

**Kate Northrup:** It's really critical that we both have full robust lives together and full robust lives apart. I can't even tell you how attractive it is when Mike has all these plans with his guy friends or doing this thing or planning this thing, it's wonderful because I know that I am not his only source of joy or emotional nourishment. Same with me. Like, I have all kinds of things going on that I'm happy to tell him about and share with him, but I bring that energy back to our back to our marriage. But I'm not dependent on our marriage as my only source of social and emotional nourishment.

Welcome to Plenty. I'm your host, Kate Northrup. And together, we are going on a journey to help you have an incredible relationship with money, time, and energy, and to have abundance on every possible level. Every week, we're gonna dive in with experts and insights to help you unlock a life of plenty. Let's go fill our cups.

**Voice Over:** Please note that the opinions and perspectives of the guests on the Plenty podcast are not necessarily reflective of the opinions and perspectives of Kate Northrup or anyone who works within the Kate Northrup brand.

**Kate Northrup:** Oh, my goodness. Today is my 10th wedding anniversary, which is hard to believe because I feel like I literally got married last year, and I do not know how it has been 10 years. I mean, I do feel like I've been with Mike for our entire lifetime, but I also feel like what is time anyway? I mean, we're just things I don't know. I will just say, to celebrate.

Things are the best they've ever been in our marriage and, more connected, than even 10 years ago in many ways. And so for anyone who is in a relationship where it's gotten stagnant or stale, or like the spark went out, we have been through those periods of time, particularly around, like, times of young kids, particularly around times of Mike's illness and injuries, like, you know, it was not a sexy time, but I will just say it keeps getting better and better. And in some ways, beyond my wildest dreams of what might be possible. And that's, you know, we've been together for 13 years. We've been married for 10.

And so I just put that out there as a celebration and as possibility for anyone listening that, it can get better and better and juicier and juicier and, like, more connected even over time. I don't think that it has to be the story for all of us that relationships fade or get stale. I think that they can get even better. And, I also will say this. I don't know that that's the path for every relationship, and I don't I don't see relationships ending as a failure in any way.

That's, like, a whole other episode I could do. So that's not to say you're doing something wrong if that's not happening, but it is just to say, like, it can happen, and we are experiencing that. And there it's not like there haven't been some real dark years in there. So all of that to say, celebrating 10 years with my amazing husband, Mike, and he's also my business partner. He's also the greatest dad of all time.

And I'm gonna give you 8 tips that I have that really work for us in our relationship in celebration. I probably should have come up with 10. Maybe by the end of the episode, I will have 10 tips for 10 years. But right now I have 8. And so I'm gonna start out with number 1.

And this one I learned from I mean, this one is, like, common. A lot of people talk about it. But I learned specifically from a woman named Jill Rogers who taught a workshop called the 7 sacred steps that I took in early, early days with Mike. And so my number one is to really stay in your heart and consciously open your heart, especially in times of conflict. So, what we know from the Institute of Heart Math is that the electromagnetic field of the heart is, like, 6 times as big or maybe even more.

It might be 60. I don't know. Maybe, Samantha, you can fact check me on that while you're here. I have it in my slide deck from relax money, but I can't I can't bring it to recall right off the bat. But what we do know is that the electromagnetic field of the heart reaches 3 to 5 feet outside of the heart in full 360.

So if you think about that, in a relationship, how often are you in proximity where the other person is standing within 3 to 6 feet from you? It's like, hopefully a lot. They're actually feeling the electromagnetic field of your heart. It is 60 times greater than the brain. I was 10 up.

So the electromagnetic field of your heart is 60 times greater than the electromagnetic field of the brain. It is such an incredible opportunity to sync up energetically with those we love, whether they're our romantic partner, our children, our friends, other people who we love and who matter to us, to really tend to our coherence. And coherence means that your heart is in a coherent rhythm, electrically speaking, energetically speaking, that is smooth and consistent. And we can create coherence through literally opening our hearts, becoming present to love. And this is particularly difficult when we're in times of conflict, and I have had the powerful experience of being in conflict with Mike and then consciously consciously choosing to open my heart even though I really wanna keep it closed, and the tone of the exchange changes immediately.

I will tell you every single time we're in conflict, and I think, Kate, you could open your heart, I don't want to, I never want to. And yet when I do, immediately, the love begins to flow again and we can find each other. And so if you are wondering, like, how do I actually open my heart? I have 2 tips. One is I got from Jill Rogers.

