

ACTION PLAN

— JON GORDON —

About This Plan

This action plan is designed to accompany Jon & Kathryn Gordon's book *Relationship GRIT*.

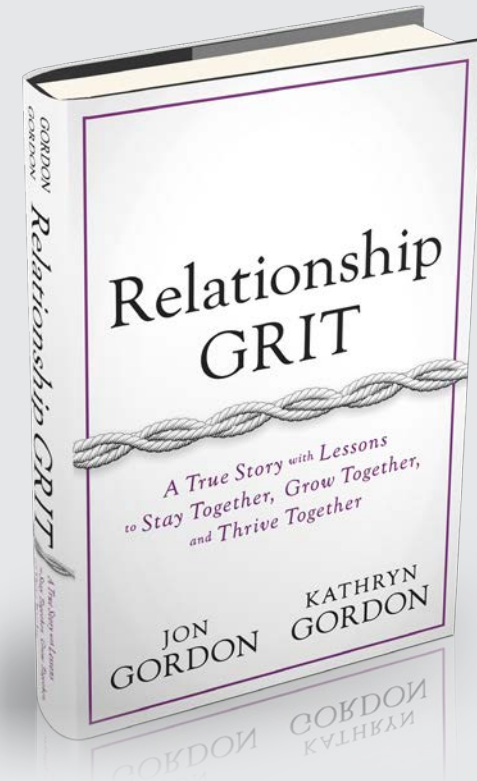
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Relationship GRIT: A True Story with Lessons to Stay Together, Grow Together and Thrive Together
by Jon & Kathryn Gordon

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This *Relationship GRIT* action plan can be used together as a couple or individually as a reflective and growth guide for an individual in a relationship.

If using as a couple, this guide is best answered first individually and then shared and discussed together.

Let's get started...

Relationship GRIT



A True Story *with Lessons*
to Stay Together, Grow Together,
and Thrive Together

JON
GORDON

KATHRYN
GORDON

The marriage doesn't have to be over.

The relationship doesn't have to end.

You don't have to give up.

You just need some Relationship GRIT to help you stick it out.



A relationship consists of two imperfect people coming together and having to work together to turn their individual flaws into a collective strength.

A strong relationship develops through a process called GRIT.

G – God

R – Resolve

I – Invest

T – Together

Spend some time reflecting on your current relationship. As you begin studying Relationship GRIT and this action guide, how committed are you to developing GRIT to make your relationship thrive?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

Not committed

Committed

Very committed

What is holding you back from being “very committed” (10) to your relationship?

As you begin this journey, make a promise to your relationship, to your partner, to yourself. A promise to develop and apply the lessons and principles shared in Relationship GRIT. Write your promise below and refer to it often to be encouraged, rejuvenated, and focused.

Relationship GRIT Promise:

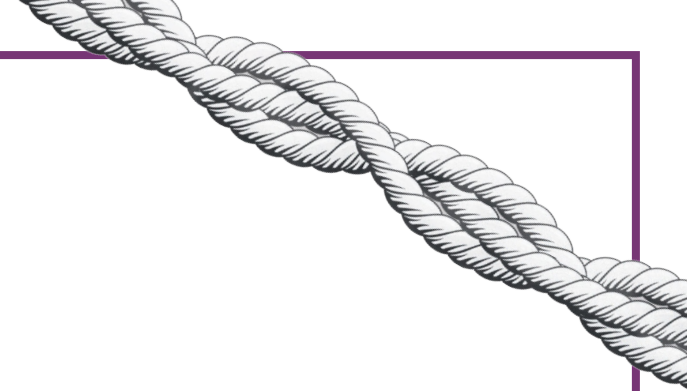
“We are just beginning.

We’re not done.

The best is yet to come!”

JON TO KATHRYN ON THEIR 20TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY.

