

# Team Ups

**THE UNIFYING POWER OF GRACE,  
COMMITMENT, AND COOPERATION  
IN MARRIAGE**

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

## CHAPTER ONE

*Grace like  
Sweeping*

## Us Time

Now it's your turn. Grab these questions, find a spot where you and your spouse love to chat, and create your own war room.

1. If you were to compare marriage to any sport, what would it be and why? Share with each other your own sports analogies and insights. Be silly but also find a moment to think seriously about this.



## CHAPTER TWO

*Goodbye Me,  
Hello Us*

## Us Time

Now it's your turn. Read over these questions and find some time to chat with your spouse about those pesky old habits.

1. When you got married, did one or both of you realize marriage would require change? What took you by surprise? Chat about the habits you thought would die quickly, but haven't.

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2. Is there an area that's caused conflict in your marriage that you could solve by striking a balance? Talk about practical ways you can do this. Make a plan to work toward it this week.
  
3. How do you handle your spouse's grating habits? If you were to sit down and evaluate your attitude and behavior in this area, would the scale tilt more toward Shakespeare's degrees or a certain fickle Goldilocks's posture? You know, an annoying discontentment that things are not "just right."
  
4. Take time to apologize to one another for battles you picked recently that you should have overlooked. Commit to doing better at overlooking offenses, and pray together for help in this area.
  
5. Mentally make a list of one or two ways you've noticed that your spouse has made progress in an area. Together, take time to affirm and encourage each other in the changes you've seen. Applaud the other's growth.

## CHAPTER THREE

# *Yours, Mine, and Ours*

## Us Time

Now it's your turn. Here are a few things you and your spouse can chat about over sushi, Mexican food, or whatever cuisine you both like indulging in together.

1. Can either of you relate to my campaign? Maybe you're staging your own right now, but over something like the gym or Thai food. Take a few minutes to chat about one or two interests you don't currently share and how they affect your relationship.

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2. Have either of you faced an unexpected disappointment? Maybe you've kept your feelings hidden, or perhaps you're allowing them to create tension and distance in your marriage. Take a few minutes to talk about one of your disappointments. Pray together for wisdom on how to work through and let go of any hurt feelings.
  
3. Make a list of your favorite common interests. Plan this week's date around one of them.
  
4. What's an area you'd both like to "stretch" in this week? Jot down one or two things each, along with a few "action steps" on how you can step out of your comfort zone.
  
5. In what ways has being married made you a richer individual?

## CHAPTER FOUR

# *Conflict 101*

## Us Time

Now it's your turn. Embrace the adventure of conflict and discuss it with your spouse. Here are some questions for you to talk about together.

1. Chat about how you each handle conflict. Are you more like me, or like Ted? How?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Have you ever approached an argument with a "me-first" mentality? Which characteristics on the "me-first" list cause you to wince with conviction?



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3. Which of these "team-first" characteristics do you see practiced in your relationship? Which ones could you both improve in?

4. Has there been an instance when you've let the sun go down on your anger? Talk about how this may have hurt your relationship. Also discuss how this may have benefited your marriage.

5. What can you do better to approach conflict as an adventure rather than a threat?

## CHAPTER FIVE

*A Lighthearted  
Marriage*

## Us Time

Now it's your turn. Here are some questions for you and your spouse to chat about.

1. How do you tend to respond when faced with a situation similar to our Paris Honeymoon Camera Fiasco? With humor or resentment?
2. As a couple, do you laugh together? If it doesn't come easily or often, why do you think this is? What can you do to change that?

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3. When it comes to offenses, are you quick to let something go or do you allow grudges to fester? If you're prone to grudges, take some time to examine your heart and ask the Lord to help you grow in your ability to let things go.

4. How do you approach the small stuff? What are ways you can do better in compromising in the little things?

5. Do you keep tabs on payback your spouse owes you? If so, does this help or hurt your relationship?

## CHAPTER SIX

*The Lost Months*

## Us Time

Now it's your turn. On your next quiet evening together, here are some things to discuss.

