

# envisioning the new year together

Setting goals for the next 12 months will help you draw closer as a couple

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IT WAS OUR FIRST NEW YEAR'S EVE AS A MARRIED COUPLE. As I shared my goals for the coming year (remodeling parts of our house and completing a big writing project), I could see my new husband's face fall.

When I asked Roger about it, he tried to downplay his disappointment. "I thought we would save up for a summer vacation," he finally admitted. But the look in his eyes said it all—in my excitement, I had completely left him out of my plans.

To avoid such marriage-testing discussions in the future, my husband and I make a plan to talk about how we want our year to go. I have to admit, instead of being dry and businesslike, this exercise opens the door to surprisingly intimate conversations.

We start off with one category and talk through what we'd like to accomplish in the year ahead. Notebook in hand, we write down our goals and then break them into doable chunks. Gradually we work our way through the categories. Here are a few of the categories, and the questions we ask each other:

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