

## Five Ways to Make a Marriage Click

Novelty and gift stores still keep crystal decorations with 25 embossed on them and there are people whose marriages last even longer. They are not the results of forced marriages in early youth within strong cultural and religious barriers, nor are they the result of devoted worshippers who believe suffering a rotten marriage in silence is the best way to please God and make things easy on the last day. Some couples just manage to make their union click, even in this age of divorce, prenuptial agreements and vulgar court battles fought by greedy celebrities. The greatest secret to a successful marriage is that it does not have a ready recipe book to be photocopied and distributed. A good marriage is always customised to the teeth -- the two people who are a part of it go out of their way to make things special for each other. All of us are different, so the only way to manage a marriage perfectly is to know your partner and yourself thoroughly and be willing to take things on as they come. Below are some properties that most of these happily-ever-after matches have but once again they are no magic formula.

**The Importance of Respect** Why do you love your spouse? If you start thinking carefully, you will realize that the physical attributes play a great role in it all, and there is no reason why they should not. We are not talking of storks bringing in the babies here. But do you really respect him or her for what he or she is? Respect is a heavy word -- it weighs more than love. You have to respect your partners opinions, his or her idea of personal space, and retain your own respect at the same time. Slavishly following every whim of your partner and then behaving like a spoilt child once this transient charm of saying yes to everything is over is not what makes a marriage. There are too many people squabbling over money, career, child rearing, household duties and every possible angle of a conjugal life today. These petty disagreements are not going to occur if two people respect each other. It is difficult, and not blindly done, but those who can manage it have found the key to happiness.

**The Meaning of Commitment** Do you walk around with your resignation letter in your pocket? Do you automatically look for loopholes while signing a contract? Do you like painting one day and want to take up pottery on the next? When a person is fickle-minded, it will show in every aspect of his or her actions. In marriage, commitment does not limit itself to being tied down to the marital bed. It may sound shocking, but there are couples who have actually had open affairs with other people and stayed undyingly true to each other. And there are chaste and prim creatures who surf pornography on the sly. Commitment is a contract between you two -- you define the terms and ensure you stick to them.

**The Value of Freedom** Marriage and freedom, in popular imagination, are opposite terms. The moment you marry, you are supposed to be fettered to the other in wedlock. But love is all about setting free, not tying down. Couples who have led gloriously happy married lives have learnt how to be free within their marriage. This includes freedom of opinion, thought, action and emotion -- up to a degree mutually agreed upon. We are not advocating a Bohemian lifestyle, but marrying does not mean enrolling into prison life either.

**The Role of Communication** How do you voice your love? Some shout it from rooftops, some look around before whispering it into the ear. Communication is not just talking, but connecting in general. You can say volumes through touch, smile, nod, glance and silence. Do you understand each other? If you don't, or if you find you have to spell out everything and yet make that extra effort to get yourself across, then maybe you should reconsider things.

**Romance Never Dies** The day you stop your courtship is the day the fire dies in the hearth. Whether it's a holiday to Europe or a weekend drive, a diamond ring or a quick kiss before going to work -- every gesture counts -- because these are the actions we remember most. This is no wishful talk, but a proven attribute of human nature.

## About the Author

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