



5 Scientific and 84 Expert Reasons to  
Never Stop Dating Your Spouse

# Yield, Don't Stop



When my wife Chrissy and I were first married we lived in an area of town that had a YIELD sign posted at a particular intersection.

I found it most annoying that people were continually stopping when they did not need to. It was the kind of intersection where it only took one timid driver to create a traffic jam during rush hour. I was not alone in my frustration.

One day, much to my amusement, I saw hand written on the YIELD sign these words - "DON'T STOP".

Marriage changes a lot of things for a couple. But when it comes to dating your spouse, regardless of your driving style, there is a lesson to be learned from that sign: "YIELD, DON'T STOP".

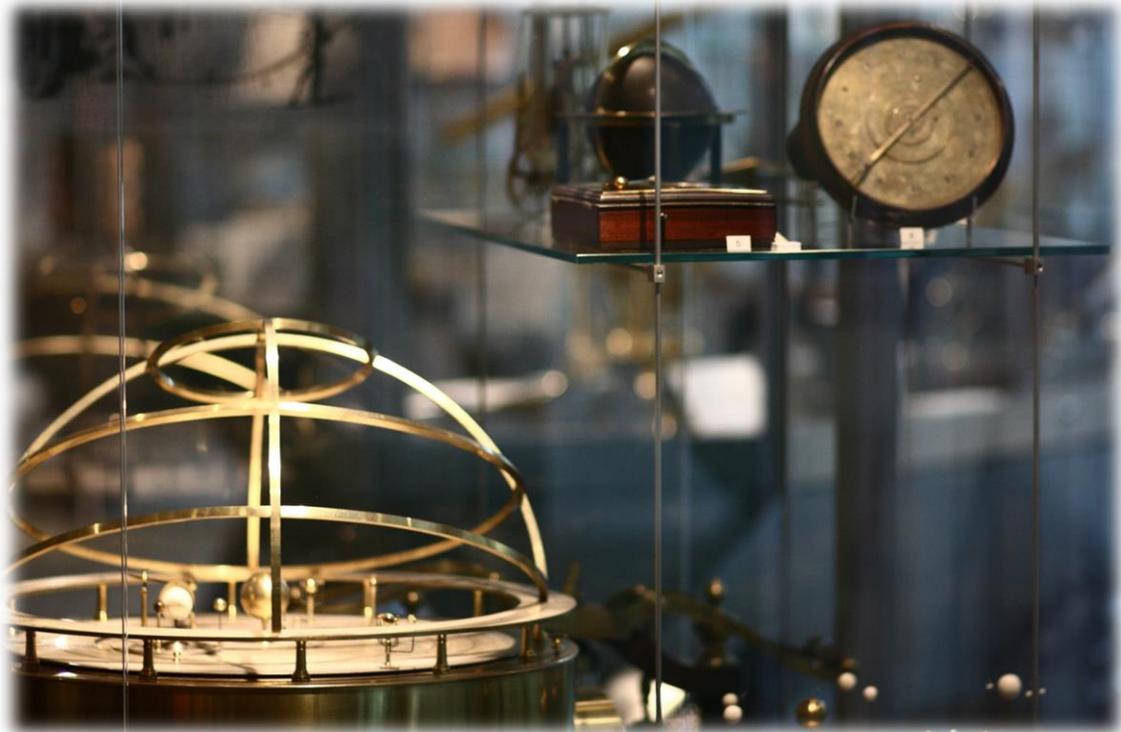
One of the problems couples encounter after they get married is that they tend to take their foot off the gas. The chase ends. They stop pursuing when they should simply be yielding.

*“As a counselor, I have never had a couple come to me with a deteriorating marriage that was committed to ‘dating’ each other throughout the years. It’s always one of the first things they let go as they slid toward disrepair and apathy.”*

*~ Beth Steffaniak Marriage Counselor*

# Social Science on Dating

Professors W. Bradford Wilcox and Jeffrey Dew conducted an extensive review of social science literature in order to assess how date nights influence the quality of couple's relationships. They shared their findings in a report written for the National Marriage Project called [The Date Night Opportunity](#).



What they found was that social science clearly suggests five ways that regular dating can foster stronger marriages.

*{ Reason # 1 }*

# Better Communication



Dating is a way to prevent the “two ships passing in the night” syndrome. It can give you opportunities to talk without distraction. Conversations can happen when you are on a date that would not happen otherwise.

