

Creating Quality Time for Each Other – Mar. 2024

LWCC Marriage Ministries Email For March 2024

Wow, nearly the end of March already.

I wonder if, like me, you've had the thought, 'Where has that three months gone'!!! The busy holiday season is over, and in no time at all we've settled back into our regular busy routine. The only problem with the busyness of that routine is, that the first thing that often gets affected is our quality time together. So, our email this month looks at some ways we may be able to revisit the routines and rigours of daily life, make some adjustments, and maybe create some extra snippets of time for one another. We're only too well aware that spending time together is essential to nurturing and deepening intimacy and connection, so let's see if we can find some simple things you can do to create opportunity for more quality time together.

1. KEEP COMMUNICATION OPEN.

It doesn't take rocket science to know that if this re-evaluation is going to work, it means communicating openly with one another. First, set some time aside to do the evaluation. Before you meet, think through what you would like to see – not only in terms of your availability, but also your desires for that time. What sort of expectations do each of you have if you were to spend more time together?

Talking about what you would both like, is a great way of seeing how your desires align, not only with one another, but with reality, too. Then, looking at your calendars, you'll begin to get a better grasp on whether the true amount of time you have, aligns with those desires and expectations

2. REASSESS YOUR WEEKLY SCHEDULES.

Take a look at the mix of activities that you are each involved in. How many of those activities are individual, versus shared activities? Are there any adjustments you can make that will give you a little extra time with one another? Maybe there are some activities that either of you could consider eliminating to free up time. Alternatively, are there some things that you could join in on? Just keep in mind the end objective - trying to find extra ways we might spend snippets of time together as a couple.

Take a look at all of the obligations each of you have from one week to the next. Maybe - just maybe - it's possible that you're missing opportunities to be together? How can you create more overlap where you didn't before?

Is it possible for you to:

- Carpool to work?
- Have breakfast or lunch together occasionally?
- Take advantage of times when the kids are busy with activities?
- Turn the TV off once in a while and have a chat together?
- Run routine errands as a couple?

Put your heads together and see what other ideas you can come up with. Who knows what you might come out of the woodwork!!!!

3. RE-EVALUATE YOUR PRIORITIES.

Maybe, one of the things you need to do in that Reassessing process is to take another look at your priorities and obligations. Check out together whether your standing obligations still align with your priorities. Have a Conversation about it, then, keeping in mind the intent behind the conversation, decide whether you can comfortably step away from (or reduce) some of those obligations.

Don't pressure one another to give up important activities that are meaningful to you. Work, instead, to identify the ones that might not hold a high amount of significance. Spending more time together doesn't mean convincing your spouse to quit a discipline, practice, or activity that they love. Instead, it might mean turning down requests to volunteer at church or school, or putting aside something for the greater good - an extra snippet of time together.

4. KEEP A FEW MINUTES IN THE MORNING AND THE EVENING FOR YOURSELVES.

Early morning and bedtime are often times when we go on autopilot. Maybe we're too tired, or being on autopilot, we struggle to break out of our usual habits, or those routines are simply too ingrained. However, these times of day are perfect for stealing a few extra moments together.

A morning devotional, creating a coffee routine, or even eating breakfast together could help to nurture that extra snippet of time together. At bedtime, consider cutting back on scrolling or TV time in favour of a good conversation. Whatever these small changes look like, know that they could pay huge dividends for your marriage.

5. SCHEDULE REGULAR DATE NIGHTS.

You had to know I'd slip this one in here somewhere! Continuing to date your spouse is crucial if you want to nurture lifelong love – even if you spend date nights in! There's no rule that says how often you should date, or that you should go out; maybe because of schedules it's just once a month, or once a fortnight. Dating doesn't have to be extravagant either; instead, it can be simple and inexpensive, as we've discussed in previous emails. But get in the habit.....!!!!

6. WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE MORE AVAILABILITY FOR EACH OTHER.

Seriously though, take the time to Talk Together about possible adjustments you can make. Believe me, the more you can do to make time, the closer you will get to one another. Also, every adjustment you make, sends a significant message to your spouse as to how much you value them, and put them on a pedestal. This is going to look different for every person; consider also the importance of things like shared meal time, taking time for prayer and devotionals, as much as the shared general day to day activities.

By working together, you are making positive change that you are much more likely to follow through on. We pray many of you find this exercise a very helpful and rewarding one that brings more than just a few snippets of extra time together. Please, let us know how this has worked for you.

Blessings from the Marriage Ministries Team; Stan & Ronnie, John & Karen

(Content adapted from Article by Dr's. Les & Leslie Parrott)