**10 Healthy Ways to Keep Your Marriage Moving Forward**

Hope Clinic for Women

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1. **Successful marriages take work.**  They don’t happen in a vacuum.  They occur when the couples in them take the risk of sharing what it is that’s going on in their hearts and heads.
2. **You can only change yourself, not your spouse.**  If you love someone and think that after a while he/she will alter his/her behaviors you find uncomfortable, think again.  If you want changes, put them out there for your spouse to see so your he/she knows what you need.
3. **All arguments stem from our own fear or pain.**  When upset occurs, check out what’s going on inside of you rather than get angry with your spouse.  The truth is that we usually aren’t upset for the reasons we think.
4. **Understand that men and women are very different.**  We’re not from Mars or Venus; we’re not even in the same solar system.  Understanding and celebrating our differences will make living together more peaceful, interesting, and fun.
5. **Honor each other in some way every day.**  Every morning you have the opportunity to make your marriage sweeter and deeper by recommitting to your spouse.  Feeling respected and cherished by the one you love makes life much nicer.
6. **Anger is a waste of time.**  It’s a marriage killer, because it makes you self-absorbed and won’t allow you to see the good. Give yourself some time to calm down and then gently discuss what’s going on with you.
7. **Get regular tune-ups.**  Go to a couple’s workshop, talk with a therapist, or read a marriage book together at least once a year.  You will pick up ideas, and the process alone will strengthen your connection.
8. **Find a way to become and stay best friends.**  For some this sounds unromantic, but for those who live it, most say it’s the best part of their time together.
9. **Be responsible for your own happiness.**  No other person can make you happy; it’s something you have to do on your own.  Look within to find out what piece may be missing for you.
10. **Give what you want to get.** Our needs change with time.  If you’d like to feel understood, try being more understanding.  If you want to feel more love, try giving more.  It’s a simple program that really works.

Most of all, enjoy being with one another.  Love is a gift from God!!