

# Reflections

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## Rules for Married Dialog – II

For married dialog to be effective and creative, it must also be: warm, well-timed, persevering and renewed.

**4. Warm.** One must always insist that the dialog be warm because coolness is a danger which threatens all spouses. Once some consecutive misunderstandings have accumulated, the withheld irritation becomes a marked coolness in the couple's relationship. It is not necessarily being hostile to one another; it is simply being indifferent to one another....with a cold indifference. Evidently this is something which increases the lack of communication and closes all exits. The interior connection will never be achieved under such conditions.

**5. Well-timed.** Choosing what should be said and what should not be said is an art. The proverb teaches this: Not every truth is to be spoken. There are some truths which are best to be kept silent because by saying them, we would only achieve hurting someone and would be of no benefit to achieve better understanding. There are some things kept silent which should be respected....secrets which are immune. Not everything can be said nor can everything be asked. In order to listen to one another, the couple must respect each other. One of the forms of respect consists in knowing what not to ask or not insisting when it is not favorable. Another form is not telling the spouse a truth which is very painful. Discretion, in the deepest sense of the word, is the key to married dialog, that is, in all cases, what can be communicated and what must be kept silent must be discerned.

This is also applied to the moment chosen for its expression. The truth cannot be said at just any moment. One must never speak when one is in a certain mood; for example, when one is overcome by anger, jealousy, deep sadness or an exceptional state of euphoria.

It should not be the emotions which encourage dialog but reason exclusively. The well-timed or opportune moment to say this or that truth or to ask for a specific explanation will be determined by the level of intelligence and not the passions. To choose the best time for dialog is to assure its success.

**6. Persevering.** We have to give our dialog regularity, a definite and secure time in order to avoid the increase of misunderstandings and the accumulation of problems.

Here we could mention something about the interruptions of dialog. It still happens frequently that after a fight or a misunderstanding, we suspend that dialog which should be permanent and we may even suspend it for an indefinite time. Later comes the question: who of the two will initiate the dialog anew?

A lot depends on the temperament: the choleric is overly proud to initiate it; the melancholic is overly depressed by what happened; the phlegmatic probably does not care too much; the most probable one would be the sanguine who cannot bear the situation for very long. Now, if they ask me, I usually say: it is evident that the more mature one should reinitiate the dialog.

**7. Renewed.** Constancy in dialog demands in compensation an effort of renewal because, in spite of everything, it is necessary to have something to say to one another in order to speak. On the contrary, monotony in our dialog will be the norm. If the wife only knows how to talk about fashion or domestic service and the husband only knows how to talk about business or politics, it is obvious that in the long run the conversation will be boring. The word is dependant on the thought. Therefore, it is urgent to cultivate it as a duty. The refinement would be in the sense of opening anew their spirit and vision with the aim of learning how to live better and to know how to respond to the questions which every intelligent being asks himself/herself. Very important then the topic of our literature, our artistic realizations, our religious culture.....

### Questions for reflection

1. Am I one of those who wants to know everything about the other person?
2. Could I find three virtues in my spouse?
3. Do we dialog about spiritual topics?

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