G GOD



Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. ~ Ecclesiastes 4:12

In your past and/or current relationships, has it been important to you to have a spiritual connection or bond with your partner? Circle one:

YES NO

Rate (scale of 1 -10) how important the following connections are currently to you in a relationship:

Physical Connection _____

Spiritual Connection _____

Intellectual Connection _____

Emotional Connection _____

Which connection or connections do you believe are most important in a relationship?

Why do you believe this?



BRING GOD INTO YOUR RELATIONSHIP.

– KATHRYN

Looking back, I see the power and importance of becoming a triple-braided-cord marriage.

~ JON

Who is the third cord in a relationship? _____ (pg. 9)

Making God the center of your relationship is like adding a third cord to the two of you and will give your relationship a greater source of power. Inviting God into your relationship is key to seeing a transformative impact.

Reflect on why bringing God into your relationship as the third cord will help you to weather the storms when they come?

I would stop at what came to be known as my “God tree.” And I would pray my prayers before heading back up to my apartment. I started taking Jon on walks to my God tree. It became our “thing.”

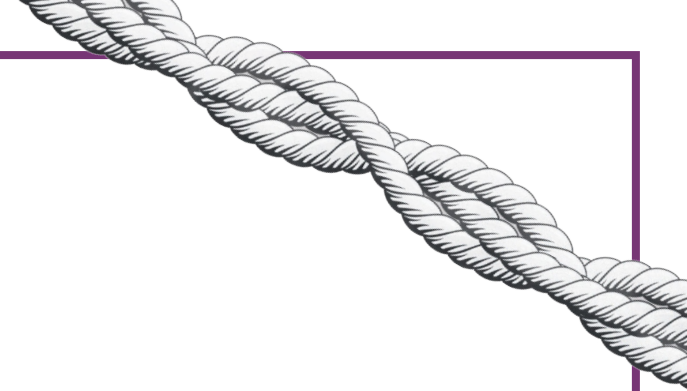
~ KATHRYN.



The “God tree” was Jon and Kathryn’s “thing”. What is one specific way that you and your partner can bring God into your relationship and begin connecting at a spiritual level?

Write it here: _____

R RESOLVE



It's often easier to give up and walk away. Relationships require a desire to stay together and a willingness to change for the better.



HEAL TOGETHER

– JON

Think about your past... your past relationships, your past hurts, your past issues, your past experiences.

How does your past affect your current relationship?

Going to counseling and acknowledging our problems early on was key because we brought them to light instead of covering them up and allowing them to fester.

– JON

What are some ways you can get (if needed) healing, closure, forgiveness, and clarity, so you do not continue to bring those past issues into your current relationship?

Life is stressful and busy. We are pulled in many different directions. We can achieve success in our work life and in our friendships but be failing in our home life.

Think about the following areas: your work, your family, yourself, your friends... Are you pursuing success in one or more of those areas at the expense of your partner? How is that choice affecting your relationship?

What are some of the biggest stresses in your life right now?

How are these stresses affecting your current relationship?

For Jon, the stresses in his life were what deepened his faith and faith was the foundation that healed his marriage.

Are there areas in your life that you need to let go of and give the control to God? Circle one:

YES **NO**

What is one thing that you can commit to letting go your control of? _____

What does that feel like to let go of the control it has on you?



BE WILLING TO CHANGE.

– JON

Choice. We all have a choice. Will we look in the mirror and address the problem(s) or choose to repeat the same pattern and mistakes?

Are you willing to look within and see what needs to be changed? Circle one:

YES NO

What are three specific areas that you want to improve and change?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

For each of the areas, what is one action you can take today to begin that transformation:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

I learned that changing for the better doesn't take a lot of talent or skill. It just takes a willingness and desire to be better for yourself and the people around you.

- JON

First, we are WILLING, then we roll up our sleeves and DO THE WORK.

How willing are you to do the work it will take to change?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

Not willing

Very willing

What is holding you back from being a 10?



