

A Next-Step Mentality

MARRIAGE IN MOTION ▶ Module 4: An Epic Future

4.2

MODULE 4, LESSON 2

SUMMARY

- When couples start planning on the future, they rarely have a meaningful process for doing it.
- This lesson is about moving you away from making your relationship “less bad” to forBetter. Too many couples stay stuck, not knowing how to reach the next step in their relationship. Our goal is to help you begin planning for the future, a future that is meaningful and rich with possibilities. In order to do so, you will work through a four-step process for achieving the relationship you desire and deserve.
- The four elements of a Next Step Mentality are:
 1. **Dreaming** — You have to allow yourself to dream and then articulate it. Dreaming is about being clueless, foolish, and naive. Now is not the time to judge or analyze. Simply dream.
 2. **Data** — Gather information. What would it take to make your dream a reality?
 3. **Discussion** — Schedule time to have a discussion. This is NOT time for making a decision.
 4. **Decision** — Now it is finally decision making time.
- Our goal for you is to be intentional and proactive about moving in the directions of your dreams, one small step at a time.

“Nothing happens unless first we dream.”

— CARL SANDBURG

ACTIVITIES

1 DREAMING

Something fantastic happens when couples come together to support one another in reaching their life's goals, mission, and/or dreams. The only way to support your partner's dreams is to actually have a dream.

This exercise is intended for you to brainstorm an entire page full of dreams. And when I say brainstorm, I really mean *heartstorm*. For the moment, I want you to turn your brain off, stop thinking, and instead feel with your heart and soul.

What dreams will guide your future?

WRITE DOWN ANY AND ALL OF THE DREAMS THAT COME TO MIND. Don't worry about how you will achieve your dream, or whether or not it is realistic. For now, just focus on the end result — dreaming.

Here are a few questions to consider that may help build out your list of dreams:

- When are you and your partner at your happiest?
- When have you grown the most as a person?
- What do you enjoy doing for fun?
- Who is someone you admire? Why?
- What is something you have always wanted to try?
- What accomplishment are you most proud of?
- If you could have any job for a day, what would it be?
- What is your greatest talent?

2 DATA



Now that you have an entire page full of dreams, select **ONE** dream to focus on. Write that dream in the space below.

Collecting data will take some effort but it's an important piece of the puzzle when making an educated decision. If "dreaming" is plotting a destination on a map, then "data" is researching your route.

Use this space to begin organizing your data. How much will it cost? What is the time commitment? How will I need to shuffle competing priorities? Is there anyone I should seek counsel from to gather more data?

3 DISCUSSION

Discussing your dreams may be new for you. We are asking that you be vulnerable and share intimate details about your most treasured desires with your partner. You may even find yourself feeling defensive. That's okay! This is a new skill you are learning.



Let's for a moment, assume that your partner is on your team. They **WANT** to support you in achieving your dreams.

Speaker, your role is to be clear, vulnerable and candid about your wishes and desires. Listener, your role is to be warm, supportive and curious. Listen with the thought of mind of "How can I help you reach your dream?" Again, the point is not to determine how 'realistic' the dream is, but to uncover and share the desires and hopes that drive the dream.

Take turns sharing your dream and why this dream is important to you. Remember that you are not making any decisions at the time. You are simply learning how to discuss your dreams, and so explore what might be driving them.

4 DECISION



Now is the time to decide IF and HOW you will move forward. The operative question is:

Do you really want this dream to come true? If so, you need to choose it, and begin planning the specific (small) steps required to make it come to life.

Do you need to research? Budget? Get a mentor?

What is the next, specific, measurable step that you need to take to make this dream real?

And more important, as a couple — are you able to support one another's dreams, and in what capacity?

Keeping with our motto, remember, you can only make a dream come true with small, consistent steps in the right direction.

*“If you have built castles in the air,
your work need not be lost; that is where they should be.
Now put the foundations under them.”*

— HENRY DAVID THOREAU



TAKEAWAY

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