

Did I Make a Mistake?

In the last lesson you learned how minor issues can explode into major issues and how to prevent that from happening. You also explored how each of you could have different perspectives on an issue.

In this lesson, you'll explore ways to evaluate your concerns that you may have made a mistake in moving in together or in getting married.

The Absolute Danger Sign You Should Leave

This is simple. **If you've been physically threatened or attacked you need to get to safety.** Once safe, find someone to assist you in sorting out the rest. Just be safe.

That said, let's move to the usual challenges people face when merging two lives.

Merging Lives Takes Time

We live in an impatient society. Consider this. When you boot up your computer, how long does it take before you get impatient? I bet not long.

You may think it should only take a couple of weeks of living together for you to be functioning together easily. That's not an unusual thought, but it's unrealistic.

Two amazing, independent beings with different habits and expectations are merging their lives. It takes a few months to sort those things out and establish new habits.

Give yourselves some time, at least three months. If things have improved, but are still a little rocky, give yourselves another couple of months.

Review Your Strengths

Sometimes people allow their self-doubts about situations crowd out the good things which are happening.

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Doubts are often based upon emotions. Take some time to look at things objectively:

1. **Do you and your partner listen to each other?** Giving each other your full attention when you share your day is indicative of interest and caring.
 - Eye-rolls or a reluctance to share or listen can be signs the two of you need the assistance of a relationship expert.
2. **Do you have fun together?** Having fun keeps your relationship strong.
 - When life gets too intense, your relationship can seem more difficult than it actually is. **Take time to do some of the fun things you did when dating.**
3. **Are you compatible?** Having mutual interests is bonding.
 - Compatibility is more than interests. **Compatibility is also about your values, beliefs, priorities, and dreams in life.** It also includes schedules, time and money management, and keeping your house neat... or not.
 - When you have areas of compatibility of ideas and beliefs, you have more to share with each other. **When you have compatibility in time, money, and house management, life flows more easily.**

The Danger of Comparison

Remember that your relationship is *your* relationship. Be careful about comparing it with someone else's. You only see the public image of other couples. You have no idea what's going on once the doors close.

On the other hand, if you're having challenges and your friends and family are warning you that what's happening isn't healthy, you have a choice to make. Are you and your partner willing to work on forming a stronger relationship? If not, your answer may be made for you.

How Committed Are You?

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When evaluating challenges in your relationship, discuss how committed you are to working things out.

If you and your partner are committed, there are strategies you can use which will help you become a stronger couple:

1. **Remind yourself of your why.** Why is this relationship so valuable that you want to devote time, energy, and money to working things out?
 - Always remember why you love each other. Keep that uppermost in your mind.
2. **Take time to be with each other.** Date night is important. Schedule it to be sure it doesn't get lost in the busyness of life.
3. **Find someone objective to help you over the rough spots.**
 - One of the biggest mistakes people make is waiting until it's too late to get outside help. Don't have that regret.

Summary

Bumps and self-doubts are normal in the beginning stages of relationships. You're bringing two lives together and that takes time, communication, and some finesse. If you're committed, find objective third parties to assist you when needed.

In the next lesson, you'll come to know all the wonderful things you have to look forward to.

Before moving ahead, take a few minutes to reflect on how you can apply what you've just learned.

Reflection

1. List everything you can think of that you enjoy and appreciate about your partner.

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2. How committed are you to your relationship? What would you do to keep it healthy?

3. Why is it dangerous to compare your relationship to someone else's?