



## Overview

"**The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work**" by Dr. John Gottman and Nan Silver is a comprehensive guide that distills decades of research into practical advice for building and maintaining a healthy, happy marriage. Dr. Gottman, a renowned psychologist and relationship expert, shares insights from his extensive studies of married couples, offering evidence-based strategies to strengthen relationships and prevent common issues from leading to divorce.

## Core Concepts

The book is built around seven key principles that Dr. Gottman has identified as essential for a successful marriage. These principles are designed to help couples enhance their emotional connection, improve communication, and navigate conflicts effectively. Each principle is supported by practical exercises and real-life examples that couples can use to apply the concepts to their own relationship.

## The Seven Principles

- 1 Enhance Your Love Maps:** This principle emphasizes the importance of knowing your partner's inner world—understanding their likes, dislikes, fears, dreams, and life goals. Dr. Gottman explains that couples with a deep understanding of each other's inner worlds are better equipped to weather life's challenges together.
- 2 Nurture Your Fondness and Admiration:** A successful marriage is built on a foundation of mutual respect and affection. This principle encourages couples to cultivate positive feelings toward each other by focusing on the qualities they admire and appreciate in their partner.
- 3 Turn Toward Each Other Instead of Away:** This principle is about the small, everyday interactions that build emotional connection. Dr. Gottman highlights the importance of responding positively to your partner's bids for attention, affection, or support, which strengthens the bond between you.
- 4 Let Your Partner Influence You:** In healthy marriages, partners respect each other's opinions and are open to influence. This principle encourages couples to practice humility, compromise, and equality in decision-making, which fosters mutual respect and teamwork.
- 5 Solve Your Solvable Problems:** Not all marital conflicts are created equal. Dr. Gottman distinguishes between solvable problems and perpetual issues, offering specific strategies for resolving the former while managing the latter in a way that minimizes tension.



**6 Overcome Gridlock:** Some issues in marriage may never be fully resolved, but this principle teaches couples how to address them constructively. By understanding the underlying dreams and values behind gridlocked conflicts, couples can find ways to accommodate each other's needs.

**7 Create Shared Meaning:** A fulfilling marriage involves more than just avoiding conflict—it's about building a shared life and creating a sense of meaning together. This principle focuses on establishing shared goals, rituals, and values that strengthen the couple's connection and give their relationship a deeper sense of purpose.

## **Practical Applications**

Throughout the book, Dr. Gottman provides exercises and questionnaires that help couples apply the seven principles to their own relationships. These activities are designed to enhance communication, deepen emotional intimacy, and foster a stronger, more resilient marriage.

## **Conclusion**

*"The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work"* is a valuable resource for couples at any stage of their relationship, whether they're newlyweds or have been married for decades. By following Dr. Gottman's evidence-based principles, couples can build a solid foundation for a lasting and fulfilling marriage. The book's practical advice and actionable strategies make it an essential guide for anyone looking to strengthen their relationship and navigate the challenges of married life.



## Blog

### **Building a Stronger Marriage: Insights from "The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work"**

Marriage is a journey filled with joys, challenges, and countless opportunities for growth. But what makes some marriages thrive while others struggle? Dr. John Gottman's book, *"The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work,"* offers a roadmap for couples looking to build a strong, lasting relationship. Based on decades of research, these seven principles provide practical, evidence-based strategies to enhance your marriage, deepen your emotional connection, and navigate conflicts effectively.

#### **1. Enhance Your Love Maps**

At the heart of every successful marriage is a deep understanding of your partner's inner world. Dr. Gottman calls this the "Love Map"—an intimate knowledge of your partner's likes, dislikes, hopes, dreams, and fears. Couples with well-developed love maps are better equipped to handle life's challenges together because they know each other deeply.

**Tip for Couples:** Take time to ask your partner about their day, their current interests, or their future goals. Regularly updating your love map helps you stay connected and shows your partner that you care about their inner life.

#### **2. Nurture Your Fondness and Admiration**

Mutual respect and affection are the cornerstones of a healthy marriage. Dr. Gottman emphasizes the importance of nurturing these positive feelings by focusing on the qualities you admire in your partner. When couples lose sight of what they appreciate about each other, it can lead to negativity and resentment.