You can actually just imagine that there's a gate on your heart, and you can see it swinging open. It really works. And then the other thing is to bring to mind something or someone who you just have tremendous overflowing unconditional love for. And for a lot of people, it could be, like, a baby or a puppy that can immediately pop us into an open heart and coherence. So those are my two tips for opening your heart, But staying in open heartedness with your romantic partner actually does sync up your heart rhythms and allows you to find each other.

This is, like, really, really beautiful practice. Okay. Number 2 is to get on the same page financially. Our connection to the energies of money, sex, and power are all intertwined. Our sexual energy is related to our financial energy.

Our power, personal power, not power over but power to or power with, our personal power is very intertwined with our finances and with our sexual energy. Now, if you're feeling blocked sexually, if you're feeling blocked with your partner, if you're feeling blocked with your personal power and just with agency and choice in your life, looking at how am I showing up with my sexual energy, how am I showing up financially, is really helpful, and we can talk about that in over time. But for now, getting on the same page where you are having honest, open hearted conversations with your partner around money is critical. There's so much stagnation that happens for people around their connection, around the electricity in a couple when there are lies about money, when there's secrecy, when there are half truths, when there's just vagueness, it really can suck your, your connection energy. It really can suck your sexual energy out of the relationship when there's weird stuff going on around money.

And and I probably shouldn't use the word weird. I mean, the truth is it's actually very quote unquote normal to not have healthy, clear conversations around money. I mean, the number one cause of divorce are is conflict around finances, but so much of that could be prevented through the following. So these are 3 sub tips within the get on the same page financially tip. Number 1, find common values.

So often, we can get stuck in relationship in terms of like, well, he wants to, you know, spend money on sports equipment or a fancy car or whatever. And I wanna have it for x y z. And we can really get into this, like, us against them feeling like them or me. And actually, we all have common ground. You know that the vesica pisces is a sacred geometry shape that shows the overlap.

It's essentially a Venn diagram. Right? Like, I'm over here, you're over here, but there's a shared crescent in the middle. And that shared area in the Venn diagram is the place where you can meet in terms of what is important to both of you, what matters to both of you. Money is meant to be used towards what we value.

Money likes to be spent on things that truly matter to us, not on random shit that that you're just buying to, like, keep up with the Joneses or, you know, build up your ego for what it looks like from a status perspective. And if you can really get on the same page with your partner about shared values, it cleans up the money game way more easily and powerfully. One of the things we do in relaxed money is we get really clear on aligning our spending and our entire financial picture with what really matters, and I have some very specific practices and processes for people to do that. But high level, if you can get clear on what you what matters to you, what matters to your partner, and have a combined list, you can get on the same page financially much more easily. Number 2 sub tip is have financial transparency.

Are there any financial conversations you've been avoiding? Are there any facts that you haven't told your partner about your financial history? Are you hiding anything when it comes to money? Now, I am not saying it's not okay to have your own money. That's not what I'm saying at all.

I think that can be a really healthy choice for people to have some shared expenses and some money that's just on their own. But having transparency is very key. Money secrets are a huge interruption in the connection field and also in the polarity field, and being able to be on the same page is key. So clean that up. I did a whole episode a while back on on on the problem with financial secrets and what they are costing you, and we really dove into that.

So we'll link that in the show notes. And then the third thing is to understand and find compassion for your partner's money story. When Mike and I first, took off on our road trip, part of our story is that I invited him. We weren't we weren't dating it. It wasn't romantic in any way.

We'd only hung out 2 times or maybe 3 times. But I invited him to drive across the country with me completely out of the blue, which is kind of another story for another time. But I think maybe we we told it on the episode, when he was on this past September. Anyway, in that com in that time, we ended up 5 a 5 day road trip ended up turning into 10 months living on the road, living life out of my Toyota Prius and being we didn't have another home. We were staying in Airbnbs, friends' houses, hotels.

We lived on the road for 10 months out of my car. And as a result, there was a lot of time for talking. And in the that initial 5 days to 2 weeks, we really talked about everything. And one of the things we talked about was our money stories. What did we learn from our parents?

What was modeled for us? What did we make that mean? What were some of the key moments in our money stories? And it helped me, like, understanding how Mike's parents relate to money, understanding his upbringing, understanding his financial conditioning really helped me to bring a lot of compassion to our financial life and to our financial conversations because I understand that his behavior, it can be colored by some of that past history. He understands that some of my behavior can be colored by my past history.

