

Module 1. Lesson 7. Additional Resources.

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Top Advice From Couples Therapists.

Couples therapists see a wide range of issues on a daily basis. Their wise advice can help you heal and preserve your relationship. When you take action to make these tips positive habits, you can feel the joy of a healthy, fulfilling, and positive relationship!

These tips from therapists can help you build a stronger relationship:

1. **Avoid letting the children take over your lives.** Although you need to love and care for your children in the very best ways that you can, it's also important that they don't dominate your entire relationship.
 - Children are an important part of your relationship. Even so, you can help your relationship thrive when you make it a priority to find some time for just the two of you to share some quality time together and appreciate each other.
2. **Pay attention to argument patterns.** Are you arguing about the same topics repeatedly? If so, sit down and work through these issues together before they become bigger challenges. Try to find positive solutions that bring benefits to *both* of you.
 - In addition, noticing the patterns can help you break them. **As soon as you see yourself slipping into the same argument pattern, stop right there.** Take a moment to think of a different, more pleasing approach to the challenge.
3. **Encourage each other.** Does your partner want to get a college degree? Do you want to pursue a hobby? Encouraging each other can help you build a stronger relationship.

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- It's important to embrace the changes that occur over time. Encourage each other to pursue new dreams, goals, and activities.
4. **Make your partner (and your relationship) a top priority.** Instead of putting your mother, father, or other family member ahead of your partner, make your spouse a top priority.
 5. **Learn to tolerate differences.** You're unique, and you may have multiple differences from your partner. However, let the little quirks and issues bring you closer together instead of farther apart.
 - Let your strengths compliment your partner. Let your partner's talents shore up your weaknesses. **This way, you can lean on and uplift each other.**
 - It's important to learn to live with differences. One partner's way of doing things can be just as good as the other's. Do you have a specific way of loading the dishwasher that differs from your partner? Do you handle your child's homework assignments in a unique way? These types of differences need tolerance and acceptance.
 6. **Surprise each other.** Even little surprises can make your relationship stronger. Leave a special note in your spouse's lunchbox. Send chocolates or flowers to your partner's office. **These small surprises will remind you of your love.**
 7. **Listen to each other.** Couples therapists often hear complaints about one partner not listening to the other one during conversations or arguments. **Communication is the key to a thriving relationship!**
 - Instead of ignoring a boring conversation, attempt to stay motivated to listen. If you let your mind wander off, your partner will notice your lack of attention and feel neglected.
 - If you don't listen to each other, then you can't understand the thoughts, feelings, and issues that matter. You're at risk of losing an essential part of your relationship.

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You can have a strong, healthy, and joyous relationship with your partner. Always remember that your partner is the most important thing in your life, even during difficult conversations and make it a point to show your love each day.