

# Does Having Kids Ruin Marriage?

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Ask any parent who's emotionally and mentally healthy if having kids is worth it and they'll say yes! But these little bundles of joy cause conflict and marital problems for many couples. Parenthood changes who you are as a person, which affects your relationship with your spouse. It also changes how, when and where you spend time with your spouse, what you talk about when you're together, and how you show love and affection to each other (and how often, too). But despite the myth, kids don't ruin marriages.

Here's a list of ways in which having kids can change your marriage and some marriage tips for dealing with the change.

## **Things That May Change After You Have Kids**

### **Romance...and keeping it alive**

Having kids impacts romantic activities.

You probably won't have the time or energy for as many romantic dinners or weekend getaways as you're used to, but that's no reason to stop being romantic. When you have kids, it's the little things like hugging and holding hands that keep the fire burning. Also, there are ways to have a romantic dinner or getaway without leaving your home. Use your imagination. Have fun.

### **How you show love and affection**

Having kids changes who you are as individuals. You'll see a new side to your spouse – the mother or father of your children. When this happens, don't focus on how much you spouse has changed or how your spouse is no longer the person you married; this only causes marital problems. Choose to see it as an opportunity to fall in love with your spouse all over again.

### **How you have fun**

Having kids will also change how you have fun. You may not have as much time or energy for the activities you used to enjoy, so embrace life's simple pleasures we so often take for granted like a relaxing walk with the dog in nature, or working out, watching a movie together on the couch, or simply taking a few minutes to enjoy your favorite beverage with your partner. We're not saying you'll have to give up all of the fun things you did before having kids (except for sleep); just be intentional about making time for them.

### **What you talk about**

What you talk about with your spouse will probably change after kids. If you're used to having lively discussions about your shared interests, it may be surprising when you find your conversations are solely focused on your kids, everything from babysitters to meals to schools and everything in between. It's normal. Everyone goes through this. There's nothing to worry about. If you make time for conversations about each other and stay connected, your relationship should be fine.

When you have kids, you must be more intentional about connecting and maintaining a happy marriage.

Choosing to not sweat the small stuff, and appreciating the little things, will help you to deal with feelings of overwhelm that come with parenting, plus it helps you avoid many of the marital problems that arise after having kids.

*Until next time, this is Mike Tucker and I want YOU to be mad about marriage!*