

# 9 surefire ways to make your marriage last forever

You can make sure you and your mate stay together forever — by following some basic pointers from experts.

"Couples need guidelines to make marriage work," declared psychologist Walter O'Connell. "They need to know how to overcome the obstacles that get in the way of their chances for happiness."

Here is what Dr. O'Connell and Adelaide Bry, author of numerous books on human relations, suggest:

● Don't let minor upsets grow into catastrophes. "Pun-

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ishing your partner won't solve anything," said Dr. O'Connell. "Don't try to make him or her suffer with the silent treatment. Express your annoyance and then forget it."

● Accept an insult from

your mate with good grace.

"Whenever your mate has said something that threatens to turn a nasty disagreement into all-out war, call a time-out for 15 to 20 minutes," Dr. O'Connell suggests. "Then get together with a forgiving spirit."

● Be willing to give more than you receive. Don't stifle your loving and generous urges by wondering how and when you'll be repaid.

● Be sure you want a partner, not a parent. "If you want

someone to buy you things, provide security for your future, indulge your moods and whims, you're looking for a parent, not a partner," said Miss Bry. "Don't expect your mate to play the same role in your life your parents did. Take turns caring for each other."

● Let love bring out the best, not the worst, in you. Couples who stay together forever learn early on to be as consistently polite, thoughtful and sensitive to the person they wed as they were when they first met.

● Ask for what you want. Avoid the big mistake of expecting your partner to anticipate your every want and need. "Whatever it is you crave — a hug, a kind word, a pat on the back, sex, a night out, new shoes — ask," said Dr. O'Connell.

● Learn to ride the roller coaster. "Life is not at all the way it is on TV," Miss Bry said. "There's no smooth sailing or happily ever after."

● Never lose sight of the good things your marriage has going for it. Make out a "marriage insurance" policy: Keep a list of all the benefits of your relationship. Refer to it to make sure you won't fall apart when things get rough.

● Give yourself a lifetime to get things right. Deadlines ensure failures. "Lots of couples give up much too quickly — they give their marriage a year or two or five, then get frustrated when it's still not perfect," said Dr. O'Connell. "If you want to build a better marriage, you've got a lifetime to do it."