



have become! McDonald's has given way to more expensive choices. My nine-year-old, Sadie, used to choose Applebee's. She loved the barbecue ribs. Once when Sadie and I returned from lunch, Samuel, my six-year-old, loudly declared, "Sadie, you ate at Applebee's." Like Simon Peter, she denied it three times. Unconvinced, Samuel whispered to me, "Dad, her breath *smells* like Applebee's!"

### **8. Pray together each night.**

If you are married, there is no better way to close out the day than to pray with your spouse. This involves your spouse in your ministry and allows you to pray for each other's needs. These prayers promote intimacy and foster commitment to god and to your marriage.

### **9. Turn the television and computer off, and play together.**

Television stalls conversation and interaction. Use it sparingly. Couples and families who watch TV for extended periods of time or spend countless hours on the computer talk to one another less and less. Replace those hours with interactive activities that stretch your mind and creativity. You'll make memories that last a lifetime.

### **10. Keep the communication lines open.**

The need to communicate doesn't end when you turn forty or when the kids group up. Someone said, "If Adam had been talking to Eve, she wouldn't have been out in the garden talking to a snake." Guys, we need to be listening *and* talking. Communication is key to making a ministry marriage work.

When I was growing up, I was always intrigued by the personal attention my parents gave to each other. As we ate dinner together, my dad would pull an index card out of his pocket. On it would be a few words he had jotted down that day. Referring to the card, Dad would share events of the day or things he'd heard. He might say, "Jed Winston got season tickets to the Reds' games," or "A new Disney movie is coming out." Even now, Dad makes his list and goes over it with Mom. She knows that when he jotted something down, he was thinking of her. She knows that she was on his mind throughout the day, and that makes their moments together even more precious.

Excerpted from [Keeping Your Head Above Water](#)