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Recalibrating Your Marriage

Every marriage hits its rough patches. Here's how even the busiest people can get it back on track.



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Recalibrating Your Marriage

Every marriage hits its rough patches. Here's how even the busiest people can get it back on track.



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Introduction

Making Marriage a Priority

by Caryn Rivadeneria



I'm a woman who loves her husband. But I'm a busy woman who tends to neglect her husband. I don't mean by not cooking or cleaning or serving in some "traditional" way. I mean that the more things that pile up on my plate of responsibility, the more my marriage in general and husband in specific get pushed to the bottom. Because I have so many other "urgent" things to deal with as a professional and as a mother, my husband and marriage are relegated to the "wait" pile. It's easy to assume there will be time to focus on the marriage later.





Recalibrating Your Marriage

Making Marriage a Priority

But I know how wrong that is. This became crystal clear when my parents split up a few years back after 35 years of marriage. Essentially, they had assumed there would be time to focus on the marriage later, and then just never got around to it.

Thing is, no matter how busy we get with other areas of life, our marriages need to remain top priority (after God, of course). Marriage is a bedrock, and if it's out of whack, the rest of our lives will be too.

That's what I love about this collection of articles. No matter if your marriage is in serious crisis or just needs a simple tune up, this packet is, well, packed with encouragement and wisdom to make your marriage high priority again.

Blessings,

Caryn Rivadeneira

Contributing Editor, KYRIA downloads
Christianity Today International



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A Marriage Restored

The List That Saved My Marriage

What an inventory of my husband's
shortcomings taught me
by Becky Zerbe



The day had come. I'd lasted as long as I could in my marriage. Once my husband, Bill, left for work, I packed a bag for myself and our 14-month-old son and left our home. It was the only year in our married life when we lived in the same town as my parents. Obviously the convenience of being able to run to Mom and Dad made my decision to leave Bill easier.





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With a tear-stained, angry face, I walked into Mom's kitchen. She held the baby while I sobbed my declaration of independence. A washcloth and cup of coffee later, Mom told me she and Dad would help me. I was comforted to know they'd be there for me.

"But before you leave Bill," she said, "I have one task for you to complete."

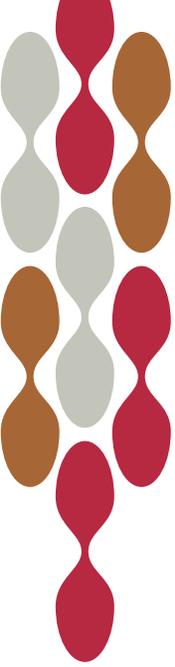
Mom put down my sleeping son, took a sheet of paper and pen, and drew a vertical line down the middle of the page. She told me to list in the left column all the things Bill did that made him impossible to live with. As I looked at the dividing line, I thought she'd then tell me to list all his good qualities on the right hand side. I was determined to have a longer list of bad qualities on the left. This is going to be easy, I thought. My pen started immediately to scribble down the left column.

Bill never picked his clothes off the floor. He never told me when he was going outside. He slept in church. He had embarrassing, nasty habits such as blowing his nose or belching at the dinner table. He never bought me nice presents. He refused to match his clothes. He was tight with money. He wouldn't help with the housework. He didn't talk with me.

The list went on and on until I'd filled the page. I certainly had more than enough evidence to prove that no woman would be able to live with this man.

Smugly I said, "Now I guess you're going to ask me to list all Bill's good qualities on the right side."





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"No," she said. "I already know Bill's good qualities. Instead, for each item on the left side, I want you to write how you respond. What do you do?"

This was even tougher than listing his good qualities. I'd been thinking about Bill's few, good qualities I could list. I hadn't considered thinking about myself. I knew Mom wasn't going to let me get by without completing her assignment. So I had to start writing.

I'd pout, cry, and get angry. I'd be embarrassed to be with him. I'd act like a "martyr." I'd wish I'd married someone else. I'd give him the silent treatment. I'd feel I was too good for him. The list seemed endless.

When I reached the bottom of the page, Mom picked up the paper and went to the drawer. She took scissors and cut the paper down the vertical line. Taking the left column, she wadded it in her hand and tossed it into the trash. Then she handed me the right column.

"Becky," she said, "take this list back to your house. Spend today reflecting on these things in your life. Pray about them. I'll keep the baby until this afternoon. If you sincerely do what I ask and still want to leave Bill, Dad and I will do all we can to assist you."

Facing Facts

Leaving my luggage and son, I drove back to my house. When I sat on my couch with the piece of paper, I couldn't believe what I was facing. Without the balancing catalogue of Bill's annoying habits, the list looked horrifying.





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I saw a record of petty behaviors, shameful practices, and destructive responses. I spent the next several hours asking God for forgiveness. I requested strength, guidance, and wisdom in the changes I needed to make. As I continued to pray, I realized how ridiculously I'd behaved. I could barely remember the transgressions I'd written for Bill. How absurd could I be? There was nothing immoral or horrible on that list. I'd honestly been blessed with a good man—not a perfect one, but a good one.

I thought back five years. I'd made a vow to Bill. I would love and honor him in sickness and health. I'd be with him for better or for worse. I said those words in the presence of God, my family, and friends. Yet only this morning, I'd been ready to leave him for trivial annoyances.

I jumped back in the car and drove to my parents' house. I marveled at how different I felt from when I'd first made the trip to see Mom. I now felt peace, relief, and gratitude.

When I picked up my son, I was dismayed by how willing I'd been to make such a drastic change in his life. My pettiness almost cost him the opportunity to be exposed daily to a wonderful father. Quickly, I thanked my mother and flew out the door to return home. By the time Bill returned from work, I was unpacked and waiting.

A New Outlook

I'd love to say that Bill changed. He didn't. He still did all those things that embarrassed and annoyed me, and made me want to explode.

The difference came in me. From that day forward, I had to be responsible not only for my actions in our marriage, but also for my reactions.





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I think back to one of the items: Bill slept in church. The minute he began to doze always marked the end of my worship time.

So often I thought he was rudely uninterested in the message—and my dad was the preacher! It didn't matter that Bill was unable to stay awake any time he sat for a longer period. The entire time he spent nodding, I spent fuming. I'd squirm in the pew, feeling humiliated. I'd wonder why I ever married this man. I knew he didn't deserve a wife as godly as I was.

Yet now I could see myself as I truly was. My pride was hampering a valuable portion of my life—my worship. This problem wasn't Bill's; it was mine. When Bill fell asleep in church, I began to bathe that time in gratitude and prayer. I took my eyes off Bill and myself and looked to God. Instead of leaving the services in anger, I left in joy.

