

10 Marriage Rules You Should Break

By Dr. Jenn Berman

There are a lot of opinions out there about what makes a marriage work. Myths and misconceptions abound. Here are ten “rules” you should consider breaking.

1. Never go to sleep angry. Actually you probably should go to sleep angry. Things become a whole lot clearer after a good night’s sleep. Staying up and trying to convince your spouse of your perspective when you are angry makes it more likely that you will say things you will regret. Make an agreement to talk about it in the morning.

2. The kids always come first. Your relationship with your partner is the emotional foundation for your entire family. Your children count on you not only to demonstrate a healthy relationship but also to provide them with the safety and security they need to create their own healthy attachments as they get older.

3. Your partner should love unconditionally. Unconditional love does not exist beyond the parent-child relationship. We earn love from our spouse and they earn it from us. This is not to say that we always have to be perfect. Ideally we have enough in the “love bank” to weather those times where we don’t behave as we should.

4. Fighting is a sign of a bad marriage. According to Dr. John Gottman, author of *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*, the most important predictor of the success or failure of a marriage is the ratio of positive interactions to negative interactions. According to Gottman, there must be five positive interactions for every negative one.

5. Always be 100% honest. Let’s be real. You don’t want to know if those jeans make your butt look big, or which one of your friends he would like to sleep with if he could. He shouldn’t answer those questions honestly and neither should you. It is more important to be a kind and loving spouse than to share the intimate details of a previous relationship.

6. Our partner should always be attracted to us. I got a call the other day on my radio show from a woman who was upset because her husband said that he was no longer attracted to her. When I probed further, she revealed that she had gained 100 pounds. We owe it to ourselves to live a healthy life; but we also owe it to our spouse. If you don’t love yourself enough to take care of yourself, why should he?

7. “Date night” should be a big romantic evening. Most couples think a date together has to be an elaborate expensive evening, but that misses the true intention of the event. Date night is about reconnecting and being together, not trying to impress your spouse.

Gluten-Free Valentine’s Day Treat

By Valentina Kenney Wein

I love creating delicious gluten-free desserts! Holidays like Valentine’s Day are the perfect excuse to make treats. Get the kids in the kitchen to help, too—it’s fun!

Gluten-Free Krispie Hearts

I’ve never come across anyone who doesn’t enjoy a Rice Krispie Treat. This version is much enhanced with the addition of melted white chocolate!



Makes approx. 1 dz 3-in. hearts

Total Prep/Cooking Time: 40 min.

1/2 cup (1 stick) plus 2 T unsalted butter

3-1/2 cups small marshmallows

6-1/2 cups Gluten-Free Erewhon Crispy Brown Rice cereal*

3 cups white chocolate chips

Red sugar for sprinkling

Take a baking sheet with edges and line it with parchment paper. Set aside.

In a large pot over medium heat, melt the butter with the marshmallows. As soon as they’re melted, add the rice cereal, turn off the heat, and mix. Pour the mixture into the center of the parchment-lined baking sheet. Grease a flat-bottomed spatula with butter and use it to press the cereal mixture flat, covering the entire surface of the baking sheet. Set aside.

Using 30-second increments, in a microwave, melt the white chocolate chips in a glass bowl. Stir after a minute or so. Once the chips are fully melted and smooth, pour them over the surface of the flattened cereal mixture. Use a flat-bottomed spreader to smooth it completely. While the melted chocolate is still wet, sprinkle it with the red sugar.

Let set at room temperature and then use an 3-inch heart-shaped cookie cutter to cut out as many hearts as you can. Save the scraps to eat!

* Please be aware that many rice cereals are not 100% gluten-free. Always read the ingredient list and look out for ingredients like barley and malt, which may contain gluten.

Valentina Kenney Wein creates recipes and shares them with *Family Magazine*, and is a regular food writer for momtastic.com.

8. Your spouse should be your whole life. Somewhere between dependency and neglect lies interdependency. One person cannot fulfill your every need. We have different people in our lives to fulfill different needs—girlfriends for gossip and mom for shoe shopping, for example. Expecting your spouse to be everything to you puts unnecessary pressure on him. Have separate adventures and report back what happened during your day.

9. Couples in therapy are headed for divorce. Most couples could benefit from learning communications tools. Also, having a third party in the room can make spouses behave more calmly than they do at home, which can lead to resolution of conflicts. Marriage counseling can give you a better understanding of one another and a safe forum to work through issues you are experiencing.

10. Being unhappy in your marriage means you should leave. Marriages that last for many decades go through ups and downs. If you are lucky enough to stay married that long, you will probably fall in and out of love many times. Marriages that last do so because both spouses work hard at it and are willing to stick it out and work through difficult times.

Dr. Jenn is a Marriage, Family and Child Therapist in private practice and the best-selling author of The A to Z Guide to Raising Happy, Confident Kids. Her first children's book, Rockin' Babies, will be released May 2011. Dr. Jenn can be heard every night on Cosmo Radio on Sirius XM. She is the owner of Retail Therapy, an eco-friendly clothing line for adults and kids. DoctorJenn.com.

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