

Relationship Advice: An Unconventional Marriage



By [Dr. Jane Greer](#)

Once upon a time, there was a very clear, natural progression of how a couple moved from one phase of their relationship to another: they dated, became engaged, got married, and, finally, moved in together. Any other choice, years ago, would have been frowned upon and maybe even whispered about. Of course, that has all changed and now we see and generally accept any choice people make, in the order in which they make it, and the way in which they commit to each other – as long as both members of the couple are on board.

Relationship Expert Advice: Have a Relationship Your Way

Whether they want to live together first, have a family first, or, possibly even, commit their lives to each other and never share a home, it is all happening out there. For example, actress [Kaley Cuoco](#) and her husband Karl Cook choose to be in a committed, monogamous relationship but also choose to [live apart](#). They tied the knot over a year ago but still maintain separate residences. Rather than worry about what family, friends, fans, and tabloids think of their arrangement, the busy pair say they value their independence, relish the time they spend together, and don't worry about what other people might be thinking. In other words, it works for them. There are pros and cons to every choice a couple makes as they build their life together and it is a matter of knowing what suits the individual people the best. So, how do you know if this possibility might be right for you? Will a situation like this enhance or hurt your relationship?

One question to ask yourself is how much do you need your privacy? Can you tolerate the company of another person without your own time over a 24-hour day? Consider also the accountability that can come with sharing a home with your partner, because sometimes even if you get up to simply go to the bathroom or kitchen your, partner might be curious about your whereabouts and ask you where you are going.

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In addition, the practicality and logistics of your lives might make it difficult to uproot yourselves, especially if you live in different places. Deciding to have a long-distance marriage can give you the opportunity to share a life while maintaining priorities of work, family, and friends. This can

be especially true if you find each other a little later in life. In that case, you may have fully established an autonomous lifestyle, which includes routines and habits that are hard to break, and in some ways might not be suitable for sharing a home with another person.

That can be the case even if you live just a few blocks away from each other. If you both find yourselves sharing these concerns – and you each already love the home you created and don't want to give it up – this might be a way to have it all. Similarly, if you each keep early, late, or unusual hours at work, and coming home could be disruptive to your partner, maybe even totally conflicting with their routine, or if you travel a lot anyway and, with that in mind, it doesn't make sense to combine households, this might be something to consider. Finally, if you have a beloved pet and your spouse is allergic, it could be a way to avoid a deal breaker and still make it all work.

Ultimately, there can be many upsides to this, even beyond holding on to your daily life as you know it. There is less of a chance to get on each other's nerves, since you always have a place to go to get away and you won't be forced to be together if you don't want to be. It can keep your love fresh and more romantic because you can exercise more control over your appearance and how you present yourself to your partner. And if you have different methods of keeping house, one of you is messy and the other a neat freak, this will allow you to just be yourselves in your own homes without bugging the other person.

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On the other hand, living apart can have a real downside. You are more likely to miss out on little moments – inside jokes and shared bedtime and morning rituals – and you're putting off the inevitable step of showing each other your authentic

selves while you navigate the tricky waters of splitting up household responsibilities and chores. Because of this there, may be much less chance to learn to cooperate and work together as a team, which allows you to develop an up-and-running sense of partnership. You might not be there when you need each other, if one of you doesn't feel well, or if you want a spontaneous snuggle. It is also possible that you will feel judged by family or friends, and even strangers, for doing something that might be construed as different.

This is not a dish for everyone, but it might be for those with a particular taste. It offers the opportunity to marry the person you love despite obstacles you might not be willing to change, which would otherwise make getting married impossible for one or both of you. Being married but living apart might be an option to give life to your commitment instead of making it untenable. For now, Kaley and Karl are taking advantage of the upsides of living apart. They are building a life together and don't seem to be concerned that their relationship has been labeled "unconventional." Whatever decision you make for your relationship, know it is right for you, and try to tune out the noise, focus on each other, and continue planning for your future.

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