It wasn't long before Bill noticed a difference. He remarked at lunch one Sunday, "You seem to be enjoying the services more lately. I was beginning to think you didn't like the preacher." My immediate instinct was to explain how he'd ruined so many services for me. But instead, I accepted his statement without defense.

Remaking the List

There have been many times through the years I've had to remake the list. I've continued to ask God to forgive my pathetic reactions and give me his wisdom in dealing with my marriage.





Recalibrating Your Marriage

The List That Saved My Marriage

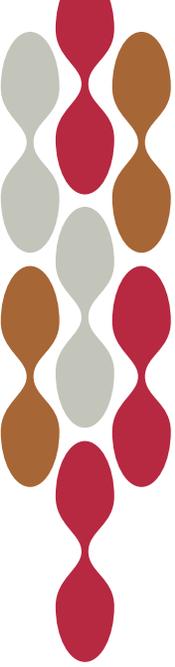
Fifteen years later, at the age of 49, Bill was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. He had to quit his teaching job, leaving me to support our family, which has led to trying days and nights of worry. Watching him fight to maintain abilities to function daily has been inspiring to my sons, as well as to me. We've had to depend on our faith that God is in control—especially when we feel so out of control. We've searched the Bible for answers to questions we struggle to understand. We've spent hours with every emotion from anger to grief. We've asked, "Why?" We've claimed God's peace that passes all understanding.

Regrettably, many days I've run short on patience, even though I know Bill can't prevent himself from doing things that try my nerves. I realize my responsibility is to respond with the love God would have me show. I cry to God to love through me—because I know I'm not capable of loving Bill as God is capable of loving him.

Many times I've thanked God for a mother who was a spiritual mentor. Though she must have been tempted, she didn't preach to me or offer her opinion on my behavior. She guided me in discovering a truth that's saved a most treasured possession—my marriage. If I hadn't learned to respond as a Christian wife to Bill's small problems, I wouldn't be able to respond appropriately to his larger ones now.

My son came home one day and asked, "Mom, what are we going to do when Dad doesn't remember us?" My reply was, "We'll remember him. We'll remember the husband and father he was. We'll remember him for all the things he's taught us and the wonderful ways he's loved us."





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After my son left the room, I chuckled. I was thinking of all the things I'd remember about this man who loved his family and his God. Many of those enduring memories are those same annoying little habits that made their way onto a list of bad qualities so many years ago.

*Becky Zerbe is author of **Laughing with My Finger in the Dam**. Becky has been married to Bill for 29 years. This article first appeared in the Fall 2005 issue of MARRIAGE PARTNERSHIP.*

Reflect

- *If you made a list like this, what would it look like? What are your responses to your husband's annoying behavior?*
- *What might your marriage look like if you focused on your reactions instead of your husband's behavior?*



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A Marriage Restored

Second Chances



Clint and Penny Bragg learned even the most broken marriage can be healed by God's reconciling love.

by Dawn Zemke

Newlyweds and new Christians Clint and Penny Bragg were the darlings of their small church. She was on the worship team and the deacon board of missions. He led discipleship training. They taught Sunday school classes together and separately, helped organize the singles' group, and directed vacation Bible school. All while Clint juggled a job as area manager for a glass business and Penny completed her bachelor's degree and teaching credentials.





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"We didn't know how to say no," Clint admits.

Yet despite the hectic schedule, their first year of marriage flew by without a hitch. On the surface, they seemed to thrive on the busyness. They didn't realize the marriage-building time they needed was being eaten up by the whirl of spiritual activity.

"It felt like God was blessing all our plans," Clint recalls. "But instead of going with or beside God, we were running ahead and asking him to catch up."

"We didn't have the spiritual roots of a strong, long-term Christian," Penny agrees. "We were still on the emotional high, very goal-driven."

The First Cracks

A two-week mission trip to Haiti in August 1990, a month shy of their first anniversary, began the first cracks in their seemingly solid relationship. Having spent two military tours in Vietnam, Clint was familiar with the harsh conditions of a third-world country. But Penny's sheltered life hadn't prepared her for the extreme poverty and suffering she witnessed. Suddenly her faith wasn't providing the security and answers she depended on.

"I'd pictured myself going door to door, asking, 'Have you heard about Jesus?'" Penny explains. "Instead mothers begged me to take their babies to America. I couldn't understand how God could allow that suffering." She returned shell-shocked, unable to process what she'd seen.





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"I shut down," she says. "The doubts about God's goodness and faithfulness stirred a lot of childhood pain and insecurity, such as my parents' divorce and an incident when, as a young adult, I was taken advantage of by a church leader. I was expected to give a glowing report to the congregation about my time in Haiti, but I felt ambivalent about God and my faith. So I put up a wall of defense to everyone around me. I didn't talk about what I was feeling, not even to Clint. I didn't want to admit I wasn't the strong, 'supergirl' he'd married."

She gradually stopped reading her Bible and connecting with the women at church, and pulled out of her church responsibilities. Clint didn't comment for fear she'd think he was trying to control her.

Along with her spiritual doubts, Penny began to struggle with her role as Clint's wife. Clint's father had died years earlier, and neither her parents' failed marriage nor the mature, 15- and 20-year marriages she saw at church provided good role models for issues facing a new wife. "I'd hear about being a Proverbs 31 woman and think, *Whoa, that's really not me,*" she recalls. "I knew Clint expected me to be a good Christian wife, and I didn't know how to handle those expectations. So I provided physically, with meals and laundry. But I didn't know how to provide emotionally or spiritually. Or how to accept those things from him."

They rarely spent time alone together the way they used to, and when they did, Penny would end up busying herself with cleaning or schoolwork.





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"As soon as I'd come home, she'd jump up and start doing things," Clint says. "I'd tell her to take it easy, but she was never willing just to sit still and relax with me."

Although Clint knew something was wrong, he felt inadequate to change or fix it. "I was a John Wayne kind of guy," says Clint. "Men should be tough, just suck it up and keep going. I didn't feel I could share with Penny how unhappy I was, and I didn't ask what was bothering her. I just thought things would work themselves out."

A Growing Distance

Over the next few months, as Penny talked less and spent less time connecting with Clint, he realized things between them weren't going to get better unless he did something. He cut back on his work hours and church responsibilities to be home more. But to cope with her growing insecurities about her faith and her role as a wife, Penny poured herself into what she felt more secure in: academics. As a student teacher, she received accolades that gave her the confidence and security she craved.

Never verbal fighters, Penny and Clint simply clammed up and became more like roommates, withdrawing and suppressing their frustrations and anger.

