

boys, "it's essential to have a broad social experience in your early years. Get to know many other boys and girls—and study and compare them."

**Keep yourself mobile romantically**

In my marriage counseling, I have discovered a significant fact about steady dating: it's not the "big wheel" at school—the successful student or athlete—who generally goes steady. Far more often, the regular dater turns out to be an insecure youngster who ties up with a similar person.

I believe this is most revealing. Young people who don't think they are as good as the others are afraid of facing the possibility of datelessness. But more assured boys and girls are confident of their ability to attract a date when one is needed.

There is an important lesson here to be learned by parents. Instill as much confidence as you can in a youngster. Praise him often so that he'll get the idea he's pretty good. Encourage him to become important in some area where his talents can stand out.

**Boys—learn to cook**

The man who acquires a few household skills makes a better husband. Unlike too many men, he won't make the mistake of underestimating a wife's job at home. He'll never say those fighting words: "But what do you do all day long?" He'll know.

The attitude that care of the home and children is solely a wife's job can trigger serious problems. A man who feels this way overburdens his wife, who is apt to become unhappy and even bitter, especially if she sees other husbands pitching in.

**Girls—learn arithmetic**

Bury forever the notion that a wife who "simply has no head for figures" is cute. In these days of complex budgeting and marketing, a wife must be accurate in her mathematics. Few things irritate a man more than a scatterbrain who goes shopping with a \$20 bill and returns with the wrong change!

I also advise my daughter to learn as much science as she can, and not merely so she can understand the space age. She will need it—and I am perfectly serious—to cope with the complicated appliances now on the market and the many kinds of synthetic fabrics which must be washed and dried according to instructions or they can be ruined. And, of course, she also must know the scientific aspects of nutrition.

**Don't delay marriage because you're having too much fun**

Girls, especially, must be aware of this pitfall. "Oh," they may say, "I don't want to tie myself down. Life's too exciting." Getting married too soon can be a great mistake—but I've also seen many lovely girls who kept on having fun until the parade passed them by. They ended up as attractive but lonely spinsters.

"You must be aware of the right time to wed," I tell Betty, "as well as the wrong time."

**Make sure your personality traits mesh**

One evening, the talk turned to the kinds of people with whom we can best get along. I stressed that since marriage means living with another human being day in and year out, it's crucial to pay the closest attention to the types of behavior or



personal characteristics that irritate you and would make a marriage unendurable.

I made these points:

If both of you like to talk and neither likes to listen, trouble almost surely will develop. A talker needs a listener, at least some of the time.

If you are unhappy unless you are with lots of people all the time and going places, while the other person likes nothing better than to spend quiet evenings at home listening to the hi-fi—think twice.

If you are quick and bright, and he or she likes to absorb ideas more slowly, ask yourself: are you impatient with people who aren't as sharp? Do they irritate you, and do you tend to belittle them? If so, you'll be smart to pick someone whose plodding mind won't annoy you.

**An engagement is not a marriage—break it if you must**

Many young people, and parents, too, seem to feel that a broken engagement is some sort of disgrace. It's not. An engagement is neither final nor binding, and a broken one merely means that the parties involved have decided, upon the basis of a trial period, that a marriage would not work.

"Never feel that you must go ahead with a marriage if you discover something that will make a successful union impossible," I tell my children.

Naturally, this does not mean that you should enter into an engagement lightly or break one for trivial reasons. Furthermore, if a girl has a string of broken engagements in her past, it's an indication that something in her personality needs straightening out.

She may have been so indulged by her parents that she isn't ready to accept a relationship in which she must give as well as receive. She needs counseling before she can hope to have a truly successful married life.

**Don't feel you have to "tell all" to your mate**

At home we haven't gone into this except in briefest form, but if the question ever should arise, I would say this:

There needn't be any "confessions" to your wife, husband, or engagement partner. Whatever has happened before you met doesn't concern him or her. It's your business and yours alone! But if your secret can affect your marriage or children, you should tell. This would include any serious chronic ailments, a suspected tendency toward certain diseases, a prior marriage, or large debts.

What is most important, however, is not what lies in your past but what you are now and what you will become as a wife, husband, or parent.

**Don't let your husband outgrow you**

This is a serious danger to a woman. A man, by leaving home daily to go to work, almost automatically grows. He meets people, sees the world in action, and develops socially and intellectually. His wife, however, is left home with the babies, and her horizons may not expand. If all she learns is the latest neighborhood gossip, then there is a good chance she will be shut out of her husband's expanding world.

To prevent this drifting apart, a wife should participate in community activities. She should take adult-education courses at night while her husband

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