

# Marriage\*

**\*after kids**



■ by Laura Goossens, MSW, LCSW

Marriage can be so hard, and when you add kids into the mix even harder. Being married with kids means you have to find a way to intentionally love on our spouse in the midst of all the middle of the night wake up's, soccer practices, and all the never-ending energy needed to keep all the tiny humans alive. Nevertheless, in marriage we are called to love and self-sacrifice for one another in the times that are better and worse, in the times that are full, and the times of stress where our cup feels empty.

The last 6 months of my life has been the most chaotic, as my husband and I are in the trenches of taking care of twin babies, and a 4.5 year old. In the midst of this hard season I have compiled a list of practical ways we have tried our best to continue to invest in our marriage when it feels like there is no time or energy left to do so.

## Small romantic gestures

You may be in a season of life where you can't go away on a romantic getaway, or have a date night at a fancy restaurant, but you can always find subtle ways to show your spouse you are thinking of them. In our season of life this has been little things like stepping up to change both twins diapers instead of leaving one for the other partner, being the first to wash all the bottles, or leaving the comfortable chair for the other spouse to sit in while we are both putting a twin to bed. It might sound stupid or trivial, but in the midst of sleep deprivation and chaos these little gestures do not go unnoticed.



## An out of the house date night at least once a month

Your marriage is your most important investment. The happier you are in your marriage, the happier your kids will be. I know some people argue for spending time together at home, but I honestly believe there is nothing like getting away from all the distractions and temptations to do laundry and connect one on one away from it all.

Sometimes this means you have to get creative and have a friend come over when the kids are in bed if finances are tight and you can't afford a sitter, but my encouragement is to get creative and do whatever you can to make this work for your family.

- Continued on Page 2 -

Article taken from the Jan | Feb 2020 issue of *PRESSING ON*, a Publication of Chicago Christian Counseling Center  
Chicago Christian Counseling Center has locations throughout Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana

[www.chicagochristiancounseling.org](http://www.chicagochristiancounseling.org)

708.845.5500 | [info@chicagochristiancounseling.org](mailto:info@chicagochristiancounseling.org)

[facebook.com/ChicagoChristianCounseling](https://facebook.com/ChicagoChristianCounseling) | Text CCCC to 22828 to join our email list

*Promoting health and wholeness through professional counseling, consultation and education from a Christian perspective.*

# Marriage\*

**\*after kids**



■ by Laura Goossens, MSW, LCSW

- Continued from Page 1 -

## Remind yourself your way of doing things is not the only way to do them

I know the type A personality types are cringing when I say this, yet this is so important. Sometimes we get so wrapped up in believing our way of doing things is best, and act out on our spouse when they have a different way of doing things. I remember one time I came home and my husband took it upon himself to fold all the towels and put them away in the closet. In my opinion the closet was a hot mess of disordered towel chaos, but I had to stop myself and remind myself of the selfless gesture he made, and the truth that there is no wrong way to fold towels.

## When you keep score, everyone loses

This is a phrase I have tried to always keep in mind. It's easy to get wrapped up in looking at how many diapers you have changed, kids you have gotten ready for school, lunches you have packed in comparison to your spouse. When it becomes a competition both parties become at war. When you stop and realize that both of you are doing your best in a really hard season of life and give each other grace you both win.



## Take time to check in

When the kids are in bed, or when you are on a date night, check in with each other. Purposely ask how your partner is doing, what needs they feel they have, and how you can work together to help them fill them. Ecclesiastes 4:12 "Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." When you are a team you have to look out for your teammates. The stronger you both are individually, the stronger you both will be together.

In closing, children are a gift, truly one of my favorite parts of life. Yet it's so easy to make your focus completely on them, and forget to focus on the relationship that is their foundation. We are all human and selfish by nature, but when we enter into a covenant of marriage we are agreeing to lay down our own needs and focus on our spouses instead in the easy seasons and the hard. The more we love on each other well the better foundation we will have for our family, and the better example of a Godly marriage we will represent for our children to follow one day. ■



*Laura Goossens is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and sees clients in our Orland Park and Tinley Park, IL locations.*

Article taken from the Jan | Feb 2020 issue of *PRESSING ON*, a Publication of Chicago Christian Counseling Center  
Chicago Christian Counseling Center has locations throughout Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana

[www.chicagochristiancounseling.org](http://www.chicagochristiancounseling.org)

708.845.5500 | [info@chicagochristiancounseling.org](mailto:info@chicagochristiancounseling.org)

[facebook.com/ChicagoChristianCounseling](https://facebook.com/ChicagoChristianCounseling) | Text CCCC to 22828 to join our email list

*Promoting health and wholeness through professional counseling, consultation and education from a Christian perspective.*