

FORTY PRINCIPLES FROM 40 YEARS



Principle #28: Put Others First

Problem: Poor Me & Selfishness

Take more of an interest in your spouse and others than yourself, seek to serve them, and put their needs before your own.

Philippians 2:3-4 (NLT) "Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too."

1 Corinthians 10:24 (NLT) "Don't be concerned for your own good but for the good of others."

1 Peter 4:10 (NLT) "God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another."

Make it Personal: Add a question here...

Principle #29: Overflow with Thankfulness

Problem: Complaining

Choose to NOT complain – just don't do it! Instead find things to be thankful for. Overflow with thanksgiving in all circumstances with all people, but be especially thankful for your spouse. Thank God for them daily.

Philippians 2:14 (NLT) "Do everything without complaining and arguing,"

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NLT) "Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus."

Ephesians 1:16 (NLT) "I have not stopped thanking God for you. I pray for you constantly..."

Ephesians 5:20 (NLT) "And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Make it Personal: What am I most thankful for? How will I choose to give thanks instead of complain?

Principle #30: Check Your Nonverbal Communication

Problem: Negative Nonverbal Cues

Nonverbal communication is seen in different gestures, facial expressions, tones, sighs, eyes, body language, etc. So be careful with what you're "saying" without even saying a word...

Proverbs 21:4 (NLT) "Haughty eyes, a proud heart, and evil actions are all sin."

Make it Personal: What nonverbal cues do I need to be most careful about? How can I speak life and encouragement without saying a word?



Principle #31: Be Confident

Problem: Insecurity

A healthy confidence in who you are is good for your marriage and for your spouse. Let them know:

- "You need me/I need you..."
- "I'm good for you/you're good for me..."

2 Corinthians 7:4 (NLT) "I have the highest confidence in you, and I take great pride in you. You have greatly encouraged me and made me happy despite all our troubles."

Psalms 139:14 (NLT) "Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it."

Make it Personal: How can I overcome insecurity and walk confidently in who God has made me?

Principle #32: Show Affection

Problem: Distant

Show love and affection to one another with "non-sexual touches" (hand holding, a hand on their back, a hug, a stroke down their hair, etc.). This can be helpful in good and bad times. Sometimes a reassuring genuine touch helps bridge any potential distance you may feel.

Romans 12:10 (NLT) "Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other."

Make it Personal: How can I show more affection to my spouse this week?



Principle #33: Pray – Pray – Pray

Problem: Prayerlessness

Take time to pray together and pray for each other. There is something amazing that changes in you when you talk to God. And there is something special and intimate that happens when you pour out your heart to God with others. Praying for others also gives you more of a love for them. Don't underestimate the power of prayer and don't use it as a last resort, but rather a first defense.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NLT) "Never stop praying."

Ephesians 6:18 (NLT) "Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere."

James 5:16 (NLT) "Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results."

2 Thessalonians 1:11 (NLT) "So we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. May he give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do."

Colossians 1:9 (NLT) "So we have not stopped praying for you since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding."

Make it Personal: How can I make prayer a more important part of my relationship?



Principle #34: Have an Eternal Perspective

Problem: Earthly Perspective

Don't be so focused on the here and now. Let go of the little things and set your heart on things above! Ask yourself: "Eternally speaking does it really matter?" Often times when we get our focus back on eternity we realize how trivial things are and can press on in victory with the right perspective.

Colossians 3:1-2 (NLT) "Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand.² Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth."

Philippians 3:13-14 (NLT) "No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead,¹⁴ I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us."

Matthew 6:20-21 (NLT) "Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal.²¹ Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be."

Make it Personal: Where is my focus? How can I have more of an eternal perspective?

