

Encourage Your Spouse and Build a Relationship That Lasts

by Jean MacKenzie

It seems that in our society it has come to be expected that women will get together and criticize their husbands and boyfriends and men will get together and put down their wives and girlfriends. Everyone has to have a few sarcastic comments to fling at their partner, especially when there is an audience around to laugh at their expense. We tend to tear down the very person we claim to love. I think it has become so common in our society that sometimes people don't even realize they are doing it.

It is so easy to find the fault in others. I know I have been guilty of this very crime many times in my past and although I try hard to guard against it now I still find myself being overly critical at times. It takes a lot of effort to keep from falling into the trap of faultfinding. Sometimes it can help to look at things from the other person's perspective.

We all have our faults, but it hurts when the person you love is always pointing them out. I'm sure you can think of a time when you were hurt by someone's negative comments. If you want to build up a loving relationship you have to try to avoid hurting your spouse by making such comments.

Sometime it is necessary to point out where some improvement or changes are necessary, just make sure your motive is always to build up your relationship rather than to tear down your spouse and use language that conveys this desire. Most often however, pointing out our spouse's flaws does not help them to overcome them. If we want to foster a loving relationship we should make a conscious effort to encourage our spouse. Make it a challenge to yourself to see how encouraging you can be.

At any given time there is always something negative you could say, but there is always something positive you could say as well. Make an effort to emphasize the positive. Think of all your partner's talents and make an effort to compliment his or her abilities. Take note of the things your spouse does that you appreciate and be sure to thank him or her for these things. Make a habit of saying something encouraging to your spouse every day.

Never mind whether or not your spouse has been encouraging to you. Take the initiative and start improving your relationship today. Notice when your spouse does the little things. Call her up at work to tell her how much you appreciate her. Mention how talented he is and don't be afraid to point out his talents to other people. Ask your partner how her day was and make an effort to listen to her response. Do something with your spouse that you know he really enjoys. Say "I love you" in as many ways possible. Give hugs and kisses and back rubs. Be romantic. Make time for each other. Write love notes. Challenge yourself to be creative and the fruits of your positive attitude may surprise you. Build up your spouse and you will be building up your relationship.

About Jean

Jean is a marriage and couples counsellor whose approach in working with couples involves the development of techniques for solving current problems and achieving unending growth in relationships. Jean strives to assist couples of various backgrounds in learning to solve their own challenges because a couple that knows how to problem solve can keep their love—and their marriage—alive forever.

Jean also offers Catholic counselling to couples wishing to incorporate the Catholic faith into the

counselling process, helping couples to develop a relationship pleasing to each other and God. Jean has a Master of Arts in Counselling from the Franciscan University of Steubenville and has trained in marriage and family therapy.

So, if you think that your relationship could use a little help-- or even a lot of help,--give Jean a call today and take that important first step in turning your marriage into a “happily ever after” story.

Where do you start?

Look no further.

1. **Go to www.jeanmackenzie.com and sign up for my free newsletter “Happily Ever After: A Guide to Healthy Relationships,” filled with helpful tips on how to nurture your relationship.** You will also receive the free report, “10 Tips for Resolving Anger in Your Relationship.”
2. **Call today for a free, no obligation, 20 minute phone consultation.** We will discuss your problems and together decide how I might be able to help you. I look forward to hearing from you.

Jean sees clients in her office in Fredericton, NB and offers telephone and online counselling. She can be reached at:

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