

Healthy Marriage Tips from A to Z
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Quick to Listen

A Family Motto - Matt's Thoughts

Most interactions in any relationship can benefit from the maxims, "Be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry" (James 1:19). Boy, do these ever benefit a marriage relationship. I've tried being slow to listen and experienced the results there. I either needed to sheepishly ask Laura what she said because I wasn't listening or worse yet, I tried to guess what she said and go with that. Your guess to where that has ended up is much more accurate than my guess was at what I didn't listen to.

I've also practiced being quick to speak and found my foot in my mouth. The taste of the sole of my shoe is all too familiar.

And yes, I've been quick to anger. That dirty Kleenex that missed the trash can means that I'll have to pick it up when I take out the trash!!! I'm incensed!!! (That's me throwing a terrible two's tantrum.)

We posted about [listening and looking into each other's eyes for our "L" marriage tip](#), and we wanted to add more to it. James 1:19 is one of our family mottos. We try to repeat it often because we need to remind ourselves often and train ourselves. As a soccer coach I know there are fundamentals of the game that must be practiced very often in order to improve our game/skills. Likewise, in life, we feel that these are a few of the fundamentals in relationship development. Practicing these in our family will prepare our sons to be skilled when interacting with others and if they do marry someday, then these can improve the health of their marriage.

Hurry Up and Wait - Laura's Thoughts

I'm trying to understand what it looks like to be "quick to listen". Usually, I'm quick to jump to conclusions, quick to spat out something off the top of my head without giving it much thought, quick to make a judgment on someone before I know the whole story. None of these practices are healthy in *any* relationship, but they can be particularly harmful in a marriage relationship.

So what does it look like to instead be "quick to listen"? Could it be that I simply learn to simply *be still*? To be calm and wait? To listen with my heart to the needs of my beloved?

I try to be quick about every aspect of my life. I find I can get a lot done in a day by being quick about my work. But I think if I were to be quick to stop, be quick to be still, and be quick to listen to what God would have me to do, I may accomplish more for Him than my "quick" efforts ever could. I think I could go from a frantic mode to one of calm and peace.

And it's likely that if I'm quick to walk to the trashcan with my dirty Kleenexes instead of trying to throw them across the room in hopes that one out of ten might actually make it to the destination, I will save my dear husband and myself much time and frustration. *I'm working on that one. ;)*

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