

COMMON MARRIAGE “STRESSORS” AND HOW TO MANAGE THEM AS A TEAM

Stress will occur through all stages of life and marriage. Some stressors may be recurrent, others stage-specific.

1 Early years.

- Negotiating boundaries: Discuss household responsibilities. As with many other marital issues there is no formula here; making it work is the object.
- Negotiating finances: If you establish joint accounts, decide who will balance them and who will pay the bills. Plan all major expenses together.

2 Middle years.

- Adjusting to life’s changes: It is unrealistic to expect your spouse to remain the same as the day you married. Seek each other’s counsel when making decisions that will affect your life together and communicate continually.
- Parenting: Children require time, money, and attention. Develop mutual understandings of your role as parents and define expectations around discipline and rearing techniques.

3 Later years.

- Retirement: If one or both spouses retire, the pattern of your daily living is going to change, and you may need to renegotiate expectations and responsibilities. Develop hobbies and activities that you can do alone and together. Do this prior to retirement.

- Saying goodbye to your partner: Discuss this critical topic with your spouse. Create both a will and a living will. Talk about preferred funeral practices. It may cause emotional discomfort, but this will aid your spouse at the time of your death.