"I felt horrible, but I didn't know what to do or how to change. And I didn't feel I could talk to anyone from church," Penny says. "They'd thrown us the wedding of all weddings. No way was I going to tell them we were having problems."





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The silence and their avoidance behavior created fertile ground for someone else to enter the picture. Three months after the Haiti trip, Penny developed an emotional attachment to a classmate, Chris.*

"Chris offered me the kind of connection I hadn't received from Clint, and seemed so attuned to my feelings," Penny says. Before long they'd crossed the line into a physical relationship. And Penny didn't know what to do.

"I felt trapped," she admits. "I knew it was wrong, but I couldn't tell Clint. And Chris kept urging me to leave him."

Penny's distance, coupled with her growing closeness to Chris, convinced Clint that there was more than friendship between the two. When he confronted Penny a couple months later, she assured him he had nothing to worry about. But too many incidents—such as seeing her at the mall with Chris when she was supposed to be at school—said otherwise.

Again and again, he pressured her to give up the relationship only to have her deny anything inappropriate was going on. She agreed to one session with a Christian counselor, but admitted nothing.

Nearly a year after the trip to Haiti, Clint issued an ultimatum: him or Chris. He then left for the weekend to give Penny space to make her decision. When he returned, she'd moved in with Chris. "I felt I'd failed him," Penny says. "What I'd done went against Christianity and my role as a wife. There was no going back."





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Over the next two months, Clint tried to persuade Penny to come home. "I was hurt and confused," he recalls. "I thought we were in love with each other. I couldn't understand how that had changed. I didn't care what she'd done. I loved her and wanted her back."

But in the spring of 1992, eight months after Penny moved out, the Braggs ended their marriage at Penny's request.

Separate Lives

Though he wouldn't admit it, Clint grew furious with God, blaming him for breaking up their marriage. He went to counseling for three months, then filled his days to keep busy. He earned a four-year degree in 29 months, coached football, sold real estate, and refurbished houses. "I didn't want time to think," he admits, "so I became Superman." Though he felt obligated to attend church to "prove" he was a Christian, he chose a large congregation across town so he could show up for services and leave as soon as they were over. In time, he stopped attending altogether.

Meanwhile, Penny avoided thinking about the consequences of the choice she'd made, and poured herself into her career. Things seemed to go well for the seven years she lived with Chris, until escalating arguments ended the relationship and in 1999 Chris moved out.

For the first time in her life, Penny was away from family and living alone. The solitude gave her time to think, and time for God to work in her. "One morning," she recalls, "I looked into the mirror, and thought, *Who are you? What in the world have you become?*"





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That night Penny reached out to God and for the first time admitted what she'd done was sin. "I felt flooded with forgiveness," she says. "But I also knew there was a mountain of consequences."

Immediately Penny began to see a Christian counselor. She found a new church and over the next three years put down the roots she'd never established as a young Christian. She also confronted the issues from her past, gradually confessing to family and friends the sin she'd committed. Some of the conversations were face to face. Some were incredibly awkward. All were humbling.

"I just kept asking, 'Lord, who else do I need to admit this to?'" she remembers. "Clint kept coming to mind, but I put him off. I was scared he would blast me."

Clint experienced his own journey of restoration. At the same time Penny was reconciling with God, an incident with a subcontractor working on one of his houses nearly ended in physical violence. Ready to punch the man, Clint heard God speaking to him: *What are you doing, Clint? Are you going to hurt this guy? Is that how you're going to show him what a Christian is?* "It stopped me in my tracks," he recalls.

That weekend, for the first time in two years, Clint attended church. Slowly, he began to re-establish his relationship with God. "I told him, 'I've been angry at you for the last ten years. I know I haven't been pleasing you. I'm willing to do things your way from now on.'"



The Return Trip

Once Penny made up her mind to contact Clint, she had to find him. He'd moved from their home state of California, and for the past three years had been living and working in Florida. One evening in February 2002, his name popped up on an internet search.

"My heart stopped," Penny says. "I knew I had to follow through with what I'd committed to do. So I wrote the most honest letter I could, admitting what I'd done and asking forgiveness."

A week later, Clint received the letter.

"I sat at my desk, and for five minutes I just stared at the envelope," he recalls.

The letter was nothing like he'd expected. Penny's sincere apology flooded Clint with emotion. "I'd told a counselor the thing I wanted most from Penny was someday to hear her say she was sorry," he says. "She warned me it would never happen. After reading Penny's letter, I closed my eyes and prayed, *Oh, thank you, Lord.*"

Clint decided to call Penny, and what he intended to be a brief conversation stretched to five hours. They talked deeply and honestly about their feelings in a way they hadn't while married, sharing things they'd never discussed, such as Clint's experience of being molested as a child. They'd always kept secrets. Now they opened to each other in a whole new way. The conversation finally ended with tears, forgiveness, and prayer.





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Though he slept little that night, Clint arose early and wrote Penny a ten-page letter. The message he conveyed was simple: Have you ever considered reconciliation?

That letter prompted another phone call, after which Clint and Penny decided to follow God's lead in putting their relationship back together. "We'd run ahead of God so many times in our lives, we needed to ask him what he wanted," Penny says. "We contacted our pastors and surrounded ourselves with wise counsel."

"We did everything we didn't do the first time around," recalls Clint. "We let everybody know so they could pray for us."

They read Scripture together, and exchanged letters and e-mails. Every Sunday night they had a devotional time over the phone.

After three months, Clint and Penny decided to meet face to face, at a spot halfway between their homes—neutral ground. There they'd settle if they could put their marriage back together.

They met in Denver on Memorial Day weekend, 2002. They'd booked separate hotel rooms to keep everything above board. Clint arrived at the airport first and made his way to Penny's gate to wait for her. When she stepped off the jetway, they embraced. "It was as if 11 years had never happened," Clint recalls.

"Like a hand fitting into a tailored glove," Penny agrees. "It was seamless."





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They spent the weekend reminiscing and catching up on each other's lives. One day they met in a park and shared journals, talking for hours. Later, Clint came to Penny's room toting a large, black suitcase he said was a present for her. Inside, Penny was stunned to find all the mementos from their wedding ceremony—cards, their honeymoon scrapbook, and the goblets from which they'd toasted their marriage.

"I was overwhelmed," Penny says. "I couldn't believe Clint had saved everything."

"I'd moved 11 times, but I could never get rid of those memories," says Clint. "I didn't understand why until I got Penny's letter. I thought, *Wow, Lord. You knew what you were doing.*"

On their last night together, they had a worship service in Penny's hotel room. They sang, prayed, and shared Communion—a granola bar and grape juice sipped from their wedding goblets. When they finished, Clint pulled a chain with his wedding band from under his shirt. "Do you still have yours?" he asked.

