



Living Well

A Little Goes a Long Way



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Check out these websites for more information:

For more detailed information about the ministry - www.livingwellok.org
Photos and writings about the ministry - www.livingwellok.blogspot.com
Encouragement/culture on marriage - www.livingwellinmarriage.blogspot.com
Wisdom Community School - www.wisdomcommunityschool.com

Small Changes - Big Impact

When I think of the saying "a little goes a long way," I think of Super Glue. One drop will fix about anything.

If a drop or two of Super Glue will fix something that's broken, it makes me wonder. **Is there a Super Glue for marriage?**

We often think that marriage is too hard or that it would take too much work to make my marriage work. **The truth is that my marriage can be better with one small change at a time.**

We have seen dramatic changes in marriages happen when one spouse has the opportunity to hear from the other one **how much they care about each other.**

Even among couples that are struggling, **97% said that they cared** about their spouse and want the best for them, even during painful times.¹ But **only 59% believed the other one cared.**

At times of hurt, misunderstanding or conflict, **if I will believe that my spouse cares about me and wants the best for me, it changes how I see what is happening.**

As another author said, **"Assume good will."** A good maxim for life and for marriage.

Another **dramatic change often happens when couples set aside time to spend with each other** - even a few minutes of focused attention daily or a date night.

You don't have to spend a lot of money or make a big production of your date. [see the back for more ideas on \$10 dates] As Nike says, **Just Do It!**

Probably one of the most important small things is to **quit trying to change your**

spouse! First of all, you can't! Secondly, it will drive your spouse farther away. The message comes through, "You don't measure up."

But, with the work of the Holy Spirit in my life, **I can change!**

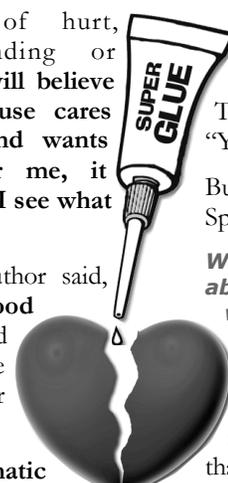
When we are no longer able to change a situation - we are challenged to change ourselves.

Viktor Frankl

In many marriages, one spouse is simply unaware that the other one is unhappy. **In 82% of struggling or so-so marriages, one spouse thought the marriage was happy.**¹ These people care deeply about their spouse and need to be **aware of what is happening.**

When these couples make some small changes, their quality of marriage greatly increases. If they will start now, they can bring a new joy to marriage!

¹The Good News About Marriage by Shaunti Feldhahn



Believe

Imagine the difference to our collective consciousness if we say "Most marriages last a lifetime" rather than "Half of marriages end in divorce." Shaunti Feldhahn

According to the Census Bureau (2009), **72% of people are still married to their first spouse.** Some of those are widowed. Probably **20-25% of first marriages now end in divorce.**

Believing in the viability of a lifetime marriage is a small

thing that can make a big impact on our willingness to get married and work to make that marriage succeed.

What made young David different that all others who tried to take down Goliath?

What made Joshua and Caleb different from the other 10 when they reported on what they saw in the land God was giving them?

They believed in God's power and His leading in those

situations. **Believing in God's work** and His plan for marriage makes an immense impact.

His plan is built on the concept that He meets my needs and I am to give to my spouse. **Marriage is about what I can give - not what I can get.** When I look to GET from my spouse, I will never be satisfied.

I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. C.S. Lewis

On the reverse side:

Great Ideas

Elements

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Great Ideas for Great Dates

When we see a new couple, one of our first homework assignments for them is to have a date. **Reconnecting in a fun way is important to the health and longevity of a marriage.**

Most women want their husbands to plan the date. They want to know that he wants to spend time together. **If a husband is reluctant to plan a date, it is usually because** 1)he doesn't want to fail, 2)he doesn't want to be criticized, 3)he has no idea what to do, or 4)he doesn't want to spend the money.

This book, *\$10 Great Dates: Connecting Love, Marriage and Fun on a Budget!* (By Peter & Heather Larson, David & Claudia Arp) is one of the most practical and helpful books we have seen.

We recommend that you plan the date together. This book has 52 ideas of dates for \$10 and under. The cost doesn't include childcare but they have a whole chapter at the end on ideas for that.

The \$10 or less idea is great because it doesn't put stress on your budget and it forces you to be creative, rather than going to the stand-by dinner

and a movie (nothing wrong with that date but it costs a lot more and doesn't always give a chance to connect).

One of the first ideas from the book is to **see your city as a tourist.** *If you were coming from out-of-town, what would you want to see?*

There was a time in our fair city that the answer to that question might be - nothing! That can no longer be said about OKC!

In fact, many visitors (especially from the East) want to see the stockyards. Hard to believe but true!

Several years ago, we did a **downtown date.** We have much more to see downtown now, but it was a lot of fun going to new places. Certainly, you can spend more than \$10, but you don't have to. If you go to travelok.com, you will find **lots of places to explore and coupons!**

Sharing new experiences together puts another drop of super glue on your marriage. **Going on a date communicates** that I choose to spend time with you and you are a priority in my life!

Elements of a Great Date

Men and women often have different ideas about what makes a great date. Men tend to connect through activities. Women usually like to connect through talking.

A great date has both - time for doing an **activity** together and for **talking** on a personal level.

Another element is **quality time** together. This means that it's just the two of you (no kids, friends, or family). You are focused on each other - same as when you were dating.

Having fun might be the most important part!

You got married because you had fun together. Your marriage can remain (or return) vibrant by continuing to have fun together.

Take a break from your normal routine. Go to a part of the city that you haven't been before. Even if your date is an "at home" date, you put the kids to bed first. Have a candlelight dinner in the bedroom! Or get take-out and have a picnic on the floor in front of the fireplace on a cold winter night.

Be purposeful in your time together. Take a hike together and talk about the wonders of God's glory in nature. Talk

about the path of your life - past, present, and future.

Remember that you are on the same team. Avoid negativity. Encourage each other. Show love and value to each other.

And they shall become one flesh. Genesis 2:24b

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up. 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Do everything without grumbling or arguing. Philippians 2:14

However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. Ephesians 5:33