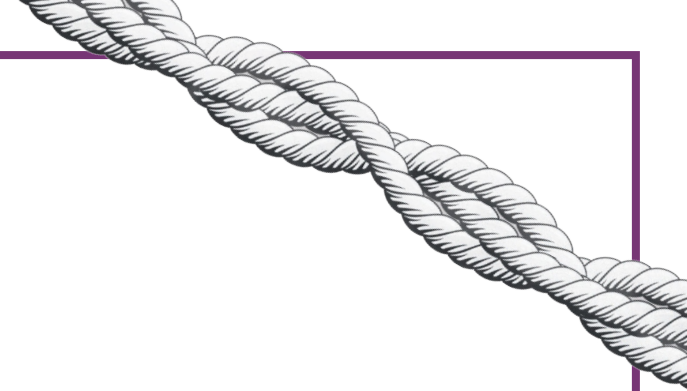
Apply the 1% Rule to your relationship: Give 1% more time, energy, effort, focus, and care to your relationship today than you gave yesterday. Each day give a little more to your relationship than you did the day before.

Ask yourself, "How can I give a little bit more TODAY to my relationship than I did YESTERDAY?" I can:

Reflect on how changing yourself for the better will ultimately change the relationship for the better.



INVEST



To have a great relationship you can't act like you are two separate teams. You must invest time and energy to become one team who supports and encourages each other.

In a relationship, you can be either a consumer or an investor.

Describe what a consumer in a relationship would act like:

Describe what an investor in a relationship would act like:

On this continuum, place an "X" where you feel like your focus currently is in your relationship.

Consumer

Investor



THE MORE I LOVE MY WIFE, THE MORE I LOVE MY LIFE.

~ JON

I became more focused on being an investor. I was no longer looking outside my marriage. I was investing in it. And once I started investing in my marriage, everything improved.

– JON

Are you ready to start investing in your relationship? Circle one:

YES **NO**

Why or why not?: _____



What is one specific action you can take today to begin investing in your relationship?



DON'T KEEP SCORE.

– KATHRYN

And that's the thing about investing. It's not always easy or convenient. One might give more one week, month, or year than the other. Whatever you do, do not keep score.

~ KATHRYN

In your relationship, how often do you keep score? Circle one:

ALWAYS

SOMETIMES

NEVER

Being in a relationship is a team effort. If you keep score on each other, you both will lose.

What is one vital way that you can avoid keeping score with your partner? (pg.48): _____



COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE.

~JON

How do you define COMMUNICATION?

Reflect on why you believe or don't believe that communication is the foundation of a great relationship.

Most relationships break down because of poor communication. It is important to communicate what you need, what's not working, how you are doing, and most importantly, your expectations.

Where there is a void in communication, negativity will fill it.

~JON

List three examples where you have witnessed or experienced not talking about something (void) and it has led to bigger issues, challenges, bad behaviors, or separation.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



COMMUNICATE YOUR EXPECTATIONS.

~ KATHRYN

One of the big reasons why communication is so essential is because when you are in a relationship you have expectations of how the other person should think and act. If you are always feeling like your spouse doesn't meet your expectations or you can't live up to the expectations they have of you, your relationship will be a disaster.

~KATHRYN

Make a list of 10 expectations that you have for your partner.

Expectations (needs and wants) that I have are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Circle the expectations that are reasonable and/or important.

Next cross out the expectations that are unrealistic and/or unimportant.



Finally, schedule a time to talk to your partner - to share your expectations and to listen to him/her communicate his/her expectations.



APPRECIATE YOUR DIFFERENCES.

~ KATHRYN

Appreciate your partner and what makes him/her unique. Part of investing in a relationship is learning to expect LESS and to appreciate MORE.

Reflect on how embracing this idea to expect less and appreciate more would change your perspective of your partner?

What are specific areas in your relationship that you can expect less?

What are specific areas in your relationship that you can appreciate more?

How would making these changes positively affect your relationship?



HAVE A SHARED VISION AND A SHARED MISSION.

