



678-374-9555

Allison Caffyn, LPC and Murray Dabby, LCSW

[www.thecouplescollege.com](http://www.thecouplescollege.com)

## Five Keys to a Great Relationship

Whether you're celebrating new love by getting engaged or looking for ways to reconnect to your partner after years together, there are five critical connection points that will get you closer to a lifetime of happiness.

1. Make time for each other – *every single day*. Create a ritual that works for both of you – at the beginning or at the end of the day. Ignore the screens in your life and focus on each other for at least 20 minutes. We think you'll look forward to this daily check-in as a love-affirming, stress-reducing oasis of calm, in an otherwise busy day.
2. Keep on talking. Early in a relationship, conversations can be thrilling, as you get to know each other and deepen your connections. As time goes on, it's all too easy to think we know everything there is to know. And we'd be wrong. Stay curious and keep on learning about your partner. Knowing the little details deepens intimacy and shows your partner how much you care. The deep connection will make it easier to get through the stressful times that come in every relationship.
3. Sex. Keep on having sex and talking about sex. Spontaneity is great, and easy, early in a relationship, but when life gets more complicated, it's easy to be too tired, too busy, too distracted to connect physically. That's why it's so important to be intentional in making time for sex. Scheduling the time may feel less romantic, but nothing will make your partner feel more cared for than saying, "at 10 o'clock tomorrow, all I want to think about is you." Find a way to talk about sex with your partner too, whether it's affirming that you like something specific or asking for a new thing to try. Couples who are able to communicate about sex generally have better sex and more intimacy than couples who don't.
4. Talk about money. Early on, it's important to understand how each of you think about money and approach financial decisions. Whether you're an exact match to each other on your financial values or not, understand where you are different and why you are different is an important step toward warding off future battles about money. Talk about feelings about debt, about how important wealth is to you, about how you will approach big purchases, and what you want retirement to look like.
5. See and love your partner for *who they are* – not who you want them to be. Remember why you fell in love in the first place, accept them without judgment and without hoping that you'll change them or talk them into doing things your way.

If any of these connection points feel too painful or uncomfortable to tackle on your own, consider a session with a couple's therapist to guide the conversation.