

## 5 WAYS TO EMBRACE YOUR UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP

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Do you consider yourselves to be a quirky couple? Whether you answered yes or no, the reality is that your personalities, upbringing, experiences, and perspectives make you two very unique individuals. And that makes your relationship one-of-a-kind as well! Learning to go with the flow of the unique dynamics of your relationship instead of resisting them or feeling like there's some mold you should fit into is part of growing as a couple. Here are five ways you can embrace your unique relationship:

### 1. Give yourselves props for what you do well as a couple.

Over time, it's easy to focus on the negatives while overlooking the positives. However, it's crucial to be able to recognize, acknowledge, and take pride in the areas in which you thrive. Whether it's your teamwork when it comes to parenting, the ability to be honest with each other without hurt feelings, or simply your complementary personalities, go ahead and appreciate your special set of strengths. Lean into them as you face challenges, and gain confidence from them when you're feeling discouraged.

### 2. Don't view your struggles as failures.

The flip side of #1 is that you're inevitably going to have areas in which you struggle. These don't "cancel out" your strengths, and they don't have to be permanent. As you navigate different seasons of life, you may find yourselves growing in some areas, while new challenges pop up. And yes, you might have that one nagging topic that's been with you since day one. That's normal, and it's part of what makes your relationship unique. Figuring out ways to work through and manage these issues is an opportunity to build resilience.

### 3. Be creative in your problem solving.

Parents are familiar with the idea of having to parent each child differently. Each child is their own person, different from his/her siblings. Parents need to think outside the box to come up with what's effective in teaching, motivating, or disciplining each kid, & the solutions look different from each other. The same goes for your marriage. You might deal with the same issues as other couples, but how you manage those issues can be different – be creative.

### 4. Start a special tradition.

Kind of like a running inside joke, except make it an opportunity for connection and bonding. Maybe you don't share a lot of hobbies. You can set aside a day where you and your spouse willingly take part in the other's favorite activities.

### 5. Avoid the comparison game.

Now more than ever, it's easy to compare yourself to other couples. While it's ok to take notes on other relationships that seem to have it figured out, avoid using them as a measuring stick to determine whether you're succeeding or failing. They might struggle in areas that you handle well, and vice versa. No two relationships are the same!