

Volume 2, Issue 3

MOTIVATED

THE MAGAZINE THAT MOVES YOU!

Marriage Is...

News and Views

The question that could save your marriage before it begins

Committed

Hold on

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FROM THE EDITOR

Marriage is supposed to be the most satisfying, most strengthening, and most lasting human relationship in all of life. But sad to say, more and more couples find themselves in relationships that are anything but satisfying or strengthening, and global divorce statistics show that marriage is becoming more expendable and less lasting all the time!

It was a wise man who said that it is important not only to pick the right partner but to *be* the right partner. And contrary to many popular love stories, it is not during the first year of bliss that most dangers crop up. Marriages do not, like dropped chinaware, smash as a result of that first quarrel, which the newly married hope is unthinkable. Marriage is a rooted thing, a growing and flowering thing that must be tended faithfully.

Lacking that mutual effort, we are apt to find some day that our marriage, so hopefully planted, has been withering imperceptibly. Gradually we realize that for some time the petals have lost their luster, that the perfume is gone. Daily watering with the little gracious affectionate acts we all welcome, with mutual concern for the other's contentment, with self-watchfulness here and self-forgetfulness there, brings forth ever new blossoms.

We hope that the following articles, stories, poems, and anecdotes will be an encouragement for those who are considering marriage, those who already have made the commitment, or those who may be having a second chance at it. It is possible for a marriage to last "till death do us part"—if tender care is taken to water and nurture it.

Christina Lane
For *Motivated*

Words for Loved Ones

I'm proud of you.
Magnificent.
I knew you could do it.
You're very special to me.
I trust you.
What a treasure you are.
Hurray for you!
Beautiful work.
Well done!
You do so much for me; thank you!
You're a joy.
You're such a good listener.
I love you.
Thanks for being so loving.
You remembered.
You're the best.
I've got to hand it to you.
I couldn't be prouder of you.
You light up my day.
I'm praying for you.
You're wonderful.
It's hard to imagine where I'd be
without you.
I'm behind you.
Thank you for believing in me.
Your love is wonderful.
I'm so happy to be with you.
I admire you.
I'm with you all the way.
You make my day!
You're a big blessing from God! ✨

