



New Jersey Family Policy Council
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THIS BOOKLET IS DEDICATED TO
 THE MEMORY OF:

WILLIAM LIBRIZZI
*Founding Chairman of the New Jersey Marriage
 Builders Steering Committee.*

MARRIAGE BUILDER STEERING
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ABOUT THE NEW JERSEY FAMILY POLICY COUNCIL

New Jersey Family Policy Council (NJFPC) is an independent, non-profit, non-partisan, non-sectarian, research and education organization that was established in September of 1995. NJFPC's mission is to be a voice for the family and to intervene in the breakdown that the traditional family is experiencing, which we believe is the cornerstone of a virtuous society.

We do this by providing professional, high quality research and education products and seminars. A strong desire and dedication to pursue justice and righteousness energizes the Council. NJFPC's products and services promote virtue, integrity and character in the leadership of New Jersey's government, businesses, churches, schools and most especially our families. The Council articulates its message through experts in law, medicine, education, media, business government and the church.

Marriage Builders is NJFPC's initiative that focuses on the treasured institution of marriage and strives to build strong marriages that go the distance. Through the Statewide Marriage Builders Steering Committee the NJFPC has brought together experts in marriage and those dedicated to reversing the trend of an increasing divorce rate. We provide tools and resources to build strong marriages for the sake of our families and especially our children. The NJFPC is grateful to those committee members that have sacrificed their time to participate in this process.



new jersey family policy council

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON HOW TO STRENGTHEN YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE!

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10 WAYS TO BUILD A MARRIAGE

THAT GOES THE DISTANCE





10 WAYS TO BUILD A MARRIAGE THAT GOES THE DISTANCE



PREAMBLE

MARRIAGE: IT MATTERS MORE THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE!

With a divorce rate over 50%, NOW is the time to reclaim a culture of successful marriages. Marriage is a covenant, a unique bond between a man and a woman whose role is to support, uphold and affirm one another. It is never too late to make a commitment to having the very best marriage possible. We know from the many successful married couples we have interviewed that the challenge is well worth the effort. You two can be one! We said it above, but it is worth repeating, Marriage: it matters more than you can imagine!

1. You Can Only Change Yourself Successfully!

Many persons marry with the expectation of changing their spouse. To love a person as they are is the highest form of love. That is why successful marriages are ones in which each spouse values their partner's strengths while minimizing their weaknesses. When each spouse seeks ways to serve their marriage partner, a beautiful lifelong relationship will result.

2. Invest in Your Marriage!

Make a commitment to invest regularly in your marriage (i.e., attend marriage enrichment programs, or plan a weekend away alone). Going away with family or another married couple can be fun but may not provide the opportunities for a couple's relationship to grow deeper. Being alone together provides the time to renew, refresh and strengthen your relationship.

3. Your Spouse is Your Best Friend!

Show appreciation for your spouse daily by telling them about a trait or quality

you admire in them. It is easy to find shortcomings in your spouse once you are married. Try to avoid that practice. Seek to affirm each other emotionally, spiritually and romantically. Criticizing your spouse in front of others is hurtful. Discuss sensitive issues behind closed doors. The old saying "praise in public and critique in private" can be a marriage saver.



4. Do Things Together!

Intentionally find recreational things you both enjoy doing together. It can be a sporting event, a movie, show, or some other activity in which you both derive pleasure. Maintain a weekly date night and make it a high priority.

5. Give Your Spouse Some Space!

While scheduling time together is extremely important, it is also healthy for you and your spouse to pursue individual interests as long as a healthy balance is maintained.

6. Learn How to Communicate Effectively!

Affirm your relationship with your spouse by maintaining honesty and openness in your communication. Words said carelessly or in anger can harm a relationship. This applies to everyone, men and women alike.

7. Build a Support System!

Surround yourself with friends and resources that affirm marriage. Go to www.njfpc.org and click on "Family Initiatives" and then "Marriage." You will find a resource list containing help-

ful suggestions and aids for building a successful marriage that can go the distance.

8. Laugh Often and Forgive Generously!

Laughter is therapeutic. Search for ways to bring laughter to your marriage. Rent comedy videos. Recall with fondness the fun times you've experienced together. Laughter at another person's expense is hurtful especially when it is your spouse. Forgiveness is an important part of marriage. Forgive generously! Remember, we are all imperfect human beings.

9. The Family That Prays Together Stays Together!

Make time for prayer with your family at home and at your local house of worship. Weekly worship and daily devotions, strengthen each family member. After all, as human beings we should constantly be working to improve mind, body, and spirit. The spiritual dimension within the marriage is a key component to many long-term successful marriages and stable, happy families.

10. Find a Mentor Couple!

Build a relationship with a couple married twenty or more years in a "successful" marriage willing to be a "coach" for your marriage. Meeting them on a regular basis may provide assistance during small storms helping you to avoid "him-a-canes or her-i-canes." Give your mentor permission to ask questions that will challenge your relationship when necessary. Ask them to share helpful hints that will enrich your marriage.



A MARRIAGE THAT GOES THE DISTANCE

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