

Angie's Marriage Column - August 13, 2008

Learn to be Happy and Content in your Marriage through God

Marriage Question: Hello Angie. I really like your article 7 reasons not to break off your marriage. I have been married 6 years and do not want to get divorced. My husband drinks alcohol in my opinion to excess. There is pretty much not a day without any alcohol. I feel that it is putting a wedge between us. I am worried that it is partly my issue maybe having low self-esteem and being needy. He watches a lot of TV and is overweight. I like to be active and visit with friends and family but he likes to stay in and watch TV. I am tired of being disappointed. Please help. Thank you.

Marriage Guidance: One thing that marriage really needs is couples that are willing to be givers and compromise with each other. Too many times spouses behave selfishly and don't consider the feelings of one another – as we all know selfishness is not conducive to a healthy, productive marriage. One way in which you both can give in to each other's personality type is one week you stay in spending time together, even if that means watching TV or renting some video's and the next week you spend time socializing with family and friends. It's really that simple.

Communicating with your husband is a great way to find out “why” he prefers to stay in rather than socialize with family and friends. Maybe he has good reasons. Perhaps your husband feels uncomfortable around your friends. Maybe he gets bad vibes from your family for some reason. In-laws are not always easy to get a long with. How do you feel when you are with his parents and siblings? Do they treat you as one of the family? It could be that your husband just likes to stay in and not socialize too much. In other words, you are an extrovert and he is an introvert - nothing wrong with that.

In fact, it's quite all right to have a different personality type than the person we married. This is one way that God allows for couples to compliment each other. Your husband compliments your out-going personality by letting you know its time to leave when visiting friends, and not to wear out your welcome. You compliment your husband by getting him out of the house and socializing once in awhile. You both should give into each other's personality type for the sake of the marriage. You can't change your husband to be an extrovert with you and he can't change you to be an introvert with him, so work with each other in those areas – *give in for the sake of principle*. Now that makes for a great marriage!

I appeal to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thoughts. (1 Corinthians 1:10)

Talk with your husband about his drinking. Be kind and nice about it. Get creative and find ways to get him interested in other things to drink in the evening with you, such as a homemade ice-cream smoothie or a cup of hot cocoa, or a root beer float. Etc. Many couples tend to lose touch with one another and go their separate ways. The marriage gets what I called the doldrums. One reason someone starts to drink is out of boredom. Don't let that happen to you and your marriage. Maybe your husband has an underlying issue that is bothering him and he is managing that issue by drinking. I highly suggest that you communicate with him before the drinking gets out of hand.

Some men don't always talk about their problems with others, even their wives. Women are more prone to express their feelings, while a man clams up and keeps quiet. But this can be detrimental to his spiritual and emotional well-being. Maybe your husband feels he can't trust you with what is bothering him. Maybe he feels bad about something and is afraid to talk with you about it. Because of pride, lots of guys think they can fix their problems somehow on their own. So it might be a good idea to make your husband feel comfortable expressing his feelings with you. One way to do that is to start doing more fun and intimate things together that you both enjoy. It's never a good idea to put someone down because they aren't that great at socializing, especially if that is just part of their personality.

Perhaps you can both join a sport, such as golf, hiking, tennis, or even walking or jogging together. I know for a fact the more that a husband and wife do *together* the closer they become with one another. So...get out there and enjoy each other! Have your husband list all the things he would like to do with you and you list all the things you would like to do with him. Pick two things from each other's list and go for it! It could be that your husband enjoys going to see a movie with you and you enjoying going to visit with friends for the day. But...both of you need to give in to each other's needs for the marriage to be healthy, happy, and productive.

One reason we have a low self-image and feel needy is because we aren't going to God with our problems. We expect someone else, usually our spouse, to fill us up. But what happens is many times our needs do not get filled by our spouses and we become disappointed. About 15 years ago I used to be the same way. I had a low self-worth because I didn't like myself – I was needy and spongy with my husband. But that's too much of a burden to put on our spouse. It's not their job to fix our character faults, it's their job only to care for and love us to the best of their ability.