The Loving Compliment

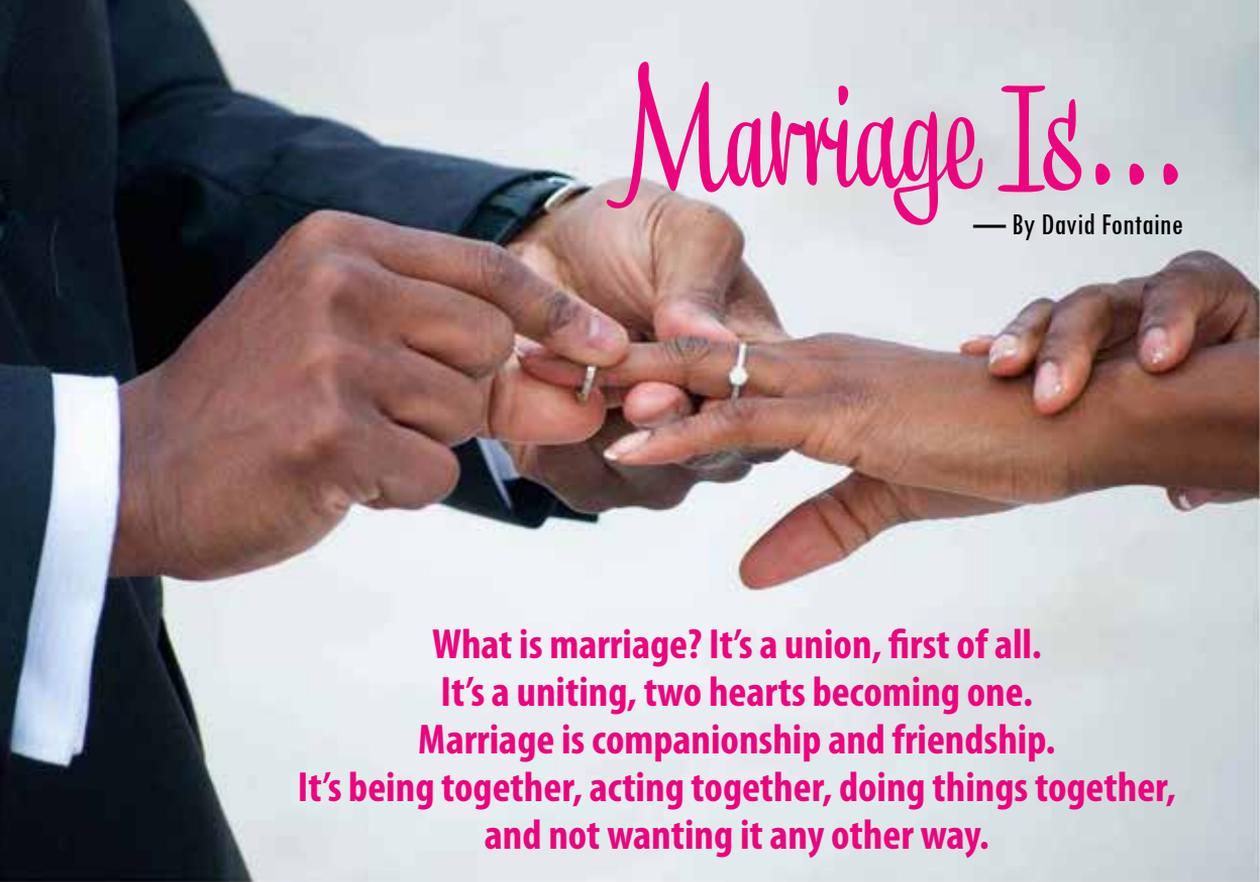
By Leo Buscaglia

Nearly every one of us wants to be appreciated, to be the recipient of that most supreme compliment—that we are loved. We need others to recognize our strengths or sometimes just to prop us up in the places where we tend to lean a little. Honest compliments are simple and cost nothing to give, but we must not underestimate their worth. The most loving compliment I've ever heard of was given by Joseph Choate, a former ambassador. When asked who he would like to be if he could come back to Earth again after he died, he replied without an instant's hesitation, "Mrs. Choate's second husband." ✨



Marriage Is...

— By David Fontaine



**What is marriage? It's a union, first of all.
It's a uniting, two hearts becoming one.
Marriage is companionship and friendship.
It's being together, acting together, doing things together,
and not wanting it any other way.**

Marriage is understanding. It's being blind to the faults of the other. It's being considerate in every way—considerate of the other's time, feelings, and desires.

♥ Marriage is caring. It's being concerned. It's going out of your way to make sure the other person is well cared for.

♥ Marriage is kindness. It's saying kind words and putting those words into action.

♥ Marriage is support. It's supporting your spouse in their endeavors, in their projects, in good times and bad. It's giving them moral support, physical support, prayer support, all-around support. It's cheering them on and encouraging them when they feel down.

♥ Marriage is stooping to lift the other. It's being strong when the other is weak.

♥ Marriage is protecting your mate from physical and emotional harm. Marriage is provision. It's doing your part to make sure the other has all they need. It's pulling your share of the load.

♥ Marriage is hard work day after day. It's going out of your way to meet the needs of your mate in whatever way you can, even if you don't feel like it.

♥ Marriage is lending a helping hand.

♥ Marriage is sacrifice. It's giving of yourself for the one you love. It's being ready to give up your own ideas or desires to make your spouse happy. It's giving and giving and giving again.

♥ Marriage is yielding, bending, melting together.

♥ Marriage is going the extra mile.
♥ Marriage is compassion. It prefers the happiness of the other to your own.
♥ Marriage is give and take.
♥ Marriage is taking turns; it's not one sided. Marriage is submission. It's giving the other person a chance.
♥ Marriage is living and loving and helping one another.
♥ Marriage is learning from one another.
♥ Marriage is humbling.
♥ Marriage is being flexible.
♥ Marriage is walking a mile in the other's shoes.
♥ Marriage is listening and understanding. Marriage is being there for each other in bad times as well as the good.
♥ Married love stands through thick and thin, no matter how hot the trials or how hard the test. Married love never loses hope. It's always there, always dependable, always ready with outstretched hands and open arms to take the other in—to love, to comfort, to hold, and to cherish.
♥ Marriage is learning to let the little things pass.

♥ Marriage is communicating honestly and openly. It's being willing to humbly share your heart and deepest thoughts.
♥ Marriage is talking, praying, discussing, and agreeing together.
♥ Marriage does not let things build up between you by ignoring the other, but rather finds a way; it creates solutions.
♥ Marriage is joining hand in hand, heart to heart.
♥ Marriage is discovery. It's discovering each other, learning about each other and all the funny things you say and do.
♥ Marriage is having a good sense of humor. It's relaxing together, enjoying each other.
♥ Marriage is respect.
♥ Marriage is having faith in each other.
♥ Marriage is accepting the other for what they are.
♥ Marriage is coming to the realization that you are not complete without your other half.
♥ Marriage can be the most satisfying and strengthening experience you will ever have.

In marriage, with children, at work, in any relationship
—an ounce of praise, of sincere appreciation of some act or attribute,
can often do more than a ton of fault-finding. If we look for it we can usually
find, in even the most unlikely, unlikable, and incapable person,
something to commend and encourage.
Doubtless it is a human frailty, but most of us, in the glow of feeling
we have pleased, want to do more to please,
and knowing we have done well, want to do better.



