

Mapmy marriage

Below are some questions aimed at improving marriages without needing the introduction of a third person to facilitate and help. The aim is to aid natural reflection and conversation. You could use these questions to work through systematically – or you could use just one or two and drop them into conversation on a walk or car journey.

Useful pointers;

Never apportion blame. Be non confrontational – don't make the other person feel defensive.

Chose your timing and context carefully – or it could be seen as inflammatory.

Start with these questions yourself; some self-examination!

- I made promises at our wedding – have I stuck to them?
- What were our motives in marrying in the first place?
- How am I honouring my spouse?
- Is Jesus clearly seen in my words, actions and attitudes towards my spouse?
- Am I being a helper to my spouse?
- How would I like my spouse to be a helper to me?
- What am I really after in asking my spouse the following questions; is to genuinely improve our marriage, or might it be to apportion blame or have a dig?
- Do I still love my spouse with the same love that I had when we first got married? If not what has happened?
- Do I show affection to my spouse? If not what has happened?
- Is there an issue I have to forgive my spouse for?

Questions to discuss together.

- What are you thankful for in our family life/marriage/ home?
- How have things turned out versus expectations? What could make it better?
- Have we got out of the habit of chatting?
- What have we learned about each other recently?
- What do you enjoy doing, and why? Are there fun things we used to do that we have stopped doing?
- Are there any individual activities either or both of us do that could be dropped in favour of a joint one?
- What do we really appreciate about each other, and are grateful for?
- Is there anything I do / don't do, or an attitude I have, that you would like me to change?

- Have we become tired and distant to the point where talking about our relationship has become irritating in itself?
- Do we pray together? Can we address this?
- How can I help you grow as a Christian? Is our faith still a priority – and how could it be more so?
- What are your hopes for the next five years? How can I support you in that? What are the implications for both of us? Are we both OK with that?
- Do we enjoy being in each other's company and look forward to seeing each other?
- When was the last time we spent some quality time together, going out for a meal, going for a walk, doing things without anyone else being around?
- Are there issues which we need to forgive each other for or tell each other?

If either, or both, of you would like to talk with someone else then Belmont does have couples who are marriage mentors. There are also counsellors who are available.