Relationship Advice

I would like to give a toast to the bride and groom, Melissa and Chris! May they thrive together in this new city and have a long and happy marriage. Every relationship we have contributes to a good human life, even our romantic relationships.

 Aristotle talks of Eudaimonia or human flourishing as worthwhile activities done well. So, Eudaimonia is this good human life we all want to live. It doesn’t start off with romantic relationships, but instead it starts off with friendship. Friendship means that you both wish goodwill on to each other, which I have seen you two do with my own eyes. The two of you immediately wished for good things to happen to each other, so that this goodwill is reciprocated.[[1]](#footnote-1) When you two first met, you hit it off straight away as friends who felt the same about many different things. This allowed the two of you to be able to talk and listen to each other, which made your friendship grow even stronger. As we all see now, the feelings got strong enough to become romantic, so here we are now with our two love birds Melissa and Chris.

 I have faith that you two will last a long time as romantic partners because I see the good people you are. Melissa, you have always been selfless, helpful, smart, and loving to those who get to know you the best. I wish you the best in your new life. Chris, I have only known you for a short amount of time, but I see how much of a gentleman and nice guy you are to Melissa and everyone who loves her and has known her for a long time. I will now give you guys some advice on how to have the successful long-term marriage we all want you guys to have. You can take it or leave it; I just want you two to know that you guys will be fine in this new city.

 First, I would like to say that trust is necessary in each other. You have to be able to always rely and depend on each other. Be there for each other. Second, make sure that you both understand the kinds of intimacy you value. The more shared types of intimacy you have, like physical or emotional, the better the possibility of your relationship to stay intimate. Also, remember to consider which side of who you are you show to each other, and work towards it being the good side. Remember to lift each other up with your communications and to have each other’s backs when things get tough.[[2]](#footnote-2) The more you work on getting better at these things, the longer your relationship will last.

 Another consideration is how marriage lives both in the hopeful future and the past of good recollections like Kierkegaard writes as Judge Wilhelm in the Aesthetic Validity of Marriage.[[3]](#footnote-3) In order for your romantic relationship to be the best it can be, you two need to think of your love in the past and hope for more of it in the future, so that where you are in the present gets you to the goal of a long-term relationship with the love you have for each other now. You can’t think of just the past or just the future because that means you aren’t truly together in the present. To help you be in the present I have a few suggestions that have worked for others that might help.

To start off, practice giving your full attention to your partner sometime during the week because that can help your trust or connection to each other grow. Then, recommit to each other every day. Remember that it is good to be playful and have fun with each other, too. Always be willing, open, and ready to share the work in this long-term relationship. If there is conflict that isn’t a big deal, let it go, and never go to sleep mad. If the conflict is a big deal, it is important to talk it out with each other to think of a solution. A last piece of advice for now is to be able to show your love each other by both big gestures like trips and small gestures like compliments.[[4]](#footnote-4)

 It has been found that communication is the number one skill for a long-term successful relationship through a study by Robert Epstein and colleagues. They looked at 7 different skills including communication, knowing your partner, and sex and romance. What they found was that communication and knowing your partner were the two most important skills for a successful relationship.[[5]](#footnote-5) What I will add to this is that when you know your partner well enough and show them this, then they will be happier, and the relationship will be better off. This shows that you both care about each other. Also, there is work from the professor, Brian Ogolsky, that shows that both the individual and couple do things to avoid splitting and to improve their partnerships.[[6]](#footnote-6) The individual might idealize their partner, while the couple will be willing to sacrifice or make each other less stressed to avoid splitting. To improve the partnership, an individual needs to think about what is best for the couple or pray for their partner, and the couple needs to do something like use good humor to diffuse stress. These things can help but aren’t guaranteed to help your relationship last, so try them and see what happens.

 Something else I have figured out that could help is that since you guys have similar personalities, financial status, and social status, it is more likely for your marriage to be successful.[[7]](#footnote-7) With that in mind, I want you two to continue to cook together and go to church together because it will help keep your relationship close. For the lover of the two of you, always desire what is best for the beloved and to be united with the beloved. It is important to know that the strength of these desires can change, so there are many different degrees of love.[[8]](#footnote-8) I wish the two of you the best of luck in your marriage and remember that all you need is love.

Bibliography

Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics: Book VIII, Ch.2, note 3

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Aesthetic Validity of Marriage by Soren Kierkegaard, p.91-92

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1. Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics: Book VIII, Ch.2, note 3 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/communication-success/201210/7-keys-long-term-relationship-success> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Soren Kierkegaard, The Aesthetic Validity of Marriage p. 91-92 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/meet-catch-and-keep/201702/7-secrets-successful-relationship> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/fulfillment-any-age/201701/the-2-essential-keys-successful-long-term-relationship> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <http://time.com/4927173/relationships-strategies-studies/> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042810017842>. Discussion section: commonalities part [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Love by All Accounts by Eleanore Stump, p. 27-28. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)