

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY PLANNING DAY

The purpose of a **Marriage and Family Planning Day** is to make a good relationship even stronger and better. The goal of your time together is to deepen your connection as a couple. Many couples don't communicate well, especially about difficult topics. That's when little irritations fester and turn into larger issues and distractions. During your planning day, you will have the opportunity to openly and safely discuss things that are working well in your relationship as well as things that need improvement. What you learn about each other will help you both become better spouses and partners.

PLAN FOR SUCCESS

- Take the day off. Block out the entire day for just the two of you.
- Hire a babysitter to pick up your children from school, handle homework, give them dinner, and put them to bed.
- Turn off your cell phones. (Determine ahead of time when you will check for messages from the babysitter.) Have a nice breakfast or brunch before you get started.
- Keep your calendar handy. As you discuss your plans and dreams, schedule important dates on your personal and family calendars.
- Enjoy a nice dinner to celebrate each other and your bright future together.

GOAL OF YOUR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY PLANNING DAY

To get on the same page as a couple and to discover how you can create more happiness in your lives as individuals and as partners.

Use the following questions to prompt discussions and dreams.

LOVE + APPRECIATION LIST

What do we love and appreciate about each other?

LOOK BACK AT THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS

Review the past twelve months using photos or your calendar. Find your highlights or favorite moments to create a positive start to the day. Consider every area of life: personal, marriage, family, work/business, self-care time, health, community, friends, team, and legacy. Likewise, consider how these highlights impacted your lives physically, intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, financially, and creatively.

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- What are our proudest accomplishments?
- What were our signature experiences?
- What trips did we love and want to repeat?
- What trips would we do differently?
- What challenges did we have?
- What activities with our child(ren) were big wins?
- What's the wisest decision we made?
- What's the biggest lesson we learned?
- What's the biggest risk we took?
- What's the biggest surprise of the year?
- What's the most important thing we did for others?
- What did we fall short of accomplishing? What did we learn?
- What are we most grateful for?
- What relationships had the greatest impact on our life and why? (Write those people a note of gratitude.)

FORGIVENESS

Do good for yourself; forgive your spouse and yourself.

- Did anything happen during the past year that still needs to be forgiven? Deeds or words that made you feel bad? Or are you angry with yourself?
- Is there anything else you need to let go of before you can start your next year?

DREAM LIST

Create a list of at least 100+ dreams and then share your list with each other (these can be short-term, long-term, easy, and more challenging dreams.) If you have already made your lists, share them now. Celebrate the dreams you've accomplished during the past twelve months and brainstorm ideas to add to your master dreams list.

- What dreams would we each like to accomplish this year?
- What dreams can we put on the calendar and plan for starting now?

PLANNING TIME TOGETHER

Just as you intentionally made space on your calendar for your Marriage and Family Planning Day, plan for future times together as a couple and one-on-one with your child(ren).

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Weekly and Dream Date Night

- When is our weekly date night?
- What are some fun weekly date night activities?
- What would a dream date night look like? Pick a day and put it on your calendar.
- How frequently do we want to do a dream date night? Annually, quarterly, monthly, etc.?

Family Fun Times

- When are our weekly Daughter/Son one-on-one times (i.e., Daddy-Daughter Date Night, Father-Son Hang Out, Girls' Night Out, or Mom-Son Fun Time)?
- What are some fun activities we can do?
- When and how often do we want to do our family fun days?

Travel

- Where are at least two places that we would like to spend three or more days in the next year (as a couple or as a family)?
- What trips do we want to plan for just the two of us?
- Where do we want to go for our quarterly overnights to reconnect on our goals?
- What other travel trips do we want to plan this year? In the next five years?
- What amazing trips or experiences would you be excited about in the next ten years? With just our family? With other families?
- Which families would we like to travel with?
- What trips or activities do we each want to plan individually with friends (i.e., a guys' trip or girls' trip)?

MORE DISCUSSION POINTS & QUESTIONS FOR DEEPER CONNECTION

Take turns asking and answering each of the questions that follow. As you consider them, be honest and gentle (not nitpicky) with your responses. The goal here is to clear the air and to learn what you can do to make each other happier.

Two Things

- What two things about me could benefit from change this year?

Show Me Love

Review each other's love languages.

- What can I do to show you love and appreciation more often?
- How can I better receive or accept love?

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Need to Know

- What do I most need to know about you right now?
- Are you going through anything that I should be aware of that you've been hesitant to share with me?

