

Open Communication

“As hard as it is to form the words, be swift to say, ‘I apologize, and please forgive me,’ even though you are not the one who is totally at fault. True love is developed by those who are willing to readily admit personal mistakes and offenses.

“When differences do arise, being able to discuss and resolve them is important, but there are instances when it is best to take a time-out. Biting your tongue and counting to ten or even a hundred is important. And occasionally, even letting the sun go down on your wrath can help bring you back to the problem in the morning more rested, calm, and with a better chance for resolution.

“Any intelligent couple will have differences of opinion. Our challenge is to be sure that we know how to resolve them.”

-Joe J. Christensen, “Marriage and the Great Plan of Happiness,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 64

Controlling Emotions

“It was said of old that ‘a soft answer turneth away wrath’ (Proverbs 15:1). We seldom get into trouble when we speak softly. It is only when we raise our voices that the sparks fly and tiny molehills become great mountains of contention. . . . The voice of heaven is a still small voice; likewise, the voice of domestic peace is a quiet voice.”

-Gordon B. Hinckley, “Except the Lord Build the House . . .” *Ensign*, June 1971, 72

Avoid Pinpricking

“Don’t be too critical of each other’s faults. Recognize that none of us are perfect. We all have a long way to go to become as Christ-like as our leaders have urged us to become.

“Ceaseless pinpricking’ (as President Kimball called it), can deflate almost any [relationship]. Generally, each of us is painfully aware of our weaknesses, and we don’t need frequent reminders. Few people have every changed for the better as a result of constant criticism or nagging. If we are not careful, some of what we offer as a constructive criticism is actually destructive. At times it is better to leave some things unsaid.”

-Joe J. Christensen, “Marriage and the Great Plan of Happiness,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 46

Listening and Understanding

“In [apartment] discussions, differences should not be ignored, but should be weighted and evaluated calmly. One’s point or opinion usually is not as important as a healthy, continued relationship. Courtesy and respect in listening and responding during discussions are basic in proper dialogue. As we learn to participate together in meaningful associations, we are able to convey our thoughts of love, dependence, and interest.”

-Marvin J. Ashton, “Family Communications,” *Ensign*, May 1976, 52