

The No. 1 Cause of Divorce May Not Be What You Think

There is one issue that is causing many marriages to fall apart. This article discusses what that issue is and provides five tips to prevent it.

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- **Editor's note:** *This article was originally published on [Kevin A. Thompson's blog](#). It has been republished here with permission.*

I'm convinced the number one cause of divorce is not [adultery](#), [financial problems](#), or [irreconcilable difference](#). Those are most often symptoms of a deeper problem.

While these problems might be real, I believe there is a bigger issue.

The most common issue I see with couples who are struggling in marriage is *a lack of intentional investment in their marriage*.

While it's a fair debate of which comes first — did someone lose interest so they lost intention or did someone lose intention so they lost interest — either way there is a key idea:

We can influence our feelings by intentionally investing in our marriage

As I've written before, [our affections often grow toward our investments](#). Wherever we put our time, money and energy also ends up receiving our passion, interest and affection.

Think about what this means for a marriage: you will generally feel for your spouse to the extent in which you invest in your spouse.

Your feelings are often far less about them and far more about what effort you have put into your marriage.

Obviously there are exceptions. Some people have made bad choices in who they married or [the spouse has made a bad choice in who they have become](#), but most of the time, we love our spouse to the extent that we invest in our spouse. (See: [Marry a Partner, Not a Child](#))

Consider what this means: **if your feelings of love are waning, they can be recovered.** With some effort, intention and energy, love can grow.

Every week I interact with marriages which are suffering. I am often like a triage nurse who observes the couple, makes an initial determination of the seriousness of their illness, and then gets them with the right specialist so the expert can assist them with the issue. As the couple leaves our initial interaction, I almost always give them the same assignment: on the way home, retell the stories of your first date, how you fell in love, what first attracted you to the other, what you love the most about each other and what your dreams are of a future together. (See: [Change Your Marriage Today](#))

This assignment serves the purpose of unearthing long-buried feelings and memories. Just by recounting the stories, a couple is more likely to feel love for their spouse.

With a little intention, our emotions can drastically change.

Here are five things we can do every day which will reconnect us with our spouse:

- **1. Pray about the specifics of your spouse's day**

Not only will this remind you of the work of God in your life, it will also require you to know the specifics of your spouse's day and will make you wonder how their day turned out.

- **2. Always kiss goodbye and hello**

This is a physical and emotional connection which serves as a reminder of the union between a husband and wife. Make it such a habit that even if you kiss, leave and return, you kiss again.

- **3. Call, text or email at least once a day to check-in**

You can update one another on how the day is going. You can discuss any needs for the evening and make sure everyone is on the same page regarding the schedule for the night.

- **4. Have at least 5 minutes of uninterrupted conversation**

Whether it be first thing in the morning or the last thing at night, relationships demand conversation. Turn off the television, put down the phone and talk. This might be more difficult with young children, but find a way to make it happen. Remember, if you were [having an affair](#) you find the time to engage in that affair no matter how busy you are, so make the time for your spouse.

- **5. Hug for at least 30 seconds**

Before you leave for work or after you come home or as you go to bed, have an extended physical embrace which reminds your body, soul and mind of your deep connection with this other person. [Studies have shown](#) that hugging reduces blood-pressure, but it also connects you with the person you hug. Physical touch must be more than just sex. By truly embracing every day, each partner will feel more valued and loved.

If your marriage requires anything, it requires intention. To the extent that both spouses are intentional about keeping the marriage healthy, the marriage will thrive. Apathy will slowly erode a marriage, but intention will cause it to continually grow.



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