

Healthy Marriage Tips from A to Z
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Consult Your Partner

Surprise!!! - Matt's Thoughts

In Matt's head about 3pm - Phew, I can't wait for a little *me* time tonight. Maybe I could get some guys together to play some games, maybe even soccer! If that doesn't work out I can always play any multitude of computer games and just relax.

Matt begins making plans with other guys.

In Laura's head about 3pm - Phew, I can't wait for Matt to be able to help me with these restless boys so that I can get a few things done around here. I may even see if I can steal away for an hour or two by myself tonight while the boys are with Matt. (I don't claim to know a whole lot of what is going through her mind so I'll let her go there.)

Laura has her own agenda in mind.

You can see where this is headed, right?

(Of course, all characters appearing in this work are fictitious. Any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.)

I do have occasional game nights, but I consult my partner first.

In a business partnership before making a decision that would affect the company we would consult our partners. More importantly, in a life-long committed partnership with our spouse we need to communicate before acting in many instances. Decisions regarding the way we spend our time and money are maybe the most frequent. In healthy marriages spouses consult each other and align themselves on the same wavelength regarding these decisions. Fortunately, Laura and I discovered this early in our marriage. We talk often about how we plan to spend money and time so that we are on the same page and surprises have become rarer. We save surprises for special occasions.

Should I Buy this Watermelon? - Laura's Thoughts

When to consult...when not to consult? I mean, do I need to consult Matt when I'm at the grocery store to be sure it's okay with him if I buy the watermelon that's on sale for \$2.50? And I'm thinking that I may want to trim my fingernails tonight after dinner. I wonder if that's okay with Matt?

(Above examples are as fictitious as the characters in Matt's story. Except for the watermelon. I *did* buy a watermelon.)

I don't need to consult Matt about every watermelon purchase I make or about every detail of my schedule. Know why? Because we've *already consulted* about our overall grocery budget and food preferences, as well as the roles we play. In this case, I am the chief watermelon picker-outer and purchaser. It's important to be clear about the big stuff so that the little stuff isn't quite so complicated.

"As far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." This verse from Romans is one our family works to live by. Respecting our partner enough to consult him/her about purchases or time commitments is one of the best ways to live at peace. Not only that, do I really want the pressure of making major decisions for our family without consulting Matt? I pretty much don't.

Unless, of course, we're talking about a watermelon.

P.S. We believe that **connecting** with your spouse is super high on the list for a healthy marriage, and hopefully that theme will be evident as it is woven throughout the A to Z tips.

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