Penny went to her suitcase, removed a small brown pouch containing her ring, and handed it to Clint. "Many times as a struggling teacher I'd been tempted to hock the ring, or just toss it into the ocean," Penny says. "But something had made me hold onto it, and I'd felt God urging me to bring it to Denver."

Clint prayed over their rings, then looked at her with shining eyes. "Penny, will you marry me again, this time for life?"





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"I said yes and burst into tears," Penny remembers. Clint went back to Florida, sold his house, and moved to California. In August 2002—11 years after they'd divorced—he and Penny were married for the second—and final—time.

Learning a New Way

The four years since have been a blessing, and a challenge. "Within two weeks the honeymoon was over," Penny says. "We were still dealing with old issues such as trust. We knew we had to be intentional about our marriage this time around."

They've surrounded themselves with accountability and prayer partners and continue their Sunday night devotional time. They have also instituted a "mini marriage retreat," getting away for a weekend every three months. No cell phones, e-mail, or outside influences are allowed. The first day is spent relaxing and having fun together. Then they review the last three months—what God has done for them—and plan the next three—what God wants them to do. They cover all areas of their marriage, such as intimacy, communication, finances, and family, to be sure they are staying on track with God and with each other.

Inspired by the miracle God worked in their marriage, in 2004 Clint and Penny created Inverse Ministries, dedicated to providing the tools for reconciliation to other couples in crisis.

Last fall, beginning on the anniversary of their original wedding date, the Braggs made a "40-day marriage ministry mission trip." Traveling from the West to East coasts, they





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stopped in churches and individual homes, speaking about God's power to mend broken relationships.

"Reconciliation is such a unique thing," Penny says, "because you're learning to love the same person, but Jesus' way this time."

"It's a daily choice," she explains. "We wake up next to forgiveness. Like a big double scoop, we have God's forgiveness and each other's forgiveness. That's what true reconciliation is."

"If you pray constantly, daily, to God and believe it will happen, guess what? It will happen," says Clint. "Penny and I are the living proof that God can heal all wounds and restore lives."

Dawn Zemke is an editor of MARRIAGE PARTNERSHIP. This article first appeared in the Spring 2007 issue of MARRIAGE PARTNERSHIP.

Reflect

- *Penny and Clint experienced an extreme restoration. If God can work in their marriage, what do you think is reasonable to expect him to do with yours?*
- *They said that they got ahead of God in their marriage. In what ways might problems in your marriage be a result of getting ahead of God?*



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The Issue at Hand

Marital Drift



In pursuit of “the good life,” busy couples can let everything take priority over the two most important things: God and marriage. Author David Goetz discusses how to make sure that doesn’t happen.

by Ginger Kolbaba

In his small suburban office—the walls covered with photos of his wife of 15 years and crayon pictures, some framed, drawn by his three children—David Goetz’s priorities are obvious.

Yet Goetz claims that although it’s easy to paste pictures on the walls—symbols of his “trophies”—it’s not so easy to live out those priorities. Especially when he’s working to keep his business, CZ Marketing, a brand and strategy firm for non-profits, a success and to meet his writing deadlines.





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Marital Drift

An award-winning author and former pastor, Goetz made a controversial splash in the Christian world with the release of his recent book, *Death by Suburb: How to Keep the Suburbs from Killing Your Soul* (Harper San Francisco). In it, he claims that even in the most Christian suburban neighborhoods, we obscure the real Jesus and keep our spiritual life on cruise control.

If that's what happens to our faith, what happens to our marriages? One glance at the divorce rate makes you realize pursuing the "good life" that suburban living promises can wreak havoc on even the best marriages.

So how do we protect ourselves from marital and spiritual suicide?

In this MP interview, Goetz provides a wake-up call on how we fall into these patterns, and what we can do to get out of them.

In your book you discuss how living in the suburbs can choke our spiritual life and how intentional suburbanites have to be about living out faith. Has living in the 'burbs done the same to marriage?

Goetz: Yes. It's difficult to have a meaningful marriage in the suburbs. In his book, *Escape from Evil*, Ernest Becker talks about immortality symbols—things that confer glory on us, which can be measured concretely, such as cleavage, low body fat, big house, career, and successful kids. But marriage isn't an immortality symbol.





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Marital Drift

Why not?

Because there's no concrete reward. What you get from a good marriage is invisible. You get a sense of connectedness. You receive the fruit of the Spirit the apostle Paul wrote about in Galatians 5:22-23: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

That's why the pursuit of marriage needs to be intentional. Because if you default to the values of our culture, you'll pursue the sprawling house, the great body, the accomplished kids. But you'll let your marriage drift.

What do you mean "drift"?

One simple example is how we use our calendars. We mark off dates for our kids' football practices, work trips, church social events. But most people don't mark off time to make love on a Saturday morning. Everything else gets scheduled in; meanwhile, our spouse gets squeezed out.

You have great kids; own a successful business; live in a prosperous suburb. So how do you avoid the drift?

Honestly? It usually takes pain to remind me that my marriage is more important than my immortality symbols. Like every marriage, Jana and I have experienced dark moments in which I've said hurtful things. I've wondered, *What's next after what just happened?*

Seeing the suffering I've caused my wife awakens me to the drift. You know you're in drift when little things become huge issues, and you realize, *Okay, I just went off on my wife for some reason and it was a small thing.* But underneath there's this deep current of discontent.



Ultimately discontent causes marital drift?

To some extent. But so does passivity, and that's one of the classic traits of a suburban marriage.

In what ways?

I'll give you an example. Recently Jana and I weathered one of the most stressful weeks in our marriage. I'd spent the previous two weeks traveling for business and that week I had some presentations to make to clients. It was also the week that Jana moved her mother into a retirement community. I couldn't help with the move because of my work commitments, plus I had to spend time watching the kids while she got her mom settled. By the end of that week we were exhausted.

Sunday evening I decided to run to my office, which is ten minutes away, to pick up some work. I left without telling Jana. She was busy checking her e-mail, so I thought, *I'll just step out, go to the office, and come back; I won't be missed.* But I know Jana doesn't like that. She wants a connection before I go anywhere, even to bed.

When I came home, Jana said, "Dave, you were gone for 30 minutes. You know I hate when you don't tell me you're leaving. Are you mad at me?" And I thought, Am I? I knew I wasn't. But by leaving without doing something I know she likes, I was being passive-aggressive.

I had a couple of weeks where I wasn't getting any attention, and I responded by becoming passive. *I'll just leave and see if she misses me.*



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We think it's no big deal. But it is; it's a spiritual issue.