## *{ Reason # 2 }*

# More Fun

Dating is an opportunity to do new things together. In marriage there is the danger of becoming too familiar with each other. Dating is a way to break out of the familiar and do the unusual. Step out of your routines and enjoy each other's company doing something you have never done before.



*{ Reason # 3 }*

## Less Stress



Dating your spouse does not mean you have less stress in your life. Making dates happen can actually be stressful. But on the flip side, regularly going out on dates together helps to **reduce stress**. It gives couples the chance to extend emotional support to each other, especially during times of trial. Dating can become a buffer and provide an escape from the pressing concerns of regular life.

## *{ Reason # 4 }*

# Greater Commitment

Commitment is like a muscle that gets stronger with use. Dating takes commitment. It means that you have overcome obstacles, such as setting up child care, or making the time, or spending the money. When you make dates happen you are showing your spouse and others that you are committed to him or her, and to your relationship.



*{ Reason # 5 }*

# More Romance



Feelings of romance are fleeting. A fire that is not fed or tended will soon die. So it is with the sense of passion between two people. Dating keeps the fires of desire alive and growing. It is a way to both feed the fire and fan the flame of romance.

# Marriage Experts on Dating

Thanks to the power of social media I was able to assemble an impressive virtual panel of 84 very diverse marriage experts - marriage therapists, marriage counselors, marriage ministers and marriage bloggers who each bring their unique perspective as they answer this question:

*Why do you think it is important for married couples to keep dating?*

I found their answers quite inspiring and I hope you do too.



# *{ 84 Expert Reasons }*



[Dr. Karen Sherman](#) ~ Perhaps one of the most important things a married couple can do to ensure that their relationship thrives is to date. Continued dating, even if it's economical, still helps the couple feel like they matter to each other.



[Kevin Wimbish, LMFT](#) ~ Research shows that shared enjoyable memories are a pillar on which long term happy marriages are based.



[Emil Harker MS LMFT](#) ~ Time is like a downward escalator in marriage. If you aren't working to build your relationship your marriage is going down.



[Deniz Selin](#) ~ Dating allows you to keep things fresh but also learn more about each other. When things get crazy, date each other. Remember.



[Hector Cortes](#) ~ To keep the relationship and romance alive.



**SucSEXful Marriage** ~ It does help to recharge marital batteries and restrategise to make the marriage better.



**New Life Marriage** ~ Dating is important in marriage because it keeps the element of pursuit which is needed and keeps things exciting. Dating in marriage and doing new things together keeps things from getting monotonous and boring.



**Andra Brosh, Ph.D.** ~ Dating = excitement = connection = passion. Novelty and mystery are keys to any successful relationship.



[Tom and Debi Walter](#) ~ Dating allows your marriage room to breathe, & provides time for your relationship to deepen. [Get your romance on!](#)



[Philip Cole](#) ~ Marriage is a relationship not a status. Therefore, keeping the relationship alive, fresh and vibrant requires dating.



[oneheartbeat](#) ~ To carve out time to just be a couple, have fun & remember why you got together. To be intentional about investing in your spouse.



**Marriage Foundation** ~ To stay friends, show you care, put each other first, have fun, & remember you married for life not just while you have kids!



**Lia Prusha, LMFT** ~ Spouse dates are important because you need to nurture the friendship and create space for fun, connection.



**Anita Chlipala, LMFT** ~ They need to feel sexy, wanted, cherished...just like when they first started dating. Disconnection tears marriages apart and so couples need to devote quality time to each other and stay connected as lovers, not just parents.



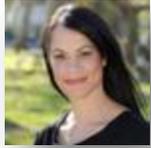
[Eros Marriage](#) ~ They are telling each other they are still attracted to one another, and want to keep passion in their relationship.



[Cheryl Comrie, LMFT](#) ~ Basically, to remind each other why they got married in the first place. To stay connected...



[Kristine Tye, LMFT](#) ~ Couples must keep dating each other because the love, joy, & appreciation in their relationship creates a safe space for their kids



[Ayana Rose LMFT](#) ~ It takes things out of "automatic" & brings it back 2 here & now. Making time 2 connect, showing interest, a wanting to be near and close. Rejuvenates the life of the relationship. It makes the more trying, difficult times more bearable.



[Lucy Rimalower, LMFT](#) ~ Keep married couples engaged with the narrative that brought them together & uphold that being a couple is a priority. Also, fun!