1. Have either of you ever felt lost in the Land Between? What was your attitude in the process? Did it help unite or divide you as a couple? In what ways?
  
2. List a few ways you choose to "live together" in unity. Are there things you could do better?

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3. Ted thrives on words of affirmation. Others might feel built up by acts of service, receiving gifts, quality time, or physical touch. Take some time to discover your "primary love language" by reading Dr. Chapman's book or visiting his website, [5lovelanguages.com](http://5lovelanguages.com). Share your findings with your spouse, and come up with some specific ways you can help fill each other's "love tank."

4. Did you feel comfortable dreaming together? If not, what needs to change in order to bring this freedom?

5. If you haven't yet encountered a season of "lost," chat about ways you can prepare your marriage for one in the future.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

*Pink Slips and  
Other Losses*

## Us Time

Now it's your turn. Brew some coffee or tea and curl up on the couch together. Take some time to talk about some of these things:

1. When you are tempted to turn against each other, what are ways you can band together instead and apply the words of Ephesians 6:12?

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2. Talk about a time you faced grief in your marriage. How were you able to work through your individual responses to it and remain united? What could you have done better?
3. Are you able to be honest with each other about your thoughts and feelings in the difficult times? If not, what do you think inhibits this? How can you change that?
4. Share with your spouse one way he or she has encouraged you in your relationship with the Lord. Be specific about how you're grateful for this.
5. Are you active in your local church? What are some ways the two of you can be part of showing God's love to others there? Brainstorm some ideas.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

*The Parent Trap*

## Us Time

Now it's your turn. Take a walk through your neighborhood or local park and chat. Here are some parenting-related thoughts and questions to get you started.

1. If you have kids, spend a few minutes reminiscing with each other about when you found out you'd be parents—whether through pregnancy or adoption. If you don't yet have children, talk about the possibility and what the timing of that may look like for you.



2. Have you struggled with infertility or miscarriage? If so, my heart hurts for you. Take some time to pray together about what God wants your family to look like. Ask Him to give you wisdom and patience as you wait for Him to reveal His plan.
  
3. How are your upbringings and personalities different? If you have kids, does this affect the way you parent?
  
4. Do you attempt to learn from your spouse's parenting approaches? How can you do better at this?
  
5. When you speak about your spouse in front of your kids, what's your general tone? Are there more compliments than complaints? What are ways you can improve when it comes to your words and attitudes?

## CHAPTER NINE

*The Friendship  
Inventory*

## Us Time

Now it's your turn. Order some takeout, light some candles, and spend a few minutes talking with your spouse about the friends you keep. Here are a few conversation starters:

1. Before you evaluate any of your friends on the inventory, see how you fare on it. If you were to rate yourself on whether you esteem marriage, view the opposite sex with respect, and build up other marriages, how would you do? What areas are you strong in? Which ones could you do better in?

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2. Now think about your close friends. Would you say your friendship with them encourages you in your marriage? Why or why not?

3. Are there any friends you need to have a chat with? Discuss with your spouse when and how you should do this.

4. Are you open to the gentle correction of a friend? Or do friends withhold it because you don't take it well?

5. What's your church life look like? Are you seeking out community there? What can you do to get more involved?

## CHAPTER TEN

*Finishing Well*

## Us Time

Now it's your turn. Find some time to chat with your spouse about what it means to finish well. Here are some questions to get you started.

1. What are some ways you are intentional in the day-to-day of your marriage? How do you think these actions will affect your marriage in the long run?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Are there any short-term decisions you make with a long-term perspective? Are there areas where you aren't doing this, but should be?

3. When it comes to weakness, specifically in the area of potential infidelity, what are ways you guard against it? How can you do better?

4. Does your family history include broken marriages? Take some time to talk about how this has influenced you and ways you have determined to rewrite tragedy.

5. Imagine you and your spouse fifty years from now. What do you see? What can you do now to affect your marriage trajectory so that you might realize what you imagine?