**Tip for Couples:** Make a habit of expressing appreciation for your partner's actions and qualities. Whether it's a small gesture like making coffee in the morning or a larger act of support, acknowledging your partner's efforts fosters a positive atmosphere in your marriage.

#### **3. Turn Toward Each Other Instead of Away**

In marriage, it's often the small moments that matter most. Dr. Gottman highlights the importance of turning toward your partner in everyday interactions—whether responding to a bid



for attention, affection, or emotional support. These small gestures build emotional connection over time.

**Tip for Couples:** Be mindful of how you respond to your partner's bids for connection. Even simple acts, like acknowledging a comment or offering a smile, can strengthen your bond and show your partner that you're there for them.

#### **4. Let Your Partner Influence You**

A successful marriage is built on mutual respect and equality. Dr. Gottman's research shows that when partners are willing to influence each other and make decisions together, their marriages are more harmonious. This principle is about embracing humility, compromise, and teamwork in your relationship.

**Tip for Couples:** Practice listening to your partner's opinions and valuing their input in decision-making. When both partners feel heard and respected, it creates a sense of equality and strengthens your partnership.

#### **5. Solve Your Solvable Problems**

Not all marital conflicts are created equal. Dr. Gottman distinguishes between solvable problems and perpetual issues. Solvable problems can be resolved with effective communication and compromise, while perpetual issues require ongoing management. Learning to address solvable problems can prevent unnecessary stress and tension in your marriage.

**Tip for Couples:** Identify areas where you and your partner can work together to find solutions. Approach conflicts with a problem-solving mindset, focusing on finding compromises that satisfy both partners.

#### **6. Overcome Gridlock**

Every marriage has its share of gridlocked conflicts—issues that seem impossible to resolve. Dr. Gottman suggests that these conflicts often have deeper emotional roots, tied to each partner's dreams, values, or identity. Overcoming gridlock involves understanding and respecting these deeper needs.

**Tip for Couples:** When faced with a gridlocked issue, take the time to explore the underlying values or dreams that make it important to each of you. By understanding what's really at stake, you can find ways to honor each other's needs, even if the conflict isn't fully resolved.

#### **7. Create Shared Meaning**



Marriage is more than just resolving conflicts—it's about building a life together that has shared meaning and purpose. Dr. Gottman encourages couples to create rituals, goals, and values that define their relationship and give it a deeper sense of purpose.

**Tip for Couples:** Work together to create shared rituals and traditions that are meaningful to both of you. Whether it's a weekly date night, holiday traditions, or shared goals, these practices help build a strong foundation for your marriage.

### **Conclusion: Putting the Principles into Practice**

*The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work* offers a practical guide for couples at any stage of their relationship. By focusing on deepening your emotional connection, improving communication, and approaching conflicts with empathy and respect, you can build a stronger, more fulfilling marriage. Remember, these principles aren't just about fixing problems—they're about creating a loving, supportive partnership that can weather life's ups and downs together.

Whether you're newlyweds or have been married for decades, these principles provide a roadmap for making your marriage work. By putting them into practice, you can strengthen your relationship and enjoy a deeper, more satisfying connection with your partner.

**For more tips and resources on building a strong, intimate relationship, visit [CoupleStrong](#).**



## Handout

# Strengthening Your Marriage: A Couple's Guide

Inspired by "The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work" by Dr. John Gottman

**Introduction** This handout is designed to help you and your partner apply the key principles from *"The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work"* to your own relationship. By following these principles, you can deepen your emotional connection, improve communication, and build a stronger, more resilient marriage.

## 1. Enhance Your Love Maps

### Key Insight:

8 Knowing your partner's inner world—likes, dislikes, dreams, fears—is crucial for a strong emotional connection.

### Action Steps:

- **Daily Check-Ins:** Spend 10 minutes each day asking your partner about their day, thoughts, and feelings. This keeps your love map updated and shows your interest in their inner world.
- **Ask Open-Ended Questions:** Use questions like, "What's something that's been on your mind lately?" or "What's a goal you're working toward right now?" to dive deeper into your partner's world.

