

ICES

The Marriage Meeting

*A simple, repeatable bi-weekly rhythm
that keeps you aligned, reduces friction,
and creates more space for real connection.*

BI-WEEKLY CHECK-IN

45-60 MINUTES

A NOTE

From Jamey & Melissa

Melissa and I started doing this bi-weekly meeting after realizing that most tension in marriage doesn't come from big, dramatic blowups. It comes from small things stacking up. Miscommunications. Assumptions. Unspoken stress. Calendar surprises. Budget tension. Household stuff.

Balancing a household is a lot of work. For us, this rhythm has been a game changer. Every other week, we sit down for 30–60 minutes and check in. How are we doing personally? How are we doing as a couple? What's coming up with work? What's happening with the kids? Where are we feeling pressure? Where might we be missing each other?

It's not romantic. It's not glamorous. It's practical.

But when we do it consistently, things run smoother. Friction goes down. Alignment goes up. Small issues stay small. And maybe most importantly, it frees up our date nights to actually feel like date nights. When the logistics and tension are handled here, connection time can just be connection.

This is the practical rhythm. On the alternating weeks, protect time that is just connection — date night, a walk, a drink, something that isn't logistics.

Pick a recurring time, protect it, and treat it like an appointment you don't casually cancel.

We've found that when this rhythm slips, we drift — not dramatically, just slowly. And slowly is hard to notice until you feel it. This meeting helps prevent that.

Our hope is that this gives you a simple, repeatable rhythm that keeps you aligned, reduces friction, and creates more space for real connection.

— *Jamey & Melissa*

GOOGLE DOC — EDITABLE DIGITAL VERSION

*Prefer to type? Open the link below, then go to **File** → **Make a copy** to save your own editable version to Google Drive.*

LINK

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kA8ZIVQFqF2AqH-k9ElxhK-HCmRKfHfOPTCG1Hvvgcl8/edit?usp=sharing>

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

If possible, take 5–15 minutes beforehand to review the prompts and gather anything you may need — calendar, budget snapshot, notes. You don't have to pre-fill everything, but coming prepared helps the conversation stay focused and productive.

1

SECTION 1

Center

Start with Prayer.

Ask for humility, clarity, patience, and unity.

Invite honesty and kindness into the conversation.

2

SECTION 2

Compliment & Gratitude

Each spouse shares one specific thing.

One thing I appreciate about you right now:

● SPOUSE 1

● SPOUSE 2

One thing you did recently that meant a lot to me:

● SPOUSE 1

● SPOUSE 2

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SECTION 3

Emotional Check-In

Each spouse answers honestly. No fixing. No defending. Just listening.

HIGH & LOW

What was a high for you over the past two weeks?

● SPOUSE 1

● SPOUSE 2

What was a low or challenging moment for you?

● SPOUSE 1

● SPOUSE 2

PERSONAL TEMPERATURE

On a scale of 1–10, how are you doing personally right now? (1 = overwhelmed / depleted, 10 = energized / thriving)

● SPOUSE 1

● SPOUSE 2

What's contributing to that number? (Optional)

● SPOUSE 1

● SPOUSE 2

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SECTION 4

Marriage Pulse

This is about how we're doing as a couple — not logistics yet.

WHAT'S WORKING

What feels good in our relationship right now?

● SPOUSE 1

● SPOUSE 2

WHERE WE'RE FEELING TENSION

Where are you feeling tension, distance, or frustration?

● SPOUSE 1

● SPOUSE 2

REPAIR

Is there anything I've said or done recently that may have hurt or bothered you?

● SPOUSE 1

● SPOUSE 2

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SECTION 5

Express Needs & Support

This is about moving forward intentionally.

STRENGTHENING "US"

What can we do differently over the next two weeks to make our marriage stronger?

● SPOUSE 1

● SPOUSE 2

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Is there something I can do to help you feel more loved, supported, or understood?

● SPOUSE 1

● SPOUSE 2

PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Is there anything I can do to make your life easier before our next meeting?

● SPOUSE 1

● SPOUSE 2

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SECTION 6

Work & Calendar

WORK

What's coming up at work that could affect our family life?

● SPOUSE 1

● SPOUSE 2

Any deadlines, travel, or stress points we should know about?

● SPOUSE 1

● SPOUSE 2

CALENDAR — NEXT TWO WEEKS

Open your calendars and review together

What commitments, travel, school events, or activities are already scheduled?

- ---
- ---
- ---
- ---
- ---

Is there anything we haven't discussed yet?

- ---
- ---

Where will we need extra coordination, coverage, or flexibility?

- ---
- ---

7 SECTION 7 Household

MENTAL LOAD

What household or family issues have been occupying your thoughts lately? (kids, repairs, clutter, schedules)

● SPOUSE 1

● SPOUSE 2

ALIGNMENT

How are we each feeling about how household responsibilities are being handled?

● SPOUSE 1

● SPOUSE 2

Is anything feeling unfair, unclear, or out of balance?

PRIORITIES BEFORE NEXT MEETING

What projects or chores need attention?

- ---
- ---
- ---
- ---
- ---

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SECTION 8

Budget

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

How are we doing with recent spending?

Are checking, savings, and credit cards where they should be?

PLANNING AHEAD

Are there large or upcoming purchases we need to prepare for?

Are we on track with our financial goals?

ADJUSTMENTS

Do we need to change or adjust anything before our next meeting?

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SECTION 9

Close

CONFIRM ALIGNMENT

BEFORE WE FINISH, ARE WE CLEAR ON:

- ☐ Key priorities for the next two weeks
- ☐ Important commitments or deadlines
- ☐ Support we agreed to provide
- ☐ The date of our next marriage meeting

Is there anything else we need to address before we wrap up?

-
-
-
-
-
-

END WITH CONNECTION

End with a hug, kiss, prayer, or simple physical affection. **Don't skip this part.**

NOTES

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SECTION 10

How to Have This Conversation Well

This meeting only works if both of you commit to the tone as much as the agenda.

1 Give Undivided Attention

- *No phones. No multitasking.*
- *One person speaks at a time.*
- *Presence communicates respect.*

2 Mirror Before You Respond

Before reacting, reflect back what you heard.

TRY SAYING

- *"What I hear you saying is..."*
- *"Did I get that right?"*

Mirroring slows the conversation and prevents misinterpretation.

3 Validate Before You Fix

Even if you don't fully agree, acknowledge your spouse's experience.

TRY SAYING

- *"That makes sense."*
- *"I can see why you'd feel that way."*

Validation does not mean agreement. It means your spouse feels understood.

4 Speak in "I" Statements

Describe your experience instead of diagnosing your spouse.

- *Not: "You're always critical."*
- *Instead: "I feel discouraged when..."*

You are responsible for your experience. Let your spouse be responsible for theirs.

5 Stay Curious

Ask questions before drawing conclusions.

TRY SAYING

- *"Can you say more about that?"*
- *"What did that feel like for you?"*

Curiosity keeps small tensions from turning into larger ones.

6 Slow Down If It Gets Heated

If emotions rise, pause. Take a breath. Return to mirroring and validation.

This meeting is for alignment — not for winning.