to fulfill this summer with the help of frequent flyer miles and hotel points). It's exciting to excitedly anticipate together and to achieve goals that seemed beyond our reach . Talk to your husband about possible activities you could enjoy together. He will be affirmed that you want to be part of his life.

Remember, the best gift you can give your children is the security of knowing that their mom and dad purposefully and unselfishly love each other. They will define that as a "good marriage". Our children grow up rapidly and you will want to anticipate the "empty nest" with joy and anticipation as you experience the next season of life together. Sadly, many pour so much energy into raising the kids that they lose the ability to connect with the spouse when the kids are grown and gone. My challenge to you – don't wait. Plan some time this week to discuss giving priority to courting each other for a lifetime. Set specific goals that make you both smile.

{Look for future articles related to "living out the dreams of your wedding day"}