**LifeGiving Marriage** ~ Every marriage needs quality time and communication, the best connecting can be done while having fun together! Your spouse needs quality time and a lot of it! Dating and romance produced the warm fuzzy feelings that made me fall in love, I want to keep those feelings! Your kids are watching, if you want them to act like a human when they marry, you have to act human now! True romance is planning a date ahead of time, showing your spouse how important he or she is to you!



**InTouchMarriage** ~ Everyone likes to feel wanted. Planning date nights shows your spouse that they're still a high priority.



**Build Your Marriage** ~ Dating helps us stay connected with each other. It honors our relationship by setting aside a special time for one another. We are reminding ourselves—and those around us—that by scheduling regular dates our relationship takes priority over other people/opportunities. It keeps us sensitive to how each other communicates. It injects romance into our relationship and keeps us from taking one another for granted. Dating is the fuel that stokes the fires of romance!



**Stuart Tutt** ~ Continuing to date after saying I do allows you a chance to reconnect with each other by discussing dreams and desires



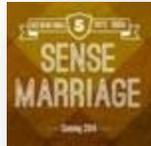
[WIAG Marriage Encounter](#) ~ If dating got 2 strangers to say "I Do" in the first place, imagine what happens if they continue dating WOW! 1) 1st dates are awkward, 2) avoid 1st dates by dating spouse often, 3) don't wait too long between dates (see # 1)



[marriage365](#) ~ Great marriages don't happen by accident, dating puts purpose and intentionality in building romance and drawing you closer.



[Teresa Mendoza, LMFT](#) ~ Without fun time together, it's all a blur of work, kids & housework. You lose track of each other.



[Five Sense Marriage](#) ~ Dating/romance is voluntarily serving our spouses love language. Keeps us humble & other-centered while stoking passion.



[Bonny @Oysterbed7](#) ~ Prioritizing dates shows that your spouse has top billing in your life and schedule by making time for them.



[Redeeming Marriages](#) ~ Dating adds depth into each marriage story by inputting fun, romance and lasting memories into the relationship. Dating brings the priority of the marriage relationship back into focus and says volumes for how couples value each other.



[Scott Means](#) ~ Continuing to date your spouse says to him or her "I still choose you."



[Tami Myer](#) ~ Within the Godhead, there is continual delight. Married couples reflect God as they keep dating, delighting in one another.



[sexwithinmarriage](#) ~ Dating can be a catalyst, but should not be confused as the substance. Dating will not save or grow your marriage by itself. What it does is increase the time and opportunity to do those things that will make your marriage grow: real intimacy, vulnerable conversation & shared life.



[Eric A. Disney](#) ~ If for a moment, you go back to making your spouse a priority and demonstrate that you're not taking your spouse for granted!



[Frank + Judith @topgunlove](#) ~ To keep the passion alive you must recreate it every day. Dating/courting is essential for both partners.



[Love Believes](#) ~ It's vital to connect, have fun together. Away from the noise + distractions. Builds oneness, fills the soul + fortifies love.



[Gail Desilets, LMFT](#) ~ Marriages are like gardens. If they are not tended to regularly, "weeds" can grow. Weekly dates help!



[The Dating Divas](#) ~ Dating your spouse constantly renews feelings, allows you to continue learning & keeps the love fresh! You feel forever young!



[Liz Shulman LMFT](#) ~ To keep the passion and fun going. To remember why they were drawn to each other and keep things spontaneous.



[Marianne Clyde, LMFT](#) ~ In nature and in life, when something stops growing, it begins to die. Same with marriage. Keep things fresh and alive.



[Zoe Reyes, LMFT](#) ~ Dating your spouse helps you as a couple to continue growing together, rather than growing apart.



[One Flesh Marriage](#) ~ Dating in marriage is one of many ways that we tell our spouse "I choose you, today and every day."



[Notes For Husband](#) ~ Some relationship needs are met during dating. After marriage, they don't go away. In fact, they become more important.



[MarriedChristianSex](#) ~ Working to grow intimacy is critical, but I don't like the phrase "keep dating". Marriage is way different than dating.



[Jim Seibold](#) ~ It means we don't have to assume commitment. Dating is intentional. It provides tangible evidence of interest & affection.



[Home Encouragement](#) ~ With all the responsibility that comes with marriage, couples forget to nurture their relationship. Dating keeps it healthy.



