

## Date Time – March 2023

### LWCC Marriage Ministries Email For March 2023

Hi folks. Last month it was writing to you from Gore, today it's a bit of de ja vue - from our 'bubble' to yours!!!! Mr.Covid has certainly clobbered me this week, like quite a few of you, and, without much success I might add, I've tried to resist dredging up the memories of 'life within the Bubble'. I'm so grateful Ronnie has been able to remain symptom free, and that, while it was rough for me for a few days, over-all it has not had the impact of last year, and I trust you are finding the same.

And so to our topic for this month - **Date Time**.

Immediately, I can imagine some of you thinking - or even saying to one another - "Why do these two make so much noise about **Date Time**"!

So, let's help put that one to bed right away. How many close friends have you had in your life time, that you are not close to any longer? Why is that?

Lost touch; lives have gone in different directions; fallen out; you have different interests now; no time to keep in touch; different priorities these days.

Do you know what, as we talk to couples - some in crisis, but many not - these are some of the reasons we get as to why they find it hard to prioritize **Date Time**. Without doubt, the most common is simply how hard it is to juggle everyday, busy schedules, especially trying to juggle, church, work and family commitments. But folks, what was God's original intent for Marriage; the opportunity to develop an intimate relationship with another human being, at a level far deeper than any other we will ever have. Regular **Date Time** is one of the key things that contributes to the strengthening and deepening of that relationship, than almost anything else we know. Regular prioritized **Date Time** helps protect you from losing touch and drifting in different directions, and more particularly keeps telling your spouse 'You are the number one priority in my life'; 'You Are Worth It'; 'I still love You, you are Special to me'.

So let's see if we can give you some ideas.

By the way, before we do, If you have this one nailed, Well Done. Hopefully, you'll still get some ideas to take your **Date Time** to a new level.

1. Prioritize it: Agree together to make it a priority. Talk about it together - How can we make this happen. it may be that for you a weekly Date is not practical, but try to make it at least a fortnightly event.
2. Take it in turns to come up with an idea and organise it. This sends such an important message to each other - I value you enough to organise and do this well.
3. Don't do the same old, same old. Change it up and vary what you do. There's no correct way to do it, and there's definitely no 'one way fits all'.
4. Sometimes it's important to keep in mind where you're both at. Ever had a Date that was a flop because you just didn't realize where each other were at right now!!! If you're organizing the next **Date Night**, it can help a lot to do a quick check on where his/her mood

or mindset is, or where their energy levels are at. For example, if they have had a particularly *hectic or emotional week* they may not be up for something energetic. But you can still be intentional by being sensitive and doing something more low key, like watching a sunset, cook a meal, or do a jigsaw Together. If you've *been apart* for much of the past week, they may not appreciate a concert or a movie, but rather be up for a quiet dinner or picnic, or a leisurely stroll for two. If there has been some *tension or stress* in their week, your sensitivity will go a long way in communicating that you are there and understand. So organize a date that helps them relax or get their minds off the worries; go to a driving range or ten pin bowling alley where they can get rid of some pent up emotion, or create something completely different to anything you might normally do, that is quiet and reflective.

5. Day Dates: why not meet each other for a midday date during the week. Visit the local markets together - Lyttelton or Riccarton Bush. Take a drive from Sumner over the hill to Lyttelton then on to Cass Bay, and Governors Bay, to the Sign of the Kiwi. Try the Lyttelton to Diamond Harbour ferry and stroll up through the reserve to the Cafe. Try the chair lift at the Adventure Park in Cashmere, or a Cruise on the Kaiapoi river Ferry. Try the walkway from Taylors Mistake to Godley Head - mind you there's plenty of others in the region to pick from.
6. Night Dates: Try a Restaurant Crawl - start at one restaurant for Entree, another for Mains and a third for Dessert. Or what about an evening soak in the New Brighton Pools. A Board Game Evening with special treats for whoever wins each round. Spend an evening delving into Your Wedding Album. Over the Top night - Dress up as if you're about to meet someone absolutely special and head out for a night on the town. Relax in front of YouTube - look up your favourite artist or group and enjoy scrolling from clip to clip.
7. Running out of ideas night: Try giving each other a blank piece of paper and giving yourselves 10 minutes to come up with as many ideas as you possibly can - only one rule - they have to be things you have not already done. The loser organises the next **Date Night**.
8. Reflection Date: For those of you who have done the Alpha Marriage course, try sitting down with the manual doing one or two of the exercises again. Or, if you've done the Prepare/Enrich assessment, take the assessment and do a review together. Take an evening to review the Prophetic words you have had over the years and talk through where you are each at in seeing them come to fruition. Take a look together at where you are at with your life goals.

The ideas are endless, and hopefully we've covered off some that will help, as well as some thoughts that will help you in being more sensitive and understanding at some of those not so easy periods, where stuff is going on that you just have to be a little more intentional about. Please, we'd love to hear your feed-back, and maybe we could start an ideas bank that we can keep and regularly pass on.

Blessings to you all, and enjoy a fulfilling and enriching **Date Time**.