Not telling her you were leaving has a spiritual connotation?

Absolutely. Passivity, or not taking initiative in your marriage, is a spiritual issue, because underneath is a deep current that says, *My needs aren't getting met, so I'm not going to meet your needs.* That's a spiritually dangerous and crippling place to be.

How do you protect your marriage from that?

By making space for God in your life. Life just naturally packs itself to the edges with everything except the most important things: God and marriage.

The spiritual discipline of creating space to listen to God is so important, because you become more reflective about your life. Over time you begin to ask, *Why am I passive? Why do I always need Jana to initiate in the relationship?*

It sounds great, but that's difficult to do—especially in suburbia where so many things compete for our time.

So the discipline is to schedule it. We read about scheduling dates and sex. The larger issue, though, is finding time in your life for God first. But one reason it's so difficult is that it's a long-term discipline that won't produce amazing results for our immortality symbols.





Recalibrating Your Marriage

Marital Drift

That's definitely our culture. We do something only if it has concrete results. I pray about my marriage, but as soon as my husband doesn't meet my needs, I react as if my spiritual discipline has failed.

Exactly. And really that's the wrong way to look at it.

Zig Ziglar says, "You can have everything in life you want, if you will just help enough other people get what they want." That's a nice pithy comment, but that isn't necessarily true. Think about this in marriage: You can have everything in your marriage you want if you just help your spouse get what she wants. On the surface, that's just good plain wisdom. But the deeper, thicker spiritual life realizes that: (1) you can't have everything in this life; and (2) there are times you give and give and give and your spouse won't get you what you want.

That probably won't sell many marriage-help books.

{Laughs} No. But with that realization, you have the great opportunity for understanding the deeper life the monastics talked about: that you must work on yourself. And your self is the biggest problem.

You think the biggest problem is your spouse not paying enough attention to you, or you always being the one who does the dishes or picks up after the kids.

The most difficult thing in a marriage is to serve the other person when your own needs aren't getting met. That's why marriage is the perfect environment for spiritual development, because it's only when your needs aren't getting met that you begin to work on your overblown sense





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of self. And *that* is something we fight against. I hate it. But without this fight, I don't grow spiritually.

I hate to say this, but I'm not sure that sounds all that enticing—especially if you're married to a difficult partner. Isn't there another way?

Do you think that if you're married to a perfect spouse you can avoid suffering? And if so, where do you think your spiritual life will be? Dead or crippled. In my book I wrote: "The human tendency seems to be to fight the difficult parts of life, as if by resisting them I can skip to the good stuff. ... [But] there's no entrance into the thicker reality of Christ's presence without the cross. No one has to go looking for one; the cross finds you."

In the first years of our marriage, Jana and I would always say, "I love you"; "I love you more." We'd think, *We don't fight much. We're not like those people.* And that romance is a wonderful gift. Once you get through all that, though, you reach the deeper stuff. That first phase of marriage, you think, *Can it get better than this?* Well, then it gets worse. The romance and newness wear off, and the suffering begins. The suffering we experience in marriage—those unmet needs, those really alone times—can lead us to the deeper life.

Studies show that once couples hit about the 20-year mark, or their late forties, a lot of women walk away from their marriage. Why is that?

You hear it's because women have given and given, and then the kids start to leave and the husband, who is in the second half of life, still wants to ascend. The woman has



sacrificed herself for years with her husband and the kids. She thinks, *It's my turn now.*

Theologian Richard Rohr sums it up well. He says that men in the second half of life need to learn the way of the cross, of suffering. But men don't want to learn that.

Many women, on the other hand, have already learned suffering—through menstruation, childbirth, giving up careers for motherhood, and by living in a culture that values men more than women. And so in the second half of life Rohr thinks that women need to learn resurrection.

So you have a marriage in which the wife is going to resurrect but the husband wants to resurrect again because he doesn't want to lose that power. You're going to have conflict.

Have you experienced that conflict in your marriage?

I've asked my wife through the years to support me in different ventures. When we were first married, I was a youth pastor and was taking classes at the University of Colorado at Denver. And I decided, "I'm going to be a writer." So Jana and I moved to the Chicago suburbs so I could take a job as a writer and editor. About four years later I became restless, so I began working on an MBA. I expected her again to sacrifice. By that time we'd had one child. I also had a book contract. So I was working full-time, going to graduate school two nights a week, and writing a book. I'm not the one sacrificing; she is. Then I decided to start my business. By this time we had two children and the week I told her I was leaving my secure job to start a business, she told me she was pregnant. And again, who sacrificed?





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So recently, she told me she wants to go back to school. And how did I respond? I became unsupportive and critical. I thought, *We don't have the money. Or, You actually need to work more because...* It didn't matter that we didn't have the money for me to get my MBA or to start *my* business. I had a great opportunity to give up power, to sacrifice some of the things I wanted so I could help my wife resurrect.

I told Jana the other day, "I know in my head that I need to do this, and it's killing me because it's so difficult." Why? Because I think about what I have to give up. I want my goals.

This is where divorce comes for many couples. Women get sick of it and say, "I don't need you." But it's really because men have never learned to give up power, which is a spiritual issue.

How do they learn that, though?

There are two ways people change. One is through contemplative prayer, through making space for God in our lives. It isn't a direct correlation, but we learn about God, and about our own motives. But most of us don't pray. Let's face it. So how are we going to learn? The only other way is through suffering. And often men don't learn this until after the wife is gone.

I know a 50-year-old who had the biggest wake-up call of his life. He'd built this successful business. And his wife left him. Then he found out he had cancer. He's a much different man now. And the only thing that changed him was the suffering in his life.





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It would be better to learn the deeper life before a divorce.

Absolutely, but I don't think you can do it without knowing God. Making space in your life for God through prayer and suffering is to become awakened to what you need to do for your marriage. Not just as survival mode or to have more romance or sex, but to honor God and serve your spouse.

When suffering comes, our instinct is to externalize the problem. But true spirituality is always internalizing: *It's not my spouse who's the problem, but I am the problem. True spirituality says, I have unmet needs. How am I going to respond? Am I going to manipulate my wife to get what I need? Am I going to be passive, and not say good night when I go to bed because for some reason I feel neglected?*

Some of the deepest, most wounding times for me are when I've realized I really hurt Jana. And I'm one of those guys who immediately knows I've done it. Though I can't stop myself, I've learned how to say, "I'm so sorry for what I just did."

For me reaching the deeper life has been learning to admit when I'm wrong. Believe me, that's suffering too.

It sounds as if your wife has mastered the art of forgiveness!