[Marriage\\_Rocks!](#) ~ Dating fosters intimacy and connection. It helps keep the flame alive.



[C. Brantley, LMFT-A](#) ~ Because the natural flow of life without intentional engagement leads to stagnation. Dating keeps the door open for newness.



**Agape Marriage** ~ It's important that couples continue that spark. Many lose it & get comfy & boring once married when they should continue dating.



**Mission Marriage** ~ We put time into things that are important to us. When we date our spouse, we are investing time in our marriage relationship.



**Noelle Warner, LMFT** ~ To have one on one time, to dress up or down, to flirt, reconnect, have fun, and kiss.



[JulieRAnderson, LMFT](#) ~ Couples need to keep their personal connection strong and remember why they got married in the first place.



[Enhancing the Dance @DrMcCleese](#) ~ To get away from the busyness of life and remind yourself that your spouse is your priority.



[Where's Sharon?](#) ~ To keep some romance ESP if you have kids! Would so love the chance for a date. It's hard while traveling.



[Laura LaPointe, LMFT](#) ~ It's absolutely essential that married couples date to keep the romance alive, romance will die without work to keep it going.



[John D. Ellis LMFT](#) ~ Allows for boundaries between the executive subsystem and the child subsystems...don't talk about money or kids.



[Gregory Blake @RatedGRomance](#) ~ Without deliberate connection time, it is hard to maintain intimacy (in the emotional sense). You have to "be there."



[Mike & Terri Schwarz @Marriage\\_Matter](#) ~ Women feel valued when pursued. Dinner & a movie is not enough, both must invest heart level interest 4 a great marriage.



[Brian J Lindner](#) ~ Having fun is still fun after you get married. Dating is fun; keep dating in marriage and your marriage will be too.



[Jennifer Smith @unveiledwife](#) ~ So that intimacy remains a priority! To be familiar with one another and deeply connected thru vulnerable conversations.



[Gina Parris](#) ~ It's important for couples to continue dating to keep a sense of freshness and adventure in their marriage.



[Calm.Healthy.Sexy](#). ~ I think it's critical for married couples to continue to date. Planning and enjoying a date is one way to be intentional about your marriage. It keeps things fun and exciting, and helps prevent boredom, fatigue and irritability.



[Cassie Celestain](#) @TrueAgape~ If we are not intentional about spending time with our spouse and continuing to learn about them we will only be pulled away from them. It is so important to take the time, energy and effort to date our spouses!



**Messy Marriage** ~ Dating is like the kindling that keeps the fires of passion growing and going strong in the relationship. This is especially true in marriage because life can crowd out and dampen our passion for one another as the realities and hardships of life batter us.



**Rachel Thomasian MFT** ~ Successful marriages require constant and continuous effort and care. Dates will improve commitment, intimacy, and cohesion within a relationship. Dating helps make working on your marriage a little bit more fun!



**Lesli Doares** ~ Continuing to date once you're married may be the most important thing a couple can do to maintain their love and protect their relationship. Dating involves doing fun things and enjoying each other's company. It's something to look forward to that will keep you connected as husband and wife.



**Tony and Alisa DiLorenzo** ~ Dating will rejuvenate your marriage. No matter if it's a quick coffee at Starbucks or an evening extravaganza. Take the time each month to nurture your marriage by taking the lead and planning a date for you and your spouse.



[Denise J Charles](#) ~ Dating allows us time to focus on our spouse and to discover new things together. It strengthens intimacy. While it can provide some much needed couple-time away from family and friends, group dating with other couples, can also be a positive reinforcement for our marriage.



[Dustin Riechmann @EngagedMarriage](#) ~ Dating is one of THE most important things you can do for your marriage! It doesn't have to be fancy or even away from home, but you **MUST** date your spouse if you want an awesome marriage and a love-filled home!



[Dale Sadler, LPC](#) ~ Dating makes the marriage a priority with both words and actions.



[Amos Fenwa](#) ~ It fosters more unity and togetherness and this brings longevity into the union. It helps them focus on each other more.



[Liz Moore Birch, LMFT](#) ~ To be sure they get alone time to focus solely on each other. Which includes holding hands and looking into each other's eyes.



[mrsmarriage](#) ~ You need to keep rebirthing a marriage - dating is 'one on one' time and equals the 2 of you coming together.



