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How to Cultivate Marriage

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How to Cultivate Marriage

Most marriage difficulties are rooted in personal problems. Self-centeredness, competition and irresponsibility can threaten the foundation of any marriage. “Marriage God’s Way” includes sacrifice, cooperation and commitment. Dr. Henry Brandt shares insights in the articles below to help teach you how to build a healthy marriage based on Biblical principles.

Building Harmony in Marriage

Those who proceed into marriage with an individualistic mindset create disharmony in their relationship, and usually end up lonely and unhappy. ([read more](#))

Are You and Your Spouse Not Getting Along?

The foundation upon which you build your marriage relationship is a mutually agreeable and mutually binding plan. That’s what makes marriage successful. It’s not a “tingle”; it’s a lifetime commitment. It’s not competition; it’s cooperation. ([read more](#))

A Solid Foundation

“I want to be a better spouse.” You say this, thinking back over a multitude of incidents that make up the history of your family. Some of them were funny when they happened; others are funny only as we look back on them. Still others were serious. Some were puzzling. ([read more](#))

Spirit-Filled Marriage

Nobody gets married without the highest of hopes that this is going to be one of the finest, friendliest, most congenial, most satisfying relationships that anybody ever had. And that is a possibility. It is possible to live that kind of life. However, we need to stop and consider what goes into a relationship that will guarantee happiness, contentment, and satisfaction. ([read more](#))

Who is the Leader?

“Wives, submit to your own husbands as to the Lord.” (Ephesians 5:22) There it is. One of the most fiercely debated Bible verses concerning marriage. “Why should the wife do all the submitting?” That is the hot question. But here is the greater truth:

the wife is not the one who needs to do all the submitting ... this verse does not stand alone. ([read more](#))

Marriage God's Way

"... present yourselves to God ..." (Romans 6:13). Sometimes it seems as though a long-lasting marriage is determined by chance or circumstances or just plain old luck. However, there are some steps that will enable you to establish your marriage on a solid foundation that will help you stay in it for the long haul. ([read more](#))

Good Communication

The secret of getting along in marriage lies in two people applying the principle embodied in this verse from the Bible: "And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise" (Luke 6:31). This is a workable formula! And amazingly, it is easier to carry out than to trying to figure out the other person. ([read more](#))

Marriage Partnership

The foundation upon which you build your marriage relationship is a mutually agreeable and mutually binding plan. That's what makes marriage successful. It's not a "tingle"; it's a lifetime commitment. It's not competition; it's cooperation. Is your partnership built on this foundation? Just as teammates have to go into a game with the same plan, you and your partner must approach your marriage, not with the attitude of 'me versus you,' but with the attitude of being fully committed to the same plan. ([read more](#))

An Inner Life for a Healthy Marriage

There is no one person as intimately involved in your life as your marriage partner. So, your partner will make you more conscious of your inner life than anyone else. How are you contributing to happiness in your marriage?

Marriage, like no other human relationship, will keep you up to date on the condition of your inner life. It is a personal decision, unrelated to marriage, whether or not you repent of a negative inner life and allow God to flood your soul with His Spirit. ([read more](#))

Marriage Boundaries

You probably got married as friends, but then found yourselves running into difficulty because you each had your own way of living and doing. You came from one family, and your partner came from another family, and those families were different.

Your job as a couple is to create some boundaries and rules that will guide you in your marriage. But if you've never created any rules before, and you or your partner don't like rules and boundaries, it won't be an easy task. ([read more](#))

Like-Minded Marriage

Are you experiencing difficulty in your marriage relationship? Are there times when you just can't seem to get on the same page with your spouse? If you get married with the idea that the person you're marrying is going to transform your life, turn you into a loving, kind, gentle, cheerful, and happy person, you're mistaken. Marriage is, first of all, a matter of your spirit, and marriage will reveal what kind of spirit is in your heart. ([read more](#))

Escaping Difficult Situations

God is with us in every situation, and He is with us right where we are! What we need to discover is how to respond appropriately to our current circumstances. You can either have a wonderful time underneath your skin, or a miserable time underneath your skin, and it's all up to you. The question is: Do you want to experience true peace, or are you more content with being angry, with bearing a grudge, with complaining, with being cranky? The answer to that question requires some personal reflection! ([read more](#))

Examples From Case Histories

Dr. Henry Brandt shares insights from various couples he counseled. The names and certain details in these true case histories have been changed to protect each person's identity and privacy.