{Laughs} Absolutely. But here's the dark place: when you realize you can say, "I'm sorry" or "I apologize for ..." and you can't make that person forgive you. And then you learn you can't even make them love you. Being in that place is true spiritual formation.



That's a scary place to be.

Yes. Because the next question becomes, *What if she doesn't love me anymore? What if I've pushed us right over the edge?*

Those are difficult places, and I've been there. It's realizing I really want to be loved, and I can't do anything to achieve that. The only thing I can do is serve her, and I have to leave it up to God at that point.

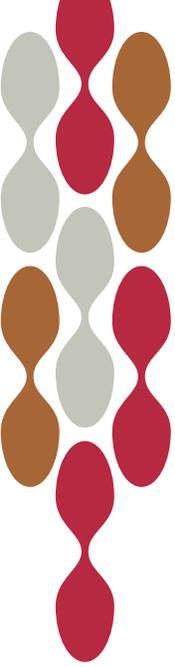
Sounds like a cliché. But I don't want anybody to think a successful marriage is about three easy steps. I don't believe that anymore. Is practical help essential? Absolutely. But if you want to get to the deeper parts of a fulfilling marriage, you can't get there directly. You can't create a fulfilling marriage. The marriage that is part of this deeper life is a marriage that is not passive, but is always initiating, as God always initiates with us; always loving even when it's not easy. But many times we design our own suffering and the consequences reverberate.

In what ways?

You design your own suffering, obviously, if you have an affair. I don't think anybody has looked back on an affair and said, "I'm glad I made that decision."

But many people design their own suffering by creating an environment in which they don't initiate. They create a passive-aggressive marriage. They create a marriage in which there's always some subtext as opposed to being open and honest and authentic.

There's a great song on U2's album *How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb*. Bono writes, "I want a trip inside your head,



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spend the day there." I'm to the point in my marriage where I want to know on a much deeper level what really makes Jana tick. What goes on inside her head on a day-to-day basis. It's a deeper love. That's what I mean by initiating—when I stop seeing her as an object that meets my needs.

There's typically someone who is giving all the time and someone who is taking all the time. In a healthy marriage that begins to flip, that taking person learns to grow and give when, in fact, he or she isn't getting anything back. I want to be that kind of person, no matter where I live.

Ginger Kolbaba is editor of Kyria.com. This article first appeared in the Fall 2006 issue of MARRIAGE PARTNERSHIP.

Reflect

- *Does Goetz's theory of "marital drift" ring true for your marriage?*
- *In what ways has "suffering" in your marriage brought you closer to God?*



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Practically Speaking

Bounce Back!

The secrets to building resilience in your marriage.

by John H. Thurman Jr.



Last week Sara got so mad she threw her shoe at me. It missed my head by about three inches!" Larry said.

"At the time I thought he deserved it," Sara admitted. "But the fact that I could *do* that really scares me! I feel as if our marriage is in serious trouble."

While not every couple throws shoes—or anything else—that sense of uncontrollable anger is not uncommon for many Christian couples. Unfortunately, some feel that the heightened level of emotion is the beginning of the end of their relationship.





Recalibrating Your Marriage

Bounce Back!

In my more than 30 years of counseling and married life, I've observed that how couples respond to an event such as Sara's shoe throwing can help them develop resilience, the ability to bounce back or recover quickly from change, misfortune, and unmet expectations.

As we explored their past ten years together, I knew that even though they were now in a difficult season, Larry and Sara had built resilience into their marriage. To build a resilient marriage your commitment to the relationship must be stronger than your history, mood, or situation. Couples who are resilient have these seven qualities in common.

1. Resilient couples don't fall prey to misconceptions about marriage.

One thing that can damage our resilience is the mistaken notion that a good marriage equals a calm and peaceful one. In the ten years Larry and Sara had been married, five jobs, one miscarriage, five harsh financial seasons, four moves, and two adventure-filled boys had taken their toll. Not to mention the fact that they came from two different family styles: Sara's parents were divorced. Her dad had cheated on her mom multiple times, and then abandoned the family when she was ten. Larry, on the other hand, grew up in an intact family—his parents are still together more than 40 years later.

As we talked, Larry nailed one of the great Christian misconceptions about marriage: "We had no idea how difficult marriage would be. If you listen to people at our church talk about their marriages, it would be easy to believe nobody has been through what we've experienced."





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It amazes me that in this day when marriage ministries and materials are so prevalent, couples still believe a great relationship will be a peaceful one. They often feel invincible, especially in the early stages of marriage. This can lead them to deny the impact of stress and family history.

Many couples mistakenly think that loving each other means always getting along. But conflict is an inescapable part of marriage if the couple expects their relationship to grow and mature.

2. Resilient couples find help when they need it.

Many couples "go it" alone—trying to deal with their issues without getting outside help from a trusted source who can offer biblical encouragement, guidance, and support. Those are typically the couples who end up with broken relationships.

Larry and Sara had always been involved in church small groups, which had been invaluable sources of strength when difficult circumstances such as miscarriage and job loss came along. But when they felt more "out of control," such as Sara's shoe throwing, they knew it was a signal to seek professional help.

3. Resilient couples remember the good things about their marriage and each other.

"He's a good father to our boys," Sara mentioned when I asked them to list each other's good qualities. "And he's patient. He puts up with my quirks."





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"I love how loyal and passionate she is," Larry added. "Sometimes she goes overboard, but I know her heart's in the right place."

The longer we talked, the more relaxed they became. "We're not quitters," Sara said. "When I see how many of our friends have crashed and burned in their marriages, I'm glad we've hung in there."

Larry looked embarrassed but said, "We had no idea what we could endure as husband and wife. But we still love each other."

Resilient couples choose to focus on the good as opposed to camping out on the bad.

4. Resilient couples accept the differences in their personalities, views, and ways of getting things done.

Sara entered marriage fearing the painful conflict she'd watched her parents experience, while Larry entered expecting the intimacy and commitment he'd seen his parents enjoy. For several years, they acted out based on the marriage models and communication styles they brought with them.

Sara tended to over-talk everything. Then if she felt Larry didn't "get it," she'd become angry.

"When I try to talk to Larry," she told me, "he always seems to run and hide. He'll either collapse in the recliner and be sucked into the television, or he'll retreat to the computer room. When he does that I feel like going ballistic, and sometimes do."





Recalibrating Your Marriage

Bounce Back!

Larry responded, "She has an opinion about everything, and when I don't engage in the conversation, she gets heated, so I retreat. Then she throws a shoe at me!"

Men and women really do have different needs.

For guys, we want to feel competent and needed. We want to feel respected. One friend of mine used to say, "Men are like dogs, they need three things: someone to feed them, play with them, and occasionally say, 'Good boy.'"