And sometimes when I'm acting out of my less conscious self financially and getting into a fear pattern or whatever it may be, Mike can passionately remind me of that. And I can do the same, so that we can snap ourselves more quickly out of unconscious programming and re and come back to the table as our current adult selves, because we don't wanna have our child selves running our financial lives. So that's getting on the same money page. Number 3 is having great boundaries. Something about Mike that I love about him is that he is incredibly direct.

But at first, it was really hard for me because I come from a family where we are very, like, more wishy washy and sugarcoat y, and we don't just, like, say the thing like that. So at first, especially when Mike would be direct with my family, I was like, ah, ouch. Oh. And I could feel myself be coming engrossed with their feelings about his directness. And this has come up so

many times in our marriage where it's like, he'll say something really direct to a friend and then I am I go into this like or I have gone into this like emotional pleasing thing where then I start emotionally caretaking and getting in the middle of it.

And one of the best parts of our marriage has been how much it has allowed me to heal the codependency in myself of either when Mike is feeling grumpy or off or whatever, like, in any way, shape, or form needing to fix that in order for me to feel okay, or if any of my family members or friends or whatever are feeling any kind of way about something that has happened, also not needing to do anything about that or fix that in any way in order for me to feel okay in myself. And so that really comes down to boundaries. And if you, we have an episode coming up if it hasn't come out already with my friend Terry Cole, who wrote a great book called Boundary Boss. And one of the things she teaches about is how to really heal our codependency, especially for over functioning codependents who, really spend so much time and energy making sure everyone else is okay. And really, they want to tell themselves they're doing that for everyone else, but actually they're doing that because at a deep core fundamental level, they don't feel okay unless everyone else is okay.

And I was one of those people, and so having great boundaries in my marriage where it's like, if Mike is feeling off, I can just check-in with him and be like, hey. Is there something you you and I need to clean up? You is there an inner you know, is there a conversation we need to have that's between something that happened between us? And if the answer is no, I can just leave it at that and be like, okay, babe. If there's anything you need that I can do to support you in your healing, in working through whatever you've got going on emotionally, please let me know.

But otherwise, I'm gonna be over here living my life and tending to what I need to tend to instead of getting sucked down whatever thing he's having going on over there. And he had to have the same thing, like, I could take him on a whole emotional roller coaster years ago that he would then get spun out for days because I would be on my own whole thing. And he too has learned to get off the codependency train and just be like, okay. Great. You go do that.

I'm just gonna be over here having my own experience, and that has been absolutely huge for us. The other thing is if you work with your partner like we do, we've run a business together unofficially since 2011, but officially since 2013. Having a clear time to discuss certain things is key for us. So we have clear a clear time to talk about money every week. We have our money date on Fridays.

We have a clear time to talk about scheduling and planning. It happens on Sunday nights. And then we have a clear time to talk business things. It often happens on Monday mornings. We also have a team meeting.

So we have times to talk about specific things so that what used to happen would be, like, we'd be laying in bed at night falling asleep, and I'd be like, hey. And I would give him, like, 35 ideas about an email sequence. And Mike was like, hi. Yeah. Not the time.

Or sometimes Mike most of the time, Mike wakes up sometimes several hours before I do, like, 2 to 3 hours before I do. So by the time I roll out at 6:30 or 6:45, Mike's been up, and he's, like, on. And sometimes he'll be like, hey. So we have a or he he has been. Hey.

So we have a problem. And he'll, like, hit me with some kind of customer service issue, and I'm, like, hold up. I just woke up. I'm still in liminal space. I'm kind of like in dream world.

This is not the time, like now I'm panicked. This is not good for my nervous system. So we have set up a structure where there are certain times scheduled to collect certain kinds of conversations that we need to have, and it happens every week, and we know it's in the calendar. And that's been really helpful for the part of me that can go into hyper vigilance of, like, oh, we have to schedule this thing, and we haven't talked about it yet, or this money thing, or, like, this idea I have. And so now I keep in my notes app in my phone a mic agenda.

And so when I think of something I need to tell Mike or talk to him about, I don't just walk into his office and bug him right then. I put it in my agenda. And then when we're sitting down to talk about things, I have my agenda items. Now that's business y things. Obviously, if there's something I need to talk about with the kids or our marriage or whatever, it's far more fluid.

