

Forgive the Forgotten

by Jean MacKenzie

I recently had a week where my husband was very busy at work and as a result was working late a lot. The problem for me was that, with four kids, when my husband's work load increases, so does mine. With my husband unable to help out as much as he usually would I quickly slipped into "poor me" mode and found myself having thoughts about how terrible it was that I had to take on all these extra burdens.

These thoughts led me to have increasingly angry feelings towards my husband until I was attributing all the woes of my life to him. Luckily I was able to snap out of it before he came home from work that night.

The point I am trying to make is that it is very easy to slip into blaming your spouse for every angry feeling you experience. Therefore it is important that you be able to distinguish between appropriate anger and excessive or misdirected anger.

Appropriate anger, when dealt with effectively can be healthy for your relationship, helping you to grow in your understanding of each other. Excessive or misdirected anger is when the anger expressed is disproportionate to the situation. In other words the person to whom the anger is expressed is usually standing there wondering, "What did I do to deserve that outburst?"

In my case the source of my anger had to do with my discontent with the situation I found myself in and my husband didn't have much control over that situation. When I was able to look at the situation rationally we were able to work out appropriate solutions to us both being overworked.

Just as one can misdirect anger resulting from a present situation or person, one may also take out anger from a past hurt on people in the present. Many people have deep hurts from their past and if he or she has not worked to resolve the related feelings of anger these emotions can interfere with current relationships, especially those of an intimate nature. The most common sources of anger that spouses bring into their marriage are related to experiences of being hurt by parents, abused, emotionally wounded in a dating relationship, or divorced. If one is not aware of harbouring anger from the past he or she may dump angry feelings on a spouse in response to a relatively minor infraction. Such excessive anger can be lethal to a relationship. If you or your spouse frequently express an exaggerated amount of anger then it is important that you determine the source of the anger and work to resolve the hurts that lead to these emotions by forgiving those who have hurt you in the past. The task of forgiving can be extremely difficult when the wounds you experience are profound. If you have deep hurts to overcome I encourage you to seek the help of a trusted professional. Remember however that forgiveness is a gift you give yourself. And, if you are in an intimate relationship with someone then it will be a gift to your relationship as well.

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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