I encouraged Sara to be more mindful before sharing an opinion. She also became intentional about giving Larry positive feedback on things he did around the house and with the boys. She even began to find herself being more sexually provocative with him.

For women, the key is to help her feel valued and cherished. If she feels her husband can love her the way she is, then she feels more secure. When a man listens to his wife, without trying to fix her, for instance, he'll be amazed to see how she can engage him physically. Larry noticed that as he listened intentionally to Sara, she actually talked less. He even began to buy her flowers, knowing how much she appreciated the gesture.

Sara and Larry became more focused on their communication styles and began to sense less tension and more hope. Larry was choosing to stay connected and not withdraw, and Sara was trying to lower her intensity level.





Recalibrating Your Marriage

Bounce Back!

"We're not the same," Sara mentioned. "And I'm starting to appreciate that that can be a good thing."

5. Resilient couples develop and maintain an internal focus of control rather than an external focus.

I asked Larry and Sara to recount some of the difficult times in their marriage and how they got through. They told me that six months into their marriage, Larry lost his job. It could have been devastating, especially since Sara's part-time job didn't bring in enough money to cover their bills. When many couples would take out their frustrations, fears, and worries on their spouse, Larry and Sara decided instead to focus on the possibilities.

"We knew we loved each other," Sara said. "It wasn't Larry's fault he was downsized. We weren't sure how it would work out, but we believed Larry would find a job and that God would lead us through this difficult time. And he did."

"So what keeps you two together?" I finally asked them.

"I love him and want us to get better," Sara told me.

Larry agreed. "We believe God can and will help us work things out, but it's tough." They both took their marriage vows seriously and didn't want to become another statistic. They hoped to survive this rough time and were committed to the process.

6. Resilient couples manage their emotions.

After Sara's fourth overdrawn check, Larry had had enough. Instead of blowing up or withdrawing from her,



which had previously proved unsuccessful, Larry took another approach. He waited for a day or two so he could calm down. Having a measure of control over his emotions, he could talk to her in a calm, rational way and they were able to resolve their money issues.

7. Resilient couples reinterpret past failures and use them as growing points instead of perennial negatives.

In other words, they look at past mistakes in order to make positive, life-changing applications.

Sara admitted she felt she had to punish Larry with angry outbursts in order to get him to do anything. As she worked on her side of the responsibility equation, she realized some of her anger was rooted in bitterness toward her dad. So she began to pay close attention to the things that could trigger her emotions. In the course of our counseling she was able to see the hurts for what they were, and began to come to terms with the hurt. In the process, her feelings about Larry grew softer.

Both Sara and Larry let go of the old hurts and took active measures to reconnect. Larry is "staying in the room" when Sara is struggling. Sara is feeling more secure in her relationship with Larry as she sees the changes he's making. They use the words, *I was wrong. I'm sorry I hurt you. Will you forgive me?*

In the six weeks they were in counseling with me, Larry and Sara were able to receive enough mercy and grace to forgive each other and make adjustments necessary to move forward.



Recalibrating Your Marriage

Bounce Back!

Today they report that shoes are no longer a weapon of choice, but something to wear.

John H. Thurman Jr. is a counselor, radio host, and member of the Association of Marriage and Family Ministries (AMFM). www.johnthurman.net. This article first appeared in the Fall 2006 issue of MARRIAGE PARTNERSHIP.

Reflect

- *Which of these characteristics of a resilient couple comes most naturally to you? Which do you need to work on?*
- *What might becoming a "resilient couple" do for your relationship?*



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Practically Speaking

A Shelter from Winter Winds

When marriage moves into a cold season, there's still hope for spring.

by Gary D. Chapman



It's discouraging," Marc said of his 24-year marriage. "We disagree on everything. We're both bull-headed, which has created conflicts and a coldness about our relationship." His wife, Marsha, chimed in, "Over the years we've both piled on the resentment. There's been more effort on my part than his. He's so critical. We hardly spend time together and we rarely touch or affirm each other."





Recalibrating Your Marriage

A Shelter from Winter Winds

While some people enjoy winter sports such as snowmobiling and skiing, no couple enjoys a winter marriage. Winter marriages, such as Marc and Marsha's, are characterized by coldness, harshness, and bitterness. The dreams of spring are covered with layers of ice, and the weather forecast calls for more freezing rain.

What brings a couple to the winter season? In a word: rigidity—the unwillingness to consider the other person's perspective and to work toward a meaningful solution. All couples face difficulties and have differences. Couples who fail to negotiate these differences will find the marriage growing cold. When one or both spouses insist on "my way or not at all," they move toward winter.

In winter, attitudes turn negative. Sarah and Will have been married 19 years. She told me, "I tried to work on our marriage, but it seemed as if he interpreted everything I suggested as nagging. Nothing worked, so I shut down. I don't care about his needs at this point. I'm waiting for him to put some energy into our marriage."

"It makes me feel like we're never going to make it. It just keeps getting worse," Will said. "We fight 24/7. I can't go on like this, and I don't know what else to do." In winter we perceive the problems as too big and our positions as too entrenched. We think that disagreements have gone on too long and can never be resolved. We blame our spouse for the decline in our relationship.

Winter's Thaw

Most couples experience winter from time to time. It may last a month or 30 years. It may begin three months after





Recalibrating Your Marriage

A Shelter from Winter Winds

the wedding or hit in the mid-life years. If your marriage is in winter, it may appear beyond hope. But don't give up. Just as most people wouldn't lie down in the snow and wait to die, there's no reason to accept passively the coldness of a wintry marriage. There is a way out, and it begins with a change of attitude.

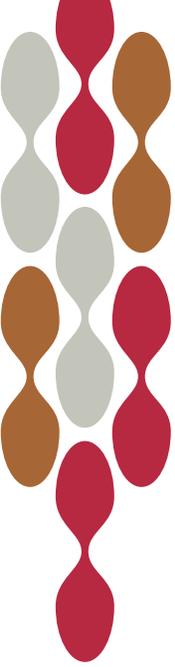
A winter marriage often makes couples desperate enough to break out of their silent suffering and seek the help of a counselor, pastor, or trusted friend. Those who seek help find it.

Thawing the ice of a winter relationship requires the courage to admit one's own failures in the past, first to God and then to one's spouse. Apologizing and asking forgiveness is the first step.

The second step is choosing a positive attitude. Ask God to help you turn from seeing the worst in your marriage to seeing the potential. Instead of believing your situation is hopeless, believe in the power of God to change you and to touch your spouse's heart. When you ask him to let you be an agent for helping your spouse become all God has designed him or her to be, you begin to move out of winter.