## 2. Nurture Your Fondness and Admiration

### Key Insight:

- A marriage thrives on mutual respect and admiration. Regularly expressing appreciation strengthens your bond.

### Action Steps:

- **Daily Compliments:** Make it a habit to give your partner at least one genuine compliment each day. Focus on specific qualities or actions you admire.
- **Gratitude Journal:** Each of you can keep a gratitude journal where you write down three things you appreciate about your partner every day. Share your entries weekly.



### 3. Turn Toward Each Other Instead of Away

#### Key Insight:

- Emotional connection is built through small, everyday interactions. Turning toward your partner in these moments strengthens your bond.

#### Action Steps:

- **Respond to Bids for Connection:** Pay attention to your partner's attempts to connect, whether it's a comment, a touch, or a request for help. Respond positively to these bids, even in small ways.
- **Weekly Ritual:** Establish a weekly ritual that allows you to spend uninterrupted time together, such as a regular date night or a morning coffee chat.

### 4. Let Your Partner Influence You

#### Key Insight:

- Healthy marriages are based on mutual respect and influence. Being open to your partner's ideas and opinions fosters teamwork.

#### Action Steps:

- **Joint Decision-Making:** Make an effort to involve your partner in decisions, big or small. Ask for their input and consider their perspective before making decisions.
- **Practice Empathy:** When discussing an issue, try to see it from your partner's point of view. Use phrases like, "I can see why you feel that way," to show understanding.

### 5. Solve Your Solvable Problems

#### Key Insight:

- Not all conflicts are created equal. Focus on resolving solvable problems with effective communication and compromise.

#### Action Steps:

- **Use Softened Startups:** Begin difficult conversations gently, without blame or criticism. For example, "I feel [emotion] about [situation], and I'd like to find a solution together."



- **Create a Plan:** For each solvable problem, work together to come up with a solution that you both agree on. Write down your plan and revisit it to ensure it's working.

## 6. Overcome Gridlock

### Key Insight:

- Some issues in marriage may never be fully resolved. Understanding the deeper meaning behind these conflicts helps you manage them constructively.

### Action Steps:

- **Explore Underlying Values:** When faced with a gridlocked issue, discuss the deeper values or dreams that are important to each of you. Understanding what's really at stake can help you find common ground.
- **Compromise with Respect:** Even if you can't fully resolve the issue, find ways to make small compromises that honor each other's values.

## 7. Create Shared Meaning

### Key Insight:

- A fulfilling marriage involves building a shared life and creating a sense of meaning together through rituals, goals, and values.

### Action Steps:

- **Develop Shared Rituals:** Create rituals that are meaningful to both of you, such as weekly date nights, holiday traditions, or morning routines. These rituals strengthen your sense of connection.
- **Set Joint Goals:** Discuss your shared goals for the future—whether it's related to family, career, or personal growth—and work together to achieve them.

## Final Thoughts

By applying these seven principles from *"The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work,"* you and your partner can build a stronger, more connected relationship. Remember, the key to a successful marriage is ongoing effort, communication, and a commitment to growing together.





Use this guide as a starting point for enhancing your relationship, and revisit these principles regularly to keep your marriage thriving.

**For more tips and resources on building a strong, intimate relationship, visit [CoupleStrong](#).**

**Prepared by CoupleStrong** *Strengthening relationships, one couple at a time.*



## Assessment

### The Seven Principles Couples Assessment

Based on "The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work" by Dr. John Gottman

#### Instructions:

This assessment is designed to help you and your partner evaluate your relationship based on the principles outlined in *"The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work."* Each partner should complete the assessment separately, and then you can come together to discuss your responses.

For each statement, rate your agreement on a scale from 1 to 5:

9 1 = Strongly Disagree

10 2 = Disagree

11 3 = Neutral

12 4 = Agree

13 5 = Strongly Agree

#### Section 1: Enhance Your Love Maps

- I feel that I know my partner's inner world well (e.g., their hopes, dreams, fears).