Our Home

- How are you feeling about our home?
- Are there any home improvements we should plan for in the next one, three, or five years?

Celebrating Events

- How do you feel about the way we celebrate birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, etc.?
- Is there anything you would like to see changed?

Family Vision

- What would we like to see in our marriage and family over the next five years?
- What can we do to be happier and more excited about our marriage than ever before?
- What do we want our family life and relationships to look like ten years from now? (Write down how old you and your kids will be ten years from now to create clarity for your vision.)
- How can we make sure we're raising our kids to be smart, kind, physically active, and healthy?
- What changes can we make to each child's daily routine to give them a better chance at being ahead of the curve regarding academics, communication, problem-solving, self-confidence, personal development, etc.?
- What books can we read as a family?
- What games should we play together and with each child?
- What learning do we need to be practicing to supplement schooling?
- What activities do we want each child to be involved in this year? Team sports? Play dates?
- What can we do to ensure each child is learning to love God and others?
- How do we plan to be involved in influencing our children's peer group? Who do we want them spending time with? Who do we want to avoid having them spend time with?
- Where do we want our kids to go to school?
- What are some family rituals and traditions we can start (daily, weekly, monthly, annually, lifetime)? Friday movie night? Weekly game night?

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Financial Planning

- At what age would we like to retire?
- What do we want retirement to look like? Travel? Hobbies? Vacation home? (Be as specific as possible.)
- What is our current financial status? (Total amount saved, how much saved this past year, how much passive income do we have?)
- How much do we want to save this coming year?
- How much do we want to give to church or charity?
- How much did we spend each month last year? How much did we spend in total for the year?
- What current expenses aren't 100 percent necessary?
- Is there anything I do that annoys you when it comes to money?
- Where do we want to be in the next five years financially? Where do we want to be financially in ten years?
- How can we get there?
- What changes are needed in our current earning, saving, and spending to put us on track to reach our financial goals?
- Let's create a monthly budget for this year.

Careers/Mission/Vocation

- How are you feeling about your career, mission, or vocation?
- What are your career goals?
- Are you passionate about where you are and what you are doing?
- If not what would make you more passionate? (Be as specific as possible.)
- Is there a better way for us to make a positive impact on the world/community?

SOCIAL NEEDS

Time spent with friends is incredibly important, and we need to be intentional making time for those relationships. Consider each of these questions for yourself and then share your answers with each other.

- Who are my five to ten closest friends with whom I need to make a priority to spend time?
- Who are my top mentors with whom I need to be proactive about spending time this year?
- Which couples do I want us to be intentional about spending time with?
- Do we go out often enough or too often with other couples or individually with friends?
- How would I like to see that change this year?

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PHYSICAL/MENTAL/HEALTH/SEX LIFE

- How are we doing health-wise? What would we ideally want our health to look like?
- What changes are needed to get there?
- What unhealthy habits do we each need to release attachment to?
- When were you in the best shape of your life?
- What are our health goals for this year? (weight, diet, exercising, taking up healthy hobbies, participating in competitions, working with a personal trainer, attending classes, etc.)
- What changes can we make to support each other in those goals?
- How will we improve our mental health?
- How do you feel about our frequency and quality of sex?
- How can we improve our sex life and make it the best we have ever had?

OUR COMMUNICATION STYLE

- What do you like about the way we communicate with each other? What would you change about it?
- Do we have any communication patterns that bother you?
- What about our typical evening routine do you like? What would you like to see change?

GIVING BACK

- How are we impacting others?
- What activities do we want to continue doing? What are some new ways we can give back?
- What causes or foundations do we want to donate to?
- Where would we like to volunteer?

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DREAMS AND GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR

Spirituality

Physical & Emotional Health

Growth

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DREAMS AND GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR

Business

Recreation & Fun

Friends & Relationships

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DREAMS AND GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR

Financial Strength & Investing

Contribution

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MAKE NOTE OF WHAT'S IMPORTANT!

Top 10 Dreams You Want to Accomplish

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____
- 7 _____
- 8 _____
- 9 _____
- 10 _____

My Ideal Day

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MAKE NOTE OF WHAT'S IMPORTANT!

Signature Experiences & Events

Trips We Plan to Take

Three to Five Couples to Spend Time With

1

2

3

4

5

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MAKE NOTE OF WHAT'S IMPORTANT!

My Top 10 Relationships

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____
- 7 _____
- 8 _____
- 9 _____
- 10 _____

Mentors to Spend Time With