But from a business perspective, having that container of those specific scheduling moments and that agenda has been a game changer for my internal landscape of a feeling of safety and calm and organization. And it helps Mike to stay focused on what he's doing instead of me interrupting him him with my multitude of ideas. Okay. Number 4, cultivate your own joy. This is so critical.

I have a lot of friends and relationships and things I do outside of our marriage. Mike has a lot of friends and relationships and things he does outside of our marriage. It's really critical that we both have full robust lives together, and full robust lives apart. I can't even tell you how attractive it is when Mike has all these plans with his guy friends or doing this thing or planning this thing. It's wonderful because I know that I am not his only source of joy or emotional nourishment.

Same with me, like I have all kinds of things going on, that I'm happy to tell him about and share with him. But I bring that energy back to our back to our marriage, but I'm not dependent on our marriage as my only source of social and emotional nourishment. We both have, like, wide social circles. A lot of places we go for that. I also do not depend on Mike for my, like, emotional processing or when I'm having a hard time exclusively.

So, like, of course, we will talk to each other if we're having a hard time, but the truth is, like, a lot of my girlfriends are much better at having those conversations different level. So I will often, if I'm having a hard time, I'll process something over voice memos with a girlfriend, I'll call a girlfriend, or I'll process it elsewhere, and then, like, I'll bring the CliffsNotes back to Mike because, honestly, like, he just doesn't need to do as much talking about stuff as I do. And so that's really great for us. Same thing if he's having a hard time with something, it used to be more that I was his primary source of kind of emotional, I don't know what to call it, not

emotional nourishment, but, like, you know, just like when he needed to work through something emotionally, I was more of the place to go for that. When he got really sick in 2018 and I was, like, trying to keep it together with the business and we had a new baby and a toddler and whatever.

I just, like, didn't have the bandwidth. I was so stressed out, and I didn't have the bandwidth. So I would respond to him. Thanks for letting me know. Who can you call for support around that?

Because I just knew I didn't have it in me. And that set up a dynamic where I'm sure I who knows? We could ask him. Like, at first, maybe it felt a little jarring, but he then grew this incredible network of support where now he has, like, a bunch of people he can call if he's having a hard time. And I'm not usually his first call.

And I think that's actually, like, really wonderful, and it keeps our relationship more fresh and romantic. And it doesn't mean that we won't tell each other when something's going on, but we don't need to dump anything on each other emotionally because we have so many other places to get those needs met. So that's been really great. And we really focus on cultivating our own joy as well as our own emotional nourishment elsewhere as well as with each other. Okay.

Number 5 is fun. Like organizing fun. Regina Thomas Hauer, AKA Mama Gina, who's a friend and been a mentor of mine for years, nearly 2 decades, she says it's not love that keeps relationships together. It's fun. And I really have to agree with her.

Like, the more fun Mike and I have, the more we do different kinds of stuff, whether it's, like, instead of doing our usual going out to a restaurant, like, maybe, one night he took me axe throwing. That was amazing. Like, maybe we'll go do mini golfing or go do he I will in full transparency, like, he's usually like, hey. Let's go do this other thing. And I'm like, yeah, but there's this new restaurant I wanna try.

So part of my fun is, like, I'm a foodie. I love to I love to do that, but we do have a date night every single week, and we try new things. We are I especially am someone who loves novelty. And so, like, getting out in the world and trying new stuff with Mike strengthens our connection and it's a way it's a way that we have fun. Number 6 is don't stuff it down.

This is one that I have really had to work on. My family of origin, like I said, we don't just, like, call shit out. We just it's like there's there's some stuffing. There's some, you know, some patterning around that. And so I've had to learn to when something's not okay to say it and often to say it in real time.

Like, instead of if Mike says something that I don't like the way he said it to me, it used to be that I would sit on that for weeks and sometimes not say something. But now I'll be like, hey. You can't talk to me that way right in the moment. And I cannot even tell you the amount of growth it shows that I can just right in the moment say back, like, set a boundary right then or and just to, like, not stuff it down. So I we really practice talking through things right away or at least within a

few hours if, like, the kids are around or if somebody's visiting or whatever, we might not handle it right in that moment because I don't think that's appropriate.

But very shortly after, within that day, ideally, we'll sit down and be like, hey. I need to clean this up with you. And oftentimes, it's like a 5 minute conversation because we stay current on what we need to talk about. We have those hard conversations regularly so that there's not some big blow up that's, like, left over from months or even years of not having said anything. Now we've been in therapy together since 2016, and we don't see our therapist every week anymore.