News and Views

By Dr. Les Parrott, adapted

The question that could save your marriage before it begins:

HOW WOULD I LIKE TO BE MARRIED TO Me?

The odds-makers say the chances are five in ten that a marriage will end in divorce.

Well, regardless of your marriage “odds,” we have a soul-searching question that will help you beat them. Ask yourself this, “How would I like to be married to me?”

Think about it. How would I rate me as a partner? Am I easy to live with? What are the positive qualities I bring to a relationship? Every relationship is unique, and while there is no definitive list of qualities that describe good partners, consider some of the traits that show up again and again in studies of lifelong love.

Research has shown that people who make good lifelong marriage partners have a way of passing over minor offenses and injustices. They’re quick to forgive.

Partners who are easy to live with are cooperative. They get along.

They know what the saying, “How good and how pleasant it is to live together in unity,” means. They also have an even and stable emotional tone.

Nobody is attracted to an uncontrollable temper. Good spouses communicate their needs openly and honestly. What they say is in sync with how they feel and what they want. They share their innermost thoughts.

We may not have every advantage for a successful marriage; few do. But by searching our soul, by questioning our character, and by becoming easy to live with, we will exponentially increase the probability of building a relationship that will last. ✨



Committed Hold on

Some days marriage is a little more than you bargained for. You didn't know it was going to be so hard. You didn't know it was going to be boring. You didn't know it was going to be lonely.

The good days are fun. But some days, marriage is a pain, and you wonder why you stick with it.

When marriage gets dull (all marriages get dull), when marriage gets difficult (all marriages get difficult), you tie your rope around a post called commitment and you hold on.

If you hold on for a few hours, or maybe a few days, it usually turns around. You work at love, you practice patience,

you inject new life. And a sagging, limping, maybe a wounded marriage, becomes alive again.

Love, by its nature, cannot run evenly. Humans are too frail. Bodies become tired, minds go haywire, spirits get low.

And when they do, you tie the knot of commitment and you hold on.

You pray while the storm roars over you. Drenched, weak, pelted, and bedraggled, you survive for a little while.

Tomorrow your love will be fresh and vibrant again. But until it is, you are happy to just hold on. ✨



Jam to Remember

By Claire Nichol, adapted

I used to struggle more often than I wanted to admit to really enjoy my children. Sure, many little unexpected happenings turned to happy thoughts later—the sorts of things that fond memories are made of—but just as often I seemed to spoil the fun for my children before it had a chance to become a fond memory. But then something happened to help change that.

It started one Monday morning. No sooner had my husband gone to work, leaving me home with our two young children, than I found myself counting the hours till he would come home. By then it would almost be the kids' bedtime and things would be easier two-on-two.

Morning inched past, and finally it was afternoon. I had hoped to get some

work done while the kids took their afternoon naps, but that hope vanished when my youngest, Emma, stayed awake, eager for attention and lively play.

When she finally fell asleep, I plopped myself in a nearby chair, but not a moment had passed before my two-and-a-half-year-old son bounced out of bed and up into my lap. “I woke up, Mommy!” he announced as though that were a great accomplishment.

“You sure did!” I tried my best to sound positive, while thinking, *There goes my afternoon. I guess I really won't be getting anything done today.* I looked at my watch. “Two more hours till Daddy's home,” I said out loud. “Let's go and get you a snack.”

Omar stood on a kitchen chair and

leaned against the counter as he helped pour milk into his cup. I would have rather done it without his help, but remembered something my mother had recently said. “At this age he wants to do everything himself.”

“But that’s so frustrating for me,” I had complained to her. “Even simple things get complicated and take so much longer.”

“It’s for the best,” Mom had told me. “Just think of it as education—all the things you go through with the kids that are part of daily life, like brushing teeth, washing hands, dressing, making snacks—it’s all brand new to them, something new to learn and experience.

“Those little things teach them self-sufficiency, character, and style. Remember, you’re the teacher and your kids are eager young pupils in the school of life.”

So I had let Omar help me pour the milk. “There you are,” I said as we finished. “And I’d like some bread, please—with jam on it.” He knew I couldn’t refuse when he asked so politely and cheerfully.

I started toward the fridge, but Omar had beaten me there and was already pulling the jam from the fridge shelf. *I hope that jar doesn’t slip through his little fingers and break*, I thought, just as it did!

The jam managed to stay in a fairly neat red splatter on the floor, but the broken glass was a different story. It was everywhere, in a hundred pieces.