~ JON & KATHRYN

As a couple, it is vital to have a SHARED vision and mission. The shared vision is what moves you together in the same direction. Think of it as your North Star. It is your road map, your path forward together. Your mission is your “why” or your “greater purpose”. Your shared mission drives you towards your shared vision.

Describe what you want to create and build for your future (vision) together as a couple?

Be as specific and detailed as possible in your description.

1 year vision: _____

5 year vision: _____

10 year vision: _____

20 year vision: _____

What are three things you can begin doing now to create this shared vision?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

If you have a shared vision of the future you are trying to create together and know why you are doing it, you will overcome the obstacles along the way.

~KATHRYN

Now, reflect on your shared mission (your “why”) as a couple.

What is the why that drives your shared vision? What is the greater purpose behind what you are creating and building together?

A couple with a shared mission doesn't give up when things get hard. They continue to work together to achieve the mission.

~JON



GIVE EACH OTHER STRENGTH.

~ JON

Make it your goal to make each other better and give each other the strength to be all you are meant to be.

~JON

Do you feel supported, strengthened, and encouraged by your partner? Circle one:

Never Sometimes Always

How can your partner support, strengthen and encourage you more?



DON'T COMPETE.

~ KATHRYN

In order to pursue your goals and dreams together you need to encourage each other instead of competing with one another.

~ KATHRYN

Do you support, strengthen, and encourage your partner? Circle one:

Never **Sometimes** **Always**

How can you support, strengthen and encourage your partner?

Reflect on what might be blocking you from supporting your partner's dreams.



Communicate with your partner the ways that he/she can support, strengthen, and encourage you. Confirm with your partner the ways that you can support, strengthen, and encourage him/her.

Don't limit each other's potential. Support each other as you become the best version of yourselves and pursue your goals and dreams together.

~ KATHRYN



BECOME ONE TEAM.

~ JON

The 4 Cs are a simple, practical, and powerful way to help you become one team.

1. Communicate: The foundation of every relationship begins with great communication.
2. Connect: Spending time together – sharing, listening, building a bond of trust.
3. Commit: Honor, serve, sacrifice, making time and effort to be there for each other.
4. Care: To do whatever it takes to make the relationship better by caring more about each other and the relationship.

Which of the 4 C's is the easiest for you to do in your relationship? _____

Reflect on why that is true.

Which of the 4 C's is the most difficult for you to do in your relationship? _____

Reflect on why this "C" is most difficult for you.

What is one thing you can do to improve this in your relationship?



Some couples have a weekly date night, a nightly walk or a morning coffee check in.

What are some practical and meaningful ways you and your partner can continue developing the 4 C's in your relationship?



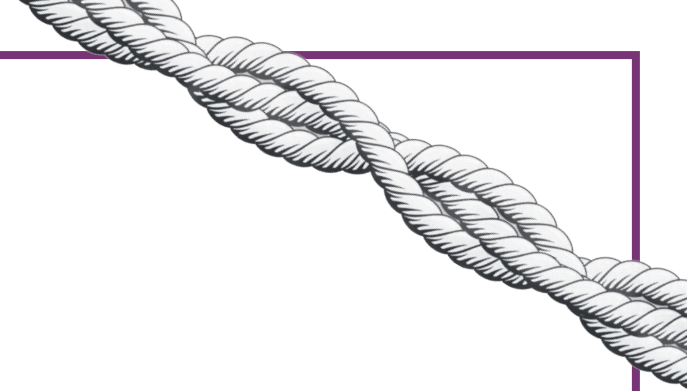
TAKE TIME TO BE INTIMATE.

~ KATHRYN

Physical and emotional intimacy are essential ingredients for a healthy and strong relationship.

~ KATHRYN

T Together



When you have Relationship GRIT, you don't give up when things are hard. You work together and invest in your relationship together and through the process you become stronger together.

Do you feel that you have a good or a great relationship?