Understand that God made you in His image and you are a special person created for God's purpose. You do not have to stay within the past of your life and keep dredging up what someone else made you feel or what someone else made you do. God has made us in His image and if we accept His love for us we can also be made *new people* with new attitudes by leaving the old person with the negative past behind us. Let the past go! Say, "Bye, bye past life, and say, hello new life!" Let your mind be renewed with Christ's Spirit and be transformed. God wants you to be created a new person *in Him*. Let go of the old self so the new self can be ushered in. God heals our wounds when we truly let Him into our hearts and minds and allow Him to take over in our life.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:27)\

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart, say the Lord. (Jeremiah 1:5)

We have to understand that where we are at in our life in the present does not have to be our future. Past negative issues and memories is what feeds us with a low self-worth and makes us feel needy and wanting. But we can conquer these negative feelings with our relationship with Jesus Christ. It is through God that we are not in need anymore. He fills us up and blesses us with abundance and happiness in this life – no one else can do that for us – only God!

“Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light”. (Matthew 11:28-29)

Sometimes it can be difficult to let go of the emotional pangs of the past, but without moving away from those past pangs, we remain stunted spiritually, emotionally, and mentally. How can we move on if mentally were still hurting? How can we move on if emotionally we don't know what we want or need? How can we move on if spiritually we are lost? By asking Christ Jesus to come into our life and asking Him to make our paths straight and our life right with Him, that's how!

“To be made new in the attitude of your minds, and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness”. (Ephesians 4:23)

Don't forget you were made in the image of God. You are God's workmanship. Let's not forget we are a *work in progress* that God is shaping and molding for His purpose. As Christ Ones we're forever changing and growing with Him, and hopefully that change is developing our character and helping us to be stronger and more faithful in Christ. Since we know that we are God's workmanship, the question we need to ask ourselves is *are we allowing Him to work His will in us?*

“For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do”. (Ephesians 2:10)

May God bless you!
Angie and Frank
Heaven Ministries ~ Marriage Healing Ministry
<http://www.heavenministries.com>

Article Resources:

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- 7 Reasons Why You Should Not Break It Off

http://www.heavenministries.com/7_reasons_why_you_shouldn.htm

- Beauty of the Imperfect Marriage

<http://www.heavenministries.com/articles/beautyoftheimperfectmarriage.htm>

- Finding Happiness in Marriage

<http://www.heavenministries.com/articles/findinghappinessinmarriage.htm>

- Healthy Relationships Involve Team Effort

http://www.heavenministries.com/articles/healthy_relationships_involve_teameffort.htm

- Having The Right Attitude For Marriage

<http://www.heavenministries.com/HeavenMin/Articles/therightattitude.htm>

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Book Resources:

Journey on the Roads Less Traveled – <http://www.amazon.com/Journey-Roads-Traveled-Angie-Lewis/dp/1413788904>

Review of *Journey on the Roads Less Traveled* by Dan Blankenship*****

What is truly captivating about Angie's book is that she talks about her own selfishness, pride, and life mistakes on such a personal level that I kept asking myself if I could have that kind of courage while writing a non-fiction novel.

Mrs. Lewis also offers some of the best advice in this book and her other books, on how to maintain a joyful marriage I have ever read. When I read her advice concerning marriage, I can't help but think of her having her own television show giving advice to couples in front of a live studio audience.

"Journey on the Roads Less Traveled" challenges us to make our faith first and foremost in our lives. Careers, homes, family, and relationships are enhanced and experienced on a whole new level when we experience them as we live under the umbrella of God's will for our lives. God's gifts to us should be used to give Him back the glory He rightly deserves.

Forgiveness is another main theme Angie Lewis provides her readers with. If we are not willing to truly forgive the people who have upset us, then we are limiting our ability to experience the kind of love Jesus came to teach us about 2,000 years ago.

I could write for days about how much I loved this book. But I just might give away so

much of the "guts" inside that purchasing the book would be unnecessary, so I will close by saying this: If you want to purchase a book that can truly change your life, inspire your faith, or make you ponder how joyful your life can truly become, this is a book that can do just that!

Buy Journey from Amazon: <http://www.amazon.com/Journey-Roads-Traveled-Angie-Lewis/dp/1413788904>

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