I covered my mouth with my hands to keep the tiredness and frustration from spilling out. “Never do that again!” Omar offered in a sorry and slightly

worried tone. I forced myself to think, *I don’t want to lose my patience. I know it wasn’t his fault.*

Suddenly Mom’s words rushed back into my mind—“something new to learn and experience.” I swooped up Omar to the safety of my arms. “First we had better get some shoes on your bare feet, then I’m going to show you how to clean up a broken jar of jam.”

Moments later, as I swept up the mess and Omar held the dustpan ready, I explained to my little pupil the dynamics of glass: how easily it shatters, and the best way to clean it up when it does.

Mom’s advice was wise. By treating the mishap as a new learning experience for my little one, I felt calm and controlled. Instead of scolding my son and promising myself I’d never make the mistake of letting him get something from the fridge by himself again, I had taught him how to deal with accidents in a positive way.

We got another jar of jam from the cupboard, and went on to butter bread and spread jam together, make coffee for mom, and set it all out neatly on the table to enjoy together.

That’s when I caught myself actually enjoying the moment! “You’re such a good cook, Omar!” His little eyes shone. “Mommy is so proud of you!” “Omar is so proud of you, Mommy!” he replied without hesitation. I smiled.

Come to think of it, I was proud of myself too. “I think I’ll buy another jar of jam and make it a permanent fixture on the kitchen counter,” I told Omar, “because enjoying you at this moment is something I want to always remember!” ❀

Answers to Your Questions

How to put the magic back into a marriage

Q:

My wife and I have been married for 11 years, and though we still love each other very much, our relationship has grown a little stale. What can we do to put the magic back into our marriage?

A:

When most couples vow “for better or worse,” in the starry-eyed magic of the moment, they can only imagine their lives together getting better and better. New parents take one long, deep look into the eyes of their baby and vow to never hurt or disappoint the child. Children promise to stay best friends forever. Doctors, nurses, teachers, social workers, volunteers, and others dedicate their lives to serving others. It’s love—that superglue of families, friendships, and every other good thing—that inspires such commitment.

Why, then, do married couples squabble? Why do parents nag, belittle, and get impatient? Why do friends drift apart? Why does the inspiration to selflessly serve others wane?

As time passes, we become so familiar with the people we are closest to that we stop valuing and treating them like we should. The wear and tear of daily living takes its toll, and the bright newness of once-treasured relationships begins to fade. Up close



and personal, everyone’s flaws and wrinkles begin to show. Routines become ruts. Our once-prized blessings begin to weigh on us.

When that happens, it’s time to reverse the trend. That will take a conscious effort and may not be easy, especially if the problem has been going on for some time, but it can be done.

We can count our blessings. We can remind ourselves of all the things about the other person that attracted us to them in the first place. Then we can put ourselves in their position and ask the same question. The quickest and surest way to return the shine to any tarnished relationship is to polish our own good qualities. When we get busy being the person we set out to be at the start, the other party will almost certainly follow suit.

And most of all, let’s remember that God can revitalize and renew any relationship when we ask Him to help us. ✨

Love Is

Slow to suspect — quick to trust,
Slow to condemn — quick to justify,
Slow to offend — quick to defend,
Slow to expose — quick to shield,
Slow to reprimand — quick to forbear,
Slow to belittle — quick to appreciate,
Slow to demand — quick to give,
Slow to provoke — quick to help,
Slow to resent — quick to forgive.

Just for Fun

The *Perfect Girl*

A friend asked a gentleman how it is that he never married.

Replied the gentleman,

“Well, I guess I just never met the right woman ... I guess I’ve been looking for the perfect girl.”

“Oh, come on now,” said the friend, “Surely you have met at least one girl that you wanted to marry.”

“Yes, there was one girl ... once. I guess she was the one perfect girl ... the only perfect girl I really ever met. She was just the right everything ... I mean, she really was the perfect girl for me.”

“Well, why didn’t you marry her,” asked the friend.

“She was looking for the perfect man,” he said. ✨

— Author Unknown



On Marriage

To keep the fire burning brightly there's one easy rule: Keep the two logs together, near enough to keep each other warm and far enough apart—about a finger's breadth—for breathing room. Good fire, good marriage, same rule.—Marnie Reed Crowell

Chains do not hold a marriage together. It is threads, hundreds of tiny threads, which sew people together through the years.—Simone Signoret

Success in marriage does not come merely through *finding* the right mate, but through *being* the right mate. —Barnett R. Brickner

A long marriage is two people trying to dance a duet and two solos at the same time.
—Anne Taylor Fleming

A successful marriage requires falling in love many times, always with the same person.
—Mignon McLaughlin

There is no substitute for the comfort supplied by the utterly taken-for granted relationship.
—Iris Murdoch

Our wedding was many years ago. The celebration continues to this day.—Gene Perret

Don't marry the person you think you can live with; marry only the individual you think you can't live without. —James C. Dobson