Getting on the Same Page: Learning to Drive “The Marriage Mobile”.
Dr. Randy Chatelain, Ph.D., Marriage and Family Therapist
DrChat-Marriage.com

Myth: Happy Couple are Always on the Same Page.

Learning to Drive “The Marriage Mobile”.
The Marriage Mobile has Two Steering Wheels, Two Gas Pedals, Two Brakes.
The Marriage Mobile is a Challenge to Drive!
It takes Consideration, Cooperation, and Lots of Communication.
Being on the Same Page and Having a Common Goal or Destination, Really Helps.
Some Couples fight over Who’s Driving. The fight over the Steering Wheels.
They fight over the Brakes.
Some partners say, “I’ll Drive, you just go along. Besides, I’m the Better Driver.”

Equifinality – We want Both Partners in the Front Seat.
“Just because I let you drive, doesn’t mean you’re in control or better than me.”
“I am in the front seat, too, and have a brake if I need it.”
Sometimes, I let you drive because you are better in that area, and I am better in other areas. (Roles, Knowledge, Skills)

Control is a Myth. Everything anyone gives me is a Gift.
I am in Our Relationship by Choice. It is my Gift.
“Consideration” is my favorite word for “Respect”.
I consider you in everything I do.
“Cooperation” We Cooperate so we can Ride Together. Give a Little, Get a Little.
Make it a Win-Win. I don’t always get My Way.
“Communication” It takes Lots and Lots of Communication
to drive The Marriage Mobile.

Novels -- Each of us have in our head a “Novel” called “Life According to Me”.
Our Novel has our Beliefs, our Rules, our Strategies, and our Fantasy Agenda.
No two Novels will be identical. We will Differ!
I have a Right to My Novel, You have a Right to Yours.
Can I Love Someone with a Different Novel? (If not, I had better be a Hermit.)
Our Individual Novel has Many Chapters.
Like Overlapping Circles, Each Partner’s Chapter may be Very Different,
or Very Similar. That is when we feel “On the Same Page”.
It is Important to Understand Each Other’s Novel and Chapters.

Only You Can Read Me Your Novel.
Only You Can Edit or Change Your Novel. There are No “White Out Rights”.
Just because you read me your novel, doesn’t mean I have changed mine.
Only I can change my Novel.
**Consensus** – Consensus basically means we both agree.

**Consensus is important** in items or decisions that affect both of us.

**Through Consideration, Cooperation and Communication;**

We can get Consensus, Buy-in, and Support.

I actually **recommend “Voting” as a sign of Consensus, or Not.**

After Communicating and Sharing Our Novels, we write down our Plan and Vote on the Plan.

Either partner can present an Item for a Vote.

**After Consensus, Your Idea now becomes Our Idea.**

You have my “Buy-in” and we are on the “Same Page”.

**Rule:** Consensus cannot be achieved through duress or by manipulation, coercion or deception. Remember, **Control takes away the Gift.**

**Rule:** Without consensus, I cannot “over-ride” you.

(Forgiveness isn’t better than Permission.)

Some partners feel that Consensus gives their Partner too much “Veto Right”.

(Remember, it goes both ways.)

**A Consensus can be changed by another Consensus.**

(But, I can’t just Disregard Our Consensus.)

---

*The Marriage Mobile: Consideration, Cooperation and Communication; plus, Novels and Consensus all work together for “Getting on the Same Page”.*