

# Rituals and Routines

MARRIAGE IN MOTION ▶ Module 4: An Epic Future

4.1

MODULE 4, LESSON 1

## SUMMARY

- The routines and rituals you keep act as a compass. They signal the direction you are headed. A healthy relationship involves building a life together that is full of meaning for the two of you. Your marital legacy is made up of the rituals you keep, the stories you tell, and the culture you create in your unique family.
- Rituals are formalized routines that we follow to make our time together sacred and special. They should create predictability and confidence that you will connect with your partner in a specific way. Rituals should be consistent enough that when you miss them, they are truly missed.
- In his book *The Intentional Family*, Bill Doherty revealed that when families don't create intention around their rituals, then their rituals will just happen to them. But when they did connect on purpose, it created...purpose. And confidence and intimacy.
- Rituals can be informal or formal. Informal rituals can be cooking dinner together each night and a formal ritual can be the way you celebrate your anniversary each year.
- One way to screw up a ritual is to not honor them. Honoring your rituals is a trust building exercise. Every single interaction you have with one another is either trust building or trust diminishing. Whatever you do, do it with purpose.

**Marriage is a creative endeavor. You get to decide what you want, what you hope for, what you're aiming at, and what you work toward.**

# ACTIVITIES

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In Module Four, we encourage you to look beyond your past pains, and your present realities, and to create movement toward your future goals and dreams.

Lesson #1 introduces the power and role of ritual in creating a foundation for your future. You'll learn about the two most important rituals for you to create and protect. You'll also learn about how creating rituals can be an exercise in trust building.

Below is an opportunity to reminisce about the rituals you grew up with in your family of origin and build new rituals in your relationship and family.

**As you think about rituals past, present, and future, here are some categories to reflect on:**

• Holidays • Bedtime • Gift Giving • Mealtime • Sunday • Birthdays • Summers • Cleaning • Vacations

## 1 RITUALS — CONVERSATION & JOURNAL

### *Conversation*



Think back to your childhood. What special, unique rituals did your family keep?  
What meaning did they create for you? What feelings do you have thinking back to this time?  
Are they pleasant, or difficult memories?

**Share with your spouse your memories and reflections on important past rituals.**

### *Journal*

**What rituals do you currently have in place in your family?**

How do they create a family culture? Are they adequate? How might you want to change, or add to them?

## *A Daily Ritual*

**If you don't currently have a daily ritual between you and your spouse, what is one morning ritual and one evening ritual you can create that will help establish a connection at the beginning and end of each day?** (Try something for a week, or for a month. If it works, keep it. If not, replace it.)

## *A New Ritual*

**Discuss the following with your partner:**



1. What is a ritual you had growing up that you would like to practice today?
2. Is there a ritual you used to have that dropped off, and you would like to bring back?
3. Think about an area in your relationship where you struggle. Can you introduce a ritual to disrupt — or even transform — the struggle? Is there a cleaning ritual, or a family vacation ritual, or a ritual before or after sex that may help create a new context for you both? If so, what steps do you need to take to make this ritual a part of your routine?



## **TAKEAWAY**

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**What was your #1 takeaway from this lesson? Describe any breakthrough(s):**