Mark an "X" on the line below:

Good Great

For Jon, the transition from good to great came when he addressed "some weeds crowding out the root that needed to be cleared out".

Reflect on what is keeping you from a great relationship.

Make a list of any weeds that you need to take responsibility to clear out:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____



KEEP WORKING AT IT. DON'T QUIT.

~ JON

There are constant negative forces that will sabotage your relationship if you aren't bonded together and working hard to stay together. You need to know and understand how these negative forces work. Don't give up finding ways to stay strong together so you can overcome them.

These negative forces are referred to as the 5 D's.

Briefly write a definition for the following 5 D's: (pgs. 90- 92)

Distort: _____

What is one distortion (lie) that is sabotaging your relationship? _____

How can you speak truth to that lie? _____

Discourage: _____

What is something that is making you want to give up on your relationship? _____

What is one thing that you can do to encourage (build courage) in yourself and your partner? _____

Doubt: _____

Reflect on an area that you are having a difficult time trusting either yourself, your partner, or God? _____

When you are experiencing doubt, you can trust God with your relationship and trust each other.

Distract: _____

What matters most to you? _____

What percentage of your energy is focused on what matters most to you? _____ %

How would your relationship be different if you focused more on what matters most to you? _____

Divide: _____

One way we can fight against division, defeat and ultimately divorce is to UNITE, to bring UNITY to the relationship.

What are three specific examples where you are divided in your relationship? What are three ways that you can bring unity to those areas?

DIVIDED

UNITE

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Jon and Kathryn's Best Practices for Having a Great Relationship

1. Compliment Each Other.



GIVE COMPLIMENTS.

~ KATHRYN

So often when we are hurt, we are tempted to talk negatively to our partner; to beat them down. During these moments, it is important to remember that he/she is not our enemy.

When we compliment our partner, we speak greatness into him/her.

Ask yourself, “Who do you want to be with? The person who always tears you down and makes you feel like a failure, or the one who makes you feel great about yourself?”

~KATHRYN

Do you regularly speak words of greatness into your partner? Circle one:

YES NO

Make a list of things of 10 things you love about your partner:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Was it Easy or Hard to come up with 10 things? Reflect on why it was either EASY or HARD.



Write this list down on a sticky note or index card and read it regularly. Look for opportunities throughout your day to compliment your partner. This will help you to Focus on What They are Doing Right while making them feel like a King or Queen!

It's funny—the more you compliment your mate, the more you like them and the more you like yourself. Complimenting and focusing on what your mate is doing right is like a positive boomerang that comes back to you.

~JON

2. Be Open to Feedback.



TAKE ONE FOR THE TEAM.

~ JON

We aren't always open to hear constructive criticism and we don't always agree with it, but to have a great relationship it is important sometimes to lose the battle but win the war.

Feedback shared in _____ and received with _____ will help you improve and grow. (pg.99)



TEACH THEM HOW TO TREAT YOU.

~ KATHRYN

Jon told Kathryn, "Okay, I'm open. Make me better."

What are specific ways that you would like your partner to treat you differently/better?

What is keeping you from communicating this to him/her?

3. Team Meetings.



AGREE TO DISAGREE.
~ KATHRYN

Do you have to AGREE with your partner in order to have healthy communication? Circle one:

YES NO

A great relationship communicates with respect. Regular team meetings are a powerful way to get centered, focused, connected, and come together to communicate better as a team and take on challenges together.

Reflect on how scheduling regular team meetings might make your relationship better.

4. Give Each Other Space. Create that Space to Grow.



GIVE EACH OTHER SPACE – BUT NOT TOO MUCH.

~ JON

In your relationship:

How much time is spent together? _____ %

How much time is spent growing individually? _____ %

We've talked about a lot of ideas for couples to do together, but making time for yourself and your own growth is just as important. It's essential to create your own happiness, grow individually as well as collectively, and find some alone time for yourself.

~ KATHRYN

What are you doing to grow as an individual? Hobbies? Work? Friends?