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

- We regularly talk about our daily lives and what's important to us.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

- I can name my partner's closest friends, hobbies, and favorite activities.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

#### Section 2: Nurture Your Fondness and Admiration

- I have a deep respect for my partner, even when we disagree.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

- I regularly express appreciation for my partner's qualities and actions.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5



- **I can easily list what I admire about my partner.**

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

### **Section 3: Turn Toward Each Other Instead of Away**

- **When my partner seeks my attention, I generally respond positively.**

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

- **We make an effort to spend quality time together regularly.**

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

- **I feel that my partner is emotionally available when I need them.**

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

### **Section 4: Let Your Partner Influence You**

- **I consider my partner's opinions when making decisions that affect both of us.**

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

- **We share decision-making responsibilities equally in our relationship.**

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

- **I am open to changing my mind after hearing my partner's perspective.**

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

### **Section 5: Solve Your Solvable Problems**

- **We can effectively discuss and resolve our disagreements.**

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

- **We approach conflicts with a focus on finding solutions that work for both of us.**

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

- **When we argue, we are able to resolve the issue without lingering resentment.**

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5



## Section 6: Overcome Gridlock

- **We understand the deeper values or dreams behind our ongoing conflicts.**  
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
- **We are able to talk about gridlocked issues without becoming defensive or hostile.**  
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
- **Even if we don't fully resolve an issue, we find ways to make compromises that respect each other's values.**  
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

## Section 7: Create Shared Meaning

- **We have shared goals, traditions, or rituals that are meaningful to both of us.**  
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
- **We often discuss our dreams and plans for the future together.**  
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
- **I feel that our relationship has a strong sense of purpose and shared meaning.**  
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

## Scoring:

- **85-105:** Your relationship is strong, with a solid foundation built on mutual respect, communication, and shared goals. Continue to nurture these strengths.
- **65-84:** Your relationship has a good foundation, but there may be areas where more attention is needed. Consider focusing on improving communication, handling conflicts, or deepening emotional connection.
- **45-64:** Your relationship could benefit from more intentional efforts to address challenges and strengthen your bond. Discuss ways to work together on these areas, perhaps revisiting the principles outlined in the book.



- **Below 45:** It may be time to address significant issues in your relationship. Consider seeking additional resources or professional guidance to help improve your connection and rebuild your relationship.

### **Discussion and Reflection:**

After completing the assessment, come together with your partner to discuss your scores. Use these questions to guide your conversation:

- **What are our strengths according to this assessment?**
- **Which areas could use more attention or improvement?**
- **How can we better support each other in building a stronger, more connected relationship?**
- **What steps can we take to apply the seven principles more effectively in our marriage?**

**Final Thoughts:** This assessment is a tool to help you and your partner understand and enhance your relationship based on the principles from *"The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work."* By focusing on communication, respect, and shared goals, you can build a stronger, more fulfilling marriage.

For more resources and support, visit [CoupleStrong](http://CoupleStrong.com).



## Description

### The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work Relationship Bundle

This comprehensive bundle is designed to help couples strengthen their marriage using the key insights from Dr. John Gottman's book *"The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work."* The bundle includes:

- 14     **Overview of the Book:** A detailed summary that highlights the seven core principles essential for building and maintaining a healthy, fulfilling marriage. This overview provides a clear understanding of the strategies that can transform your relationship.
- 15     **Blog Post:** An engaging blog that explores how couples can apply these seven principles to enhance their emotional connection, improve communication, and navigate conflicts effectively. The blog offers practical advice and real-life examples to inspire couples to put these principles into action.
- 16     **Couple's Handout:** A practical guide with actionable steps and exercises to help couples implement the seven principles in their daily lives. This handout serves as a quick reference for couples to strengthen their bond and build a more resilient relationship.
- 17     **Couple's Assessment:** A self-assessment tool that allows couples to evaluate their relationship based on the seven principles. This assessment provides a starting point for growth, helping couples identify strengths and areas for improvement in their marriage.
- 18     **7-Day Couples Challenge:** A step-by-step challenge designed to help couples explore and apply the seven principles over the course of a week. Each day focuses on a different aspect of the relationship, encouraging couples to deepen their connection and build a stronger, more fulfilling marriage.

This bundle is perfect for couples looking to enhance their relationship by applying the proven strategies outlined in *"The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work."* Whether you're newly married or have been together for years, this bundle provides the tools you need to build a lasting, loving partnership.