

# Marriage - Some Preparation

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## Free-Standing

If two trees lean upon each other, when one falls, the other will fall with it; if they are growing together, yet freestanding, then the one that falls will not bring the other down.

So, too, you must be freestanding - for if you lean upon each other with neediness, then when one of you has a difficulty, the other will also come undone. Yet if you are freestanding, when one of you is in difficulty, the other is unharmed and can lift you up again.

## Maintenance

Marriage is like a plane. Working well, it will lift you up, soaring beyond the clouds into the heavens. But to do this, like a plane, it will also need regular maintenance and refuelling.

If you expect it to be continually soaring without any maintenance, then it may suddenly take a nose-dive and crash to pieces upon the ground.

In particular, deepen on the spirituality and purpose of marriage.

## Expectations

We all have expectations of marriage. Some expectations are deep and subtle, whilst others are trivial yet nevertheless seem important. Often we don't state what these expectations are, expecting the other person somehow to guess them, which they fail to do; and when we don't live up to them, through never saying what they are or because unawares our expectations are somehow incompatible, frustration and friction arises and sets in. Therefore, it is good periodically - maybe every four months - to each write down your key expectations, so that they are visible and can be worked towards and supported.

Examples of expectations, might range from when and how many children you will be having, the amount of solitary reflection time you each need, how much socialising together you should be doing, when to retire to bed at night and arise in the morning, how tidy the house should be, financial budgeting and arrangements, how long dishes can be left before they are cleaned, all the way to (on the other hand) whether the toilet seat should be left up or down, and any miscellaneous roles you choose to define among yourselves, such as who will generally do the washing.

## Equality

Equality is very very important: keep the marriage firmly centred on equality. If it begins to stray from equality, then it will rapidly spin one person into dominance and the other into slavery, leading to an unhealthy dynamic of liberty and restriction.

Examples of indicators for when equality is being violated, would be when one of you is *commanding* the other what to do, without them asking you to do so, rather than through the processes of consultation. Beware that if one of you is regularly fussy about how things are done and the other lenient and understanding, the result be that the one ends up in the command position calling the shots and the other as a follower.

## Left and Right Hands

Your right hand may pour itself and drink a cup of tea, and then your left hand will pick it up and put it in the sink. The left hand should not complain that it should be the right hand putting it away, since it was the one that drank. And then, after a little while, it will be reversed, with the left hand acting and the right hand clearing away.

So too in marriage, whilst one of you may leave a cup out, the other may clear it away. When you feel together and are equal, there is no distinction of who has done what act, for when one of you does a thing, you are both doing it: when one of you drinks some tea, you are both drinking, when one of you clears the cup away, you are both clearing it away. When you tidy up the other's clothes, you are tidying up your own.

## Trust

The backbone of marriage is trust, and all other human things are secondary; without trust, all your endeavours will fail.

Therefore, sacrifice every comfort to achieve an ever-increasing trust, for you will thereby be sacrificing a lesser thing for a far greater.

### **Preparedness to Act**

The reality is that you will not be able to share every task equally. For example, one of you may go to work, whilst the other may do the washing during that time.

The important thing is that you must be fully *prepared* to do the other's job.

Nevertheless, it is important that each task, however the balance falls, is shared to some degree, so that then you can experience each other's pains and joys, and understand each other's feelings better.

### **Service / Projects**

Love and nurture one another tenderly, and with great and committed sacrifice; but do not indulge each other. Engage in service and projects together that will assist the world to attain a state of beauty.

### **Space**

Ensure you always have enough space and time together, and space and time on your own; invite friends around, that you may keep your house alive and homely.

### **Conflicts**

Many conflicts arise from debate about whether it is better to take one route or another to achieve a certain goal. Usually both routes will reach the goal almost equally well, and it is not worth the friction to debate. By trying out all the routes, the successful ways will become apparent.

### **Yes and No**

For every "No" you speak, you should speak nine "Yes" - indeed, ninety-nine.

It is important to build up each other's confidence and skills in all your endeavours.

### **Work**

Work is worship; but do not work too hard. You have many talents, and a great many spiritual rooms to build for the world.

### **Schedules**

You may find that you have the same goal, but different schedules and processes by which you reach that goal. Perhaps you wash dishes in a different way, or cook the rice after a different fashion. This is beautiful, and you should relish and delight in each other's diversity.

### **Old Schedules**

When you first get married, you may still be in the habit of doing things according to your old schedule and fashion you were using when you are on your own: taking spontaneous decisions and heading off out to do them, staying up late with personal projects. In marriage you will have a new joint schedule together, and you may find for the first months, that many of the things you used to be able to do no longer fit easily into your time, whilst you may be doing different things in their place. Where this is so, it may take a little while and patience to adjust to this new habit, schedule and way of doing things.

### **Babies**

Now that you are married, you feel complete. But when you have a baby, you will then realise a far more profound completion.

All the spiritual qualities you have been striving to attain are theoretical, until you have a baby: it is then you will put them into practice.

### **Info**

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