You know, sometimes it'll be a year, in between when we talk to him, but we have practice. Like, we've had help in this area. We didn't come into marriage just being good at it. So I guess that's my that's one of my bonus items. So now we're up to number 9.

Go to therapy. Go to therapy. Very, very helpful to have some help in this regard. Number 7 is this is for everybody, is to have clear roles and responsibilities, but particularly if you run a business together to be really clear on like, this is what I do. This is what you do, and not getting into the like, little gray area or, like, nebulous land of we didn't talk about who's doing what, so therefore, one person is taking on more than their fair share, or one person is feeling resentful, or you're both doing something unnecessarily.

So at home, this could look like, and this literally does in our relationship every now and again, we revisit an entire list of all the things required to keep our household running. And those would include taking out the trash, scheduling play dates, buying birthday party presents for the kids, organizing travel, you know, like creating holiday magic, keeping the kids' clothes updated, and making sure they have sneakers that fit. Like, all of that stuff, we actually will list it all out, and we will go through and say, okay. Who's doing it now? Is that still how we wanna keep it?

Do we need to change that? Do we need to eliminate this task? Do we need to delegate this task? Are you still good doing it? And so at any given time, like, we already have an agreement in place of who's doing what, and so I'm not sitting around fuming because I'm doing more than my fair share.

Mike's not sitting around fuming because he's doing his fair share. But I will tell you, when one of us starts making a sideways comment about something in that regard, I call it out right away. And I'm like, hey, do we need to revisit our agreements? Because when those sideways resentful comments start coming out, even though you're like, oh, I'm just joking. It's because there is an imbalance there.

And I know there's like an entire body of work with the book and the documentary Fair Play around this. I've never read that book. I've never watched the documentary. But I know it's out there, but we just keep it current. You know, every 6 months to a year, we look at that and we we take a look.



And same in our business, as our company evolves, we continue to revisit. Okay. What are your roles and responsibilities? What are mine? Who's responsible for reporting to who?

All of that stuff in our company. And that's like a a a larger conversation that has to do with running a business, but we know, like, who's doing what, so we're not stepping on each other's toes and so that balls don't get dropped in the business and at home. Number 8 is scheduling clarity. I already said this. It was a subtopic under, staying on the same I don't know where it was, but anyway, we have a scheduling meeting every week.

Please do this. It will change your life. Now here's what's very common, and and this I'm this doesn't mean this is what's happening in your relationship, but it's very common just with gender roles. It is very common for the if you are in a heterosexual relationship, it's very common for the woman to be the holder of time and scheduling and for the man to not know what's going on. Now that's a generalization.

I'm not saying that's true of your relationship, but it's something I see a lot. And then the man is, like, always having to check with his wife on if he can do something or not, which quite frankly is, like, really infantilizing. So what I recommend, what we do, is we have a shared Google Calendar. So I see Mike's full calendar on my calendar. It's in a different color.

He sees my full calendar on his calendar. We also have a shared calendar that we share with our nanny that is our children's calendar, and so we can see the whole picture. So if I'm trying to schedule something, I don't need to, like, tell somebody, oh, I don't know. Let me get back to you. I can see it right there.

I can see if Mike's available. I can see if he's not available. I can whatever. And then every Sunday night, we go through the calendar verbally for the week so we can really look at, okay, who's picking up the kids? Who's dropping them off?

What do we need in terms of childcare? What do we need in terms of this? What do we have coming up? So that no one is left holding the bag feeling like they don't have the support. We've talked it all through.

We've communicated it through, if we need extra support, we've given ourselves plenty of time to get it in advance. And I will just tell you, when you can handle those logistics with your partner ahead of time, it leaves a lot more space for fun and romance and connection and sex. Like, it is not sexy to be feeling like you are the only one holding the logistics for your family. But when you can start to have specific times for those connections, those those conversations, then it doesn't like pull out, you know, like, what what am I trying to say? It doesn't like take out the take out the flame in terms of having the polarity and the connection in your relationship.

So that's what I have. I think that was 9 things over 10 years of marriage. Yeah. I hope it's helpful. Mike, if you happen to listen to this, happy anniversary.

I love you. See you next time. Thanks for listening to this episode of Plenti. If you enjoyed it, make sure you subscribe, leave a rating, leave a review. That's one of the best ways that you can ensure to spread the abundance of plenty with others.

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