[Smart Relationships](#) ~ To keep that delicious spark alive and glowing red hot!



[Katelyn Carmen](#) ~ Strong, successful marriages don't just happen — they take hard work and selflessness. Couples need to continue dating and making each other a priority in order to keep their relationship strong.



[Dr. Jane Greer](#) ~ It's important for married couples to continue dating because it builds anticipation of together time and boosts excitement for the pleasure they will share.



[Trevor Mullineaux](#) ~ Connected couples make their relationship the priority. Dating is a way to nurture love.



[Suzy Ismail](#) ~ When the fireworks fizzle, couples must make time to enjoy the afterglow even if for a few stolen minutes of together time.



**Mark Jala** ~ Dating keeps us doing the same things we did to fall in LOVE in the first place. Dating keeps the PASSION and INTIMACY alive.



**Stu Gray** ~ We must nurture the things we are PASSIONATE about, or they grow cold! Dating our spouse keeps our interest & PASSION alive.



**Grant Stenzel** ~ No one on their death bed says I wish I would have worked more. It's always I wish I would have spent more TIME with family. I believe the divorce rate for empty-nesters is so high because couples have ignored their marriage and only focused on kids.



[S. Chris Troutt, LMFT](#) ~ It is IMPORTANT to date while married because it allows TIME for intimate CONNECTION that is easily lost in daily chaos.



[Cassandra @MarriageMints](#) ~ Spouses who continue to date one another, keep the LOVE, friendship, and excitement kindled. Marriage does not equal monotony.



[Jerry Stumpf](#) ~ It keeps the private dialogue free flowing and the INTIMACY open. Dating keeps the marriage FRESH and CONNECTED.



[GingerSmithLMFT](#) ~ Because there is more in a relationship than chores, children, and checkbooks. Dating reminds us of that!

# In Conclusion

In light of the social science research, expert opinions and, quite frankly, common sense, it is quite clear that continuing to date your spouse is a practice that is good for your marriage.

Dating is obviously not a cure-all for every marriage problem. However, it is a powerful way of attending to the health of your relationship.

In one sense it is like changing the oil in your car. Not a very glamorous analogy, I know (and dating is usually much more fun). Yet, there is a lot to be said for routine maintenance.

The damage that comes from neglect can be almost imperceptible at first. Yet over time without regular ongoing care and attention, marriages, like cars, deteriorate.

Thank God for warning lights that alert us to pay attention before something catastrophic occurs.

*What if the absence of dating in your marriage is like a warning light – kind of like the check engine light in your car?*



# *{ What are you going to do? }*

The renowned businessman [Jim Rohn](#) once said, "You are the average of the five people you spend most of your time with." I think that principle applies to marriages as well as individuals.

It is not uncommon for married individuals to underestimate the importance of the company they keep. If you want to become a better spouse and build a better marriage then you should surround yourself with other people who are doing that.

Would you be interested joining a virtual community of married couples who are using the simple practice of dating to become better spouses and build better marriages?

If so I invite you to join the Spouse Dates Community. Click below to sign up.

When you do you will get *75 Micro Dates to Spice Up Your Marriage*, as well as a weekly email with 10 random date ideas - a great reminder to plan your date!

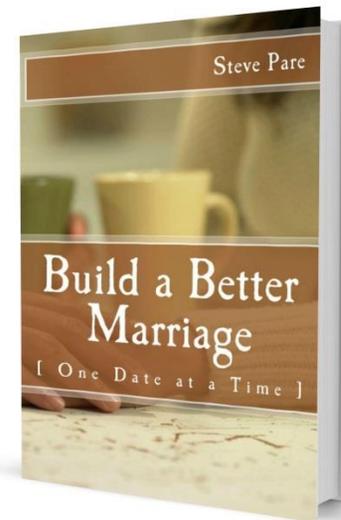
**I'm In! Sign Me Up!**

# About the Author



Husband to Chrissy for over 20 years, father to four great kids, relentless pursuer of the Divine, entrepreneurial thinker and catalyst for connecting people, ideas and resources, Steve Pare is the founder of [www.SpouseDates.com](http://www.SpouseDates.com) where he encourages men and women everywhere to build a better marriage - one date at a time.

*5 Scientific Reasons to Never Stop Dating Your Spouse* was adapted from a chapter of Steve Pare's book, [Build a Better Marriage \[ One Date at a Time \]](#), available through Amazon and Create Space.



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