Competing Spouses

When the Dolans, a Christian couple, came to see me, they had not spoken to each other for several weeks. The tension had become unbearable. The issue was over dancing in gym class. Hal Dolan had said flatly that their son should not participate.

Melissa Dolan had agreed in front of her husband, but privately gave their son permission to participate. Hal found out about it through a conversation with a neighbor who had visited the gym class. ([read more](#))

The Need for Forgiveness

Neither Frank nor Kate Bonner really wanted to break up their home, yet they were heading in that direction—fast! After 23 years of marriage, Frank had become interested in a younger woman in his office. Kate said she could see why. Kate’s hair was gray, her hands showed the years of housework she had done, her face was lined with the wrinkles of middle age. She was tired much of the time and was subject to frequent and sudden illnesses. ([read more](#))

It’s the Little Things

Everything seemed in their favor when George and Ellie got married. He was a research chemist with a good income, they bought a nice house, were active in the church, and popular with their friends. But in a few weeks this young couple was in my office seeking help. Their story went like this. George came home one night and was greeted as usual in the living room with a tender kiss. But as he held Ellie in his arms, his eyes wandered to a corner of the room and he saw hanging from the ceiling a long, wavy cobweb. He said nothing about it that night, or the next, but both times while maintaining a pleasant appearance, he said to himself in disgust, “What kind of a woman did I marry that she can’t keep her house clean?” ([read more](#))

The Need for Respect

“I’ll post those receipts the way you say to, Ken, but Mr. Roland never had me do them that way,” said Margaret Lowe to her husband in their insurance office. “Mr. Roland ... it’s always ‘Mr. Roland did this’ or ‘Mr. Roland didn’t do that’” he snapped. “Don’t forget, Ken,” Margaret said, “Mr. Roland was successful enough to sell out at 50 and move to Florida.” “And when I’m 65, I’ll still be struggling to complete the down payment on the business. You might as well add that,” he growled. For ten years, Margaret had admired Mr. Roland’s keen business sense. When Kenneth Lowe joined Mr. Roland’s sales force, Margaret thought she saw the same qualities in the new employee and she accepted his proposal of marriage after a rather hurried courtship. Then in those first few months of living together she found she didn’t know Ken as well as she had thought. ([read more](#))

The Need for Repentance

Bill and Jan Stanton lived in a long, rambling nine-room ranch house on a three-acre beautifully wooded tract of land. The swimming pool in the backyard, the two expensive cars in the garage, the neatly landscaped yard all added up to the obvious—total success. ([read more](#))

When Independence is Bad

Viola Walker was far from an avid angler, but she did go fishing with her husband, Louis, several times after they were married. Then, after three trips to the same trout stream and enduring her husband's complaints that she scared the fish away, Viola gave up the fishing business. Viola's interest was community projects and current events. She became deeply involved in these activities. Then, after one fishing trip, Louis talked about a "genuine fisher woman" who had been in their crowd, and Viola felt a pang of jealousy. And she was hurt when he said he couldn't stay home to watch her debate the new expressway route on television because he was meeting his fishing friends, including "Lady Walton." ([read more](#))

Great Expectations

Todd Turner was in trouble: for the third time, his wife had threatened to leave him, and this time she meant it. And all over a dog—or so Todd said. Todd was away from home much of the time and had bought Tracy a dog for company before the birth of their first child. After the baby's arrival, Todd wanted to get rid of the dog. "If the dog goes, I go, too," Tracy warned. "All right, go ahead," he told her. And so they separated. ([read more](#))

[The articles above are by Dr. Henry Brandt from [Biblical Counseling Outreach](#).]