

# Couples Talk Takeaways

31st January 2022

## Winging It!

*With Lyn & Andrew Griffin*

It's easy to think that those early years of a relationship will be fun and carefree but it's not necessarily the case, especially if you have a pandemic and lockdown thrown at you.

Whatever stage of life you are at and however long you've been married, fun is an important ingredient to marital joy and is certainly not limited to newlyweds.

Lyn & Andrew went from a long-distance relationship to a very intense first few months of marriage living in other people's homes. When they finally set up in their own home they found themselves being with just each other 24/7 as lockdown struck. Whilst there were many blessings to this, coming out of lockdown led to two, naturally melancholic people, finding themselves in the marital doldrums.

They determined that what they needed was some fun in their relationship!

Here are some ideas to consider to intentionally inject some fun into your relationship.

**Find out what makes each other happy.** Whilst Andrew & Lyn have lots of things, particularly enjoyed activities, in common, doing things that make your partner happy is a great way to show you care. If your idea of fun is different to each other, you might need to discover something new or build your date around your partner. This also might mean freeing the other person up to do something they enjoy without you.

**When life feels out of control, hold the good and the bad at the same time.**

Don't resign yourself to things being bad. How can you respond well to a difficult situation? How you respond is still within your control.

*Reflection question: -In areas of your life where you feel out of control, how could you be proactive about your response?*

**It doesn't have to be all about having fun as a couple.**

*Reflection questions:*

- a) what do you want to do together?*
- b) what do you like doing as an individual (eg Lyn's pottery class)?*
- c) what do you like doing with others to have fun?*

**Get outside your comfort zone** - try something new, find out something new about your partner. Surprise each other.

**Be spontaneous.** Take some risks. Make your spouse laugh. Fun can be one of those things we save for our day off but make it a part of the everyday.

But also...

**Have a to do list and schedule things in.** This might mean having to plan things. Intentionality is another key ingredient to healthy relationships. If you're just waiting for the fun to happen, it might not. Lyn & Andrew talked about their love for travelling to new places and creating an alert for cheap travel tickets.

This requires both spontaneity and some planning. It will depend on what stage of life you're at so think about what is doable for you and do some spontaneous planning, or plan for some spontaneity!

**The Joy of the Lord is my strength!** Fun is a great way to kickstart joy. Lyn & Andrew talked about having a reset of fun when they were down. Joy is deeper. What can bring you lasting, unshakeable joy? Looking for a joy that goes beyond our circumstances? If you've never considered the Christian faith that Lyn & Andrew talked about, [click here](#).

**Communicate well.** This has to be a feature on most of our takeaways but it really is so important. Take the time to find out what the other person likes/dislikes. Good communication is key to understanding your partner better. That includes asking good questions and listening well.

*Reflection question: What do you need to draw out of your personalities or life to move toward a healthy and full life?*

One way to do this might be to learn more about each other's love languages:

**Know each other's love language.** Take the [online quiz here](#).

**Fun is not always the answer.** If one or both of you is feeling down, chivvying the other along with your stand-up routine might not always be the best thing. Sometimes you need to allow the melancholy and walk alongside each other in that.

**Enjoy your partner!** It's not all about the external fun. One of the greatest gifts we can give our spouse is to enjoy *them*. Tell each other what you enjoy about them, take steps to show how much you enjoy them. Remember these things, they can get lost in the day-to-day business of life. Tell each other what first attracted you to them and be intentional in keeping that joy alive by words of encouragement and appreciation.

*Reflection question: What first attracted me to my spouse? How can I nurture that quality in him/her?*

Sometimes the choice of what to do can be paralyzing and you can end up opting for the default and mundane. Everyone's idea of fun will be different but here are some ideas to create an environment for fun:

- Go somewhere new. Explore somewhere together where both of you are on a point of discovery. Take it in turns to choose where.
- Have an "ask me anything" date night or [try these questions](#) from the fabulous Toucan Blog.
- Take a trip down memory lane. Dig out some old photographs (or an old file on a computer). Pick a date in your history and try to remember what you did/wore/listened to/ate/laughed at.
- Plan a surprise for each other.
- Say no to some mundane things you feel you have to do. Prioritizing fun sometimes requires giving up something else.
- Lyn & Andrew have written some great blogs with date ideas on the Toucan website. Have a look at these:
  - [10 Cheap winter Date ideas](#)
  - [9 Cosy autumn date ideas](#)
  - [10 fantastic date ideas for Valentines](#)

- Better still, why not sign up for regular blog updates by [clicking here](#) (spring date ideas from Lyn coming soon!)