

How to Make Marriage Work (Hint: It takes work!)

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SUMMARY

Investing in marriages is essential for creating strong, healthy relationships, contrary to the belief that they should come naturally. Many couples face challenges that require effort and learning to overcome, and it is crucial to recognize that building a fulfilling partnership takes time and dedication.

- *Marriage requires active investment and effort, not just natural compatibility.*
- *Common misconceptions suggest that if a marriage needs work, it's doomed or the wrong choice.*
- *Healthy relationships often involve refining communication skills and understanding personal and partner needs.*
- *Many couples who achieve blissful marriages have worked hard to build them over time.*
- *There is no shame in needing to learn relationship skills; it is a sign of commitment and growth.*
- *Settling for mediocre relationships is common, but individuals can create fulfilling partnerships through intentional effort.*
- *Building a strong marriage is a worthy life project that can lead to a better future for families.*
- *Everyone has the potential to create incredible relationships through consistent investment and focus.*

- Whenever people hear me advocating for investing in our marriages, whether it's with my work and through my courses or in whatever avenue works for you, often a resistance comes up where people say well,

we just are who we are, marriage needs to come naturally. I even get comments like this on my Facebook posts when I talk about how much

I've worked on my marriage, how I've got out pens and papers and started writing things down or how I've done meditations about it and really done a lot of inner, emotional laboring to change my own mindset and my own behaviors and thus, transform what's happening within my marriage on the outside.

Some people hear me telling these stories, they often say, well you know, if you had to work on it, then it was doomed from the get go or if you didn't know these things about yourselves before you got married, then you shouldn't have gotten married in the first place, you shouldn't have had kids. Or if marriage takes work, then it means it's the wrong person, you didn't find your soul mate. And I always think that these types of comments and approaches are so

detrimental and so wrong.

I'm so passionate about busting this myth. I don't believe that good, healthy, solid, soul mate, peaceful partnering marriages come any more naturally than kind, compassionate, peaceful parenting does. I think for some people, who have maybe been wired that way genetically or maybe through nurture, have learned those skills through life experience or from their own parents modeling it, it might come naturally to them. But when I look around and see what comes naturally to most people within their marriage, what I see is nitpicking, teasing, conflict, a lot of resentment, building up over years and years and a growing sense of power struggle and disconnection.

I also see some great things coming naturally too but I'm not seeing the level of connection and the type of radically healing, energizing marriage that I would like, coming naturally to people. The people that I know, who have those types of marriages, worked hard for them. It was maybe enjoyable work but it was a big investment. They spent years refining their communication skills, better understanding themselves and their needs, learning how to meet many of those needs elsewhere and learning to get to know their partner and their partner's needs better as well.

They spent years refining who they were as people and as partners, they didn't just stumble in to a happy marriage. Or at least I've yet to find the couple that it was like that for. So I believe that good, healthy relationships don't currently come naturally, maybe in the next generation or maybe in some cultures but at least not in what I've seen around me and certainly not for me and I don't apologize for that. I don't think it makes my marriage or our soul partnership any less lofty and important or aspirational, it just means that it was something that had to be built and I believe that all great things in life need to be built and that's why I love to learn from some of the greatest minds and thinkers there are out there, all about how to make relationships work, how to be ninjas, how to be incredible, how to master blissful family life.

These people right here, they are the types of thinkers who understand that we

don't just stumble in to happy life-long committed partnerships. We don't just stumble and fall and happen to be lucky or blessed with incredible, blissful family life. We create it, just like Rome was not built in a day, so too is your family's blissful existence together, not gonna be built in a day. It's something that we invest in consistently over time and if it's important to you, if it's your life project, if it's something that you think is worthy of your time, your energy, your money in some cases, then you will go to the therapies or take the courses or do the journaling or do the work, whatever it is, free or paid to get the results that you want in your relationships.

And I very much hope that you do that work with me because I love to teach and learn this stuff alongside you. But it doesn't matter if it's through me or not, what's important to realize is, there's no shame in healthy relationships not just coming naturally and just falling into it. In fact, there is immense pride in being someone who invests in it, methodically, consistently and substantially so that you can create that type of incredible foundation for your home, for your marriage and for your children's future as well.

So to those who say it should have come naturally to me and shame on me that I had to learn these skills, I say sorry not sorry. I think that there is too much shame and taboo around learning to be great in relationships, around creating the relationships we want and people are settling way too much for a mediocre, hum-drum vanilla or even just really miserable and stressful relationship. That doesn't have to be. It's your birthright to create a relationship that feels incredible for you.

It is absolutely within reach, it is absolutely within your creative power to build that. It takes building, it takes investment, it takes focus and energy but it can be done. So, for those unicorns who had it naturally, good for them but for the rest of us, we get to roll up our sleeves and make something phenomenal. (light music)