

10 Ways to Save Your Marriage

Top Los Angeles divorce attorney Stacy D. Phillips offers her best advice, so you can avoid using her services and keep your marriage alive.

Phillips, founding partner of Century City, CA-based Phillips, Lerner & Lauzon, LLP, has represented thousands of divorcing partners and says she has often seen unions that would have survived if one or both had nurtured the relationship by practicing her time-tested strategy for assuring bliss well into the future.

Find Phillips' top 10 Ways to [Save Your Marriage](#) [here](#).

1. Yours, Mine & Ours -- As important as it is to build togetherness and intimacy based on mutual interests, it's just as important to have an inner and outer life of your own. Respect your differences and it will make the relationship stronger.

2. Time to Be Together -- Sure, you're working, cleaning, car pooling, making the kids do their homework, etc. But how important are all those things if your marriage falls apart? Make time to spend together. Take regular vacations together. Spend leisure time doing things you both enjoy. Commit to a weekly date night and make it as unbreakable as the staff meeting at work.

3. Take Care of Yourself -- Spend time every day on your appearance and your physical well

being. Not only will your loved one like looking at you, but you'll feel better about yourself.

4. Communication Goes Both Ways -- Many relationships fail because of misunderstandings. Effective communication skills are necessary if your relationship is going to survive. Stay calm.

5. Criticize Gently -- Don't judge too harshly. If you criticize, do it as you would want others to criticize you. Be gentle.

6. The Children -- Yes, a child changes the dynamics of a relationship, but he or she doesn't need to destroy the sanctity of your marriage. Accept the fact that children will have problems and don't be reluctant to get outside help if it's needed.

7. Courting -- Gifts, compliments, and a loving embrace go a long way, especially when they're unexpected. Treat your spouse with the same courtesies you did when you were dating. Pretend you are trying to win your partner all over again.

8. Romance -- Keep your romantic images alive even when facing the harsh realities of life. Resolve to do just one romantic gesture for your mate every single day.

9. The Terms of Endearment -- Spell out the basics of your relationship in a yearly contract, or at least clarify them. Most disputes that break up marriages are over sex and money. Don't let surprises lead to trouble.

10. Renegotiating the Contract -- Marriage is like any other contract -- its terms and conditions must be reviewed and updated. Right before an anniversary is a perfect time.

Stacy D. Phillips is a co-founder of Phillips, Lerner & Lauzon, which specializes in high-profile family law matters. She is co-chair of the Women's Political Committee and a member of Divorce Magazine's North American Advisory Board.

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