5. Serve.



DO THE THINGS THAT MAKE YOUR PARTNER HAPPY, AND BE WILLING TO DO THINGS YOUR PARTNER DOESN'T LIKE TO DO.

~ KATHRYN

When we serve, we put the relationship, the WE, before ourself, the ME.

WE > ME = SERVE

Fill in the equation with the symbol that defines your relationship: < , > , =

WE _____ ME



What are specific ways that you can begin serving your partner today? In other words, what can you do to apply this formula, WE > ME, to your relationship?

I saw how my commitment to serve them not only made them better, it made me better. I saw how my relationship with my wife and kids improved. I was no longer coaching them from the side- lines. I was in the battle with them and connecting with them at a deeper level.

~JON

6. Make Your Relationship a Priority.



MAKE YOUR RELATIONSHIP A PRIORITY.

~ JON

If you want to grow great fruit, you need to invest in the root. You can control how much time, energy, love, and care that you invest in your partner and your relationship.

How often do you make your relationship your number one priority? (mark an "X" on the line below)

NEVER

SOMETIMES

ALWAYS

Reflect on what or who is keeping you from fully investing in your relationship and making it your most important priority?

It is important to understand that making your relationship a priority doesn't mean you don't work hard to build your career, business, or other endeavors. It doesn't mean that there won't be times when you must be devoted to your work and career. It means you don't sacrifice your relationship at the expense of being successful.

~JON



As you seek to Find Your Rhythm - Write down one thing that you will commit to do that will put your relationship first and make it your priority.

I will: _____

The covenant and nightly prayer bonded us together and to God. We became a triple-braided cord that could not be broken.

~ KATHRYN

The relationship prayer is a prayer that you write and say that asks God to bless and work in your relationship in very specific ways that are important to you and your partner.



In the space below, write out your relationship prayer.

OUR RELATIONSHIP PRAYER

G-R-I-T

G=God, R=Resolve, I=Invest, T=Together

Even though the GRIT framework works, there isn't a perfect formula to implement it. It is up to you and your partner to discover what works best for your relationship.



In thinking about the GRIT framework, reflect on each of the following areas...how are you going to take action to create a great relationship?

G = God: _____

R = Resolve: _____

I = Invest: _____

T = Together: _____

What are your three biggest takeaways from Relationship GRIT and how will you apply these to your relationship?

1. Takeaway: _____

Application: _____

2. Takeaway: _____

Application: _____

3. Takeaway: _____

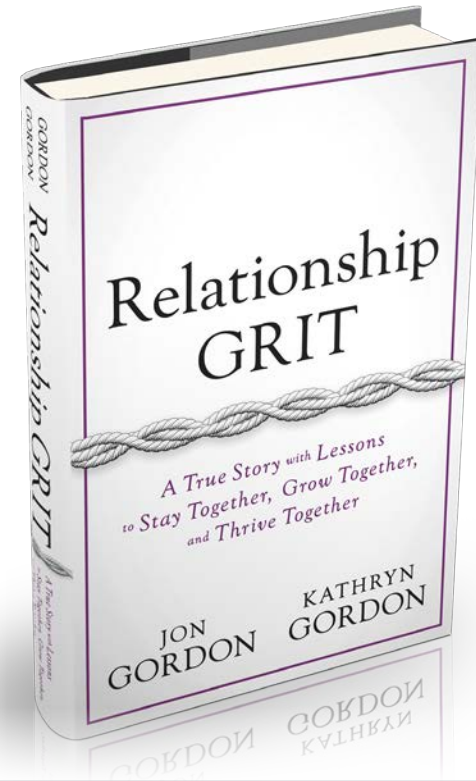
Application: _____

When you make God the center of your relationship and you Resolve to stay together and Invest in your relationship Together, you not only develop Relationship GRIT, you also create a special relationship filled with more love, joy, laughter, intimacy, and commitment than you ever thought possible.

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