

THE WEEKLY HUDDLE GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Welcome friends! As we said before, if there was one tool and practical skill we wish we had learned sooner, it was this one. The Weekly Huddle, as a normal rhythm in our lives, has allowed us to connect regularly, share our wins/frustrations, and utilize our time by prioritizing what matters most.

As time progresses and you begin adding kids, careers, friendships, etc., this weekly rhythm will become all that much more important.

One of our favorite verses of all time when it comes to planning and living with intentionality is Proverbs 19:21, “Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.”

WHERE EXACTLY ARE WE GOING?

How many times have you or your spouse felt overwhelmed by the busyness of life? Are you more reactionary with your schedule than proactive with your commitments?

If you said YES, take comfort; most couples feel this way, but we want to help you see God's way to be more proactive and productive with your time.

*Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.
Eph 5:15-16*

OUR EXPERIENCE WITH WEEKLY HUDDLES

Before we get into the format of a weekly huddle, let us share how this simple rhythm has transformed how we have planned and connected with each other. We were as guilty as anybody using the word “busy” to describe our calendar. I (Mike) had owned my own business in the digital marketing agency space and had just entered into full-time ministry as a pastor; Holly was a master trainer at Pure Barre, teaching weekly; all the while, we had two young kids at the time and were leading ministries at the church along with our small group every week. Our schedule was incredibly full, and if we were honest, we were on the verge of burnout, professionally and relationally.

Thankfully, the Lord led an incredible couple, Gary and Ann Wooley, who began showing us how to live with gospel intentionality together daily.

For the first time, we felt like we had a regular rhythm of connection in our marriage and a filter to what we could full-heartedly commit to in the present season. 9 months later, we welcomed our 3rd little kiddo Ralphie (thanks to weekly huddles, you will find out later :) and we were more focused and able to be present with each other, our work, and those we were ministering to. We went from being “yes men” to discerning together what God had called us to do together.



THE WEEKLY HUDDLE GUIDE

Fast forward to today, and we would say that our schedule is not exactly less “full” as we lead Spark Discipleship full-time, homeschool our 3 kids, and serve faithfully in the local church in Denver, but it is completely life-giving. We can connect as a couple and plan our days with gospel intentionality. Don’t get us wrong, weekly huddles are sometimes fun, sometimes not, but they are always our priority. It has become one of our “non-negotiables” every week.

THE RHYTHM: PLAN AND CONNECT WITH GOSPEL INTENTIONALITY

The weekly huddle will be an ongoing touch point, so it’s important for you both to decide **when** and **where** you will have the time to connect for an uninterrupted 60 minutes. For us, that’s Sunday night when the kids are in bed, and we can get out the tea kettle with our calendars in hand at the kitchen table (Mike with his digital calendar, Holly with her paper calendar).

Before we go any further, **when** will you commit to doing the weekly huddle, and **where** will it be? Take the time to talk to each other and find the best time to try it out.

Now that you have your time and place let’s go over what it looks like. Here is a brief outline of what our 60-minute Weekly Huddle looks like:

Open in Prayer: 5 minutes

Before we get into planning mode, we start our time in prayer, asking the Lord to center our hearts on Him. We ask for the Spirit’s help to give us the wisdom to steward our schedule to reflect His love. This is a time to take a deep breath and align our hearts with His.

Active Listening: 15 minutes

Active listening involves going beyond simply hearing another person’s words but also seeking to **understand** the meaning and intent behind what’s being spoken. It requires being an **active** participant in the communication process

Questions that we like to start with:

- Has anything come up that is important that we should hit base on?
- What do you think are the top 3 priorities this week?
- Are there any new commitments or opportunities that have come up that we should discuss?

Commitments & Planning: 25 minutes

During this time, we go over each day of the week and discuss what we are committed to and how we can support each other. The temptation during this time can be either too detailed in your planning/commitments or too broad. What’s most important is to first go through the commitments that are already on the calendar for each day of the week and then reflect together in planning your days with intentionality.

Questions to ask after you go through your commitments:

- Are we using our time effectively?