The third step is to speak your spouse's love language. Find out what makes your spouse feel loved (your biggest clue is what he or she has complained about through the years). Ask God to help you love your spouse. The Bible says, "Love covers over a multitude of sins" (1 Peter 4:8). The fourth step is to maximize your differences.





Recalibrating Your Marriage

A Shelter from Winter Winds

Differences were never meant to be divisive. Ask God to show you how your differences can be an asset to your relationship. When this happens, you'll know spring is near.

Working through winter may not be "fun" or "exciting," like sledding down a steep hill or a ski trip to Vail. But when couples persevere and take positive steps to improve their marriage, they emerge stronger, more committed, and better able to work through their differences. By extending peace, even in the midst of pain and alienation, countless couples have discovered deep healing and even deeper intimacy. When two people choose to love again, the melting ice of winter will water the seeds of spring.

Gary D. Chapman, Ph.D., is author of The Four Seasons of Marriage and co-author of It Happens Every Spring, This article first appeared in the Winter 2006 issue of MARRIAGE PARTNERSHIP.

Reflect

- *If your marriage is in "winter" right now, how difficult is it for you apologize and forgive and then take on a positive attitude? Do you believe these first two steps could help? Why or why not?*
- *What is your husband's "love language"? How willing are you to show love using his language?*



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Leadership Tools

Is Your Spouse Stressed?

9 things you can do to help.
by Donna Savage



Watching your spouse struggle with prolonged stress can be like a long roller coaster ride. Each day brings a new dip or turn produced by the irritability and frustration your partner brings home.

No one wants to watch helplessly as his or her mate wanders from unhealthy stress into burnout or depression. We want to take positive action, but we can't fix things by ourselves. Often all we can do is provide support and encouragement during the rough moments. Here are nine tips for handling the bumps and curves ahead.





Recalibrating Your Marriage

Is Your Spouse Stressed?

1. Practice listening. We all struggle with the temptation to share our insights and knowledge, sure that we can solve our spouse's problem. Instead, partners may need us to listen without evaluating their responses.

2. Be content with silence. Being supportive does not equal talking. Recognize that your spouse may not want to update you daily, because reviewing and reliving every event and emotion is additional stress.

3. Share the load. Your mate needs you to acknowledge the emotional and physical demands of stress by offering help in acceptable ways.

4. Meet primary needs. Husbands often need the reassurance of more frequent sexual intimacy when they don't feel successful in the workplace. Stressed-out wives need extra tenderness and affection—such as a simple hug with no strings attached—and more time for conversation.

5. Make home a haven. At times, deliberately choose not to unload every issue and problem from your day during your first minutes together. By waiting to share, you assure your spouse that you're not the next one in line waiting for a piece of him or her.

6. Adjust your expectations. The stressed-out husband or wife may not have much energy at home—for anything. The decision is ours whether to spend the evening sulking or to tenderly kiss them as we give them the evening off.

7. Keep your spouse in the picture. In an effort to help their stressed spouse, some husbands and wives silently





Recalibrating Your Marriage

Is Your Spouse Stressed?

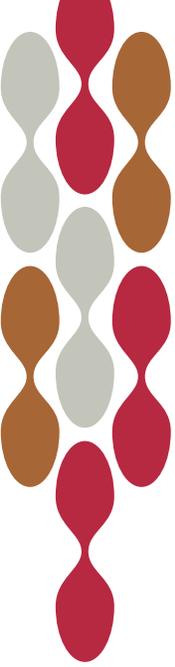
start handling all the issues of the household or the children by themselves. They begin to withdraw emotionally, not wanting to burden their mate by sharing any personal struggles. In reality, isolating the beleaguered partner simply communicates that they're a failure at home, too. We need to share the news of a child's success at school or ask for our spouse's advice about a relationship problem, and our mate needs the encouragement of being needed.

8. Guard your heart. When we hear our spouse continually vent about the same people or situations, it's easy to get sucked into their anger and bitterness. Devoting extra time and energy to bolster our spiritual walk allows us to give a husband or wife the prayer support he or she needs—without becoming bitter ourselves.

9. Demonstrate unconditional love. Let's face it. While we'd love to see our mates display only spiritually mature responses to adversity, that's not reality. Your spouse needs to "spew out the poison" building inside before it does further damage: Although watching that process isn't pretty, our spouses need the freedom to share bad reactions without fear of rejection. By extending that freedom, we put 1 Corinthians 13:7 into action: "(Love) always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."

Near the entrance of most roller coaster rides is a warning sign. Some rides prohibit people under certain heights or ages; others warn those with specific medical conditions to avoid the ride. The roller coaster ride of job stress comes with no such warnings—for the spouse at risk or the partner.





Recalibrating Your Marriage

Is Your Spouse Stressed?

We watch our mates struggle, but we can't win the battle for them. We can't wave a magic wand and make all their aggravations disappear. We can't even promise that our words and actions will lessen their stress. We can, however, offer one important promise to a stressed-out spouse. No matter how often the roller coaster pitches us from side to front and back again, we can promise to go along for the ride and stay in the car with them until the very end.

Donna Savage, a freelance writer, lives in Nevada. This article first appeared in the Fall 2006 issue of MARRIAGE PARTNERSHIP.



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Additional Resources

When Your Husband Doesn't Believe, from **Gifted For Leadership**. In this downloadable resource, you'll read stories of women who've experienced the difficulties and stress caused by being married to unbelievers. Some have happy endings; others are still hoping. But the purpose of these stories is to help you find hope and comfort in the God who does hear your prayers and loves you—and your husband.

Making In-Law Relationships Work, from **Gifted For Leadership**. This downloadable guide, designed for both mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law, helps you understand the struggles that the other woman feels and teaches you to handle any conflict in a godly way while being encouraging and supportive.



Every Woman's Marriage: Igniting the Joy and Passion You Both Desire, by Shannon Ethridge (Random House, 2006). If you're ready to stop the blame game and pursue the marriage of your dreams, Shannon and Greg Ethridge show you how to reignite your relationship with spiritual, emotional, and physical passion.

The 5 Sex Needs of Men & Women: Discover the Secrets of Great Sex in a Godly Marriage, by Gary Rosberg, Barbara Rosberg, and Ginger Kolbaba (Tyndale House, 2007). Written as a follow-up to the Rosbergs' best-selling *5 Love Needs of Men & Women*, this straightforward and candid guide looks at the different emotional, spiritual, and physical requirements of husbands and wives in a Christ-based marriage. Learn how to open the lines of honest communication and experience sexual intimacy according to God's design.



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