



Intentional Partnership: Your Rituals will Set you Free

Intentional Partnership is one where the partners are conscious, deliberate, and playful about maintaining and building a sense of connection over the years.

Rituals are **social interactions** that are **repeated, coordinated, and significant**.

Rituals have **positive emotional meaning** to both parties.

Three kinds of rituals

Rituals of **connection**: good byes in the morning, greetings in the evening, going out for coffee and conversation, working in the garden.

Rituals of **intimacy**: dates for a special time, patterns of sexual intimacy, special occasions such as anniversaries or Valentine's Day.

Rituals of **community**: activities where the partners give and receive support in their larger world, such as joint involvement in a religious community, neighborhood activities, joint friendship activities, and joint community action.

Phases of a ritual

- ♥ Transition to Ritual Space
- ♥ Engagement / Enactment
- ♥ Exit Stage

Couple Activity on Rituals

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Adapted from an exercise by William Doherty, University of Minnesota,
Fourth Annual Smart Marriages Conference, July 1, 2000



Review this sheet individually and think about your own relationship. What rituals do you practice? What category are they in? How did they become rituals?

Think about a new ritual that you would like to propose to your partner. Work out how this would happen – God and the Devil are in the details.

Sharing with your partner:

Are there rituals you both value? What is the balance between categories? Which new ritual would you like to focus on together in the next two months? Work out the details of when, where, how, the frequency, and an evaluation time.

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