THE WEEKLY HUDDLE GUIDE

- Are we over or under-committed?
- Are there any red flags that we need to address?
- Do we have a set day to rest and practice observing the Sabbath?
- When is date night?!

Side Note: One part of our Commitments & Planning time is to put on the schedule when we will be having sex that week. You may think we are crazy, but planning our sex each week has been incredibly beneficial as it has allowed us not to neglect or deprive each other (1 Cor 7:5) but to make our sex life a priority in our marriage. Author Gary Thomas said, “A great sex life is something you make, not something you find.”

When we plan times of intimacy, we like to say that we plan it with a pencil not a pen, as things can come up, kids can get sick, etc. But if a planned night needs to get “erased,” it simply becomes a conversation to put on the calendar for another time. There is SOOO much more we could discuss here and go into more depth when discussing intimacy and your marriage, but making it a consistent talking point in your Weekly Huddle and a priority in your schedule is a good starting place.

To Do: 10 minutes

After discussing each day of the week, we reviewed our commitments and planned our week intentionally. We then create a to-do list. During this time, we ask what action items we must take based on the current schedule. Is there something that we need to RSVP to, a person we need to follow up with, or a commitment that we need to reschedule— Together, we list our to-do’s and determine who will “own” the task by getting it done that week.

Close in Prayer: 5 minutes

We close our time in prayer, surrendering our commitments and calendar to Jesus, asking Him to direct our steps and conversations through the week to see His kingdom built. Praying that we would love Him with all our hearts, mind, and strength, that we would be empowered to love those we come in contact with, and that we would be intentional in making disciples that make disciples.

Practice: Getting your Weekly Huddle Reps

Is it easy enough? I think so. Set a time of 60 min weekly to reflect on the past week, look forward to the upcoming week, and evaluate how you are using your time and commitments to glorify God with all that you say and do.

Now that you have the basic structure and understanding, commit to doing this for the next 4 weeks so that you can evaluate your progress from there.

WEEKLY HUDDLE FAQ

One of us simply doesn’t want to do The Weekly Huddle.

One spouse is usually a little more of a planner than the other. We want to encourage you both to give grace to each



THE WEEKLY HUDDLE GUIDE

other in this new practice as it will feel more natural to one of you and more “work” for the other. Weekly Huddles are for planning and connecting emotionally with your spouse. It might also be good to consider **why you are meeting**. If the purpose is **prioritization** (stewardship of time) and **connection/intimacy** (connecting as a one-flesh relationship), try to keep that at the forefront of your mind when doing the Weekly Huddle.

Our Huddle went too long.

This is super common and can mean a number of different things. We encourage you to honor the agreed-upon time you guys have set for your Weekly Huddle. Trying to “press on” when the agreed time has passed doesn’t provide a constructive connection time. Some decisions and feelings just need to wait for other times of conversation during the week or month.

For example, it’s very likely that you are trying to use this time to go into BIG subjects like money, in-laws, sexual intimacy, etc. These subjects are too big to talk about at length during this time. It’s best to save some of these big subjects to longer date nights or overnights where you can have extended conversations. Holly and I try to have at least 2-3 times a year where we get away for an overnight to have more purposeful conversations around these big topics in our lives.

We argued, we both became very impatient and didn’t finish our time.

This is a common problem as we have been there more than once. Here are a few things to look out for:

Are we expecting too much from this time?

We touched on this in the previous question, but it’s very common to try to tackle BIG subjects in your Weekly Huddle. Try to avoid those subjects during this time and schedule another time to discuss them more deeply. Try to keep this time laser-focused as a high-level conversation on prioritization (stewardship of time) and connection/intimacy (connecting as a one-flesh relationship).

Are we forgetting to listen well?

It’s very easy to tune each other out, give unsought advice, or even miscommunicate your thoughts’ intent during your Weekly Huddle. Active listening is key as we observe verbal and non-verbal messages that our spouse is communicating and then provide feedback that shows our attentiveness to the conversation at hand.

Active listening is listening on purpose.



