

Happily Ever After

"Would have you made the same decisions if you could travel back in time?"

This question was posed to a group of men and women who had divorced their partners. They stated that if they could have gone back in time, they would have made different decisions! This demonstrates people make poor decisions that fail them because they do not have a thorough knowledge and understanding of themselves and their tendencies, that is, people will waste time and opportunity unless they fully know themselves as well as the purpose of their existence.

A person who wishes to have a great life and find true love must first get to know himself. Then, this **self-awareness** results in other-awareness which will in turn help establish a healthy relationship. In fact, this factor affects our decisions in all areas of life. When we lack self-knowledge, we will make the wrong choice in career, marriage, field of study, etc. since our decisions do not align with our authentic self and its tendencies.

Subsequently, we always have to take everything into consideration to get the best results. Imagine you and your family are planning a trip to the mountains. First, you must plan your itinerary several weeks before the trip and anticipate the unexpected on the way to the destination. Next, you have to estimate travel costs and then have your car serviced to make sure you can have a safe trip and avoid any mechanical issues. If you travel without a plan, you will run into problems as you go along.

Likewise, we should consider everything when we want to build **relationships** with others as this is a very important issue which has an indisputable impact on our future and happiness. In fact, our perception of the future plays a vital role in our interactions with others. We might have either a shallow perception or a profound insight based on thinking and reasoning.

This is especially true for marriage. We might prioritize either a person's physical attributes and socioeconomic status like skin color, height, career, field of study, etc. or his/her character traits such as patience, temper, generosity or stinginess, etc. Research findings on failed marriages and couple relationships have shown that preferring physical features and social class over personality traits leads to failure.

Therefore, when it comes to marriage, there are three kinds of capital to look for in our marriage partner: financial, emotional, and spiritual. If the person possesses these three qualities, you can hope to live a blissful life until eternity. Moreover, when you decide to marry, you should bear in mind that you are going to grow in the family, alongside your spouse. In other words, you need to grow spiritually, emotionally and financially together. Marriage is the bond of two souls not a way to satisfy just emotional and financial needs.

The leading cause of divorce is that most people do not spend time learning relationship skills such as emotional, sexual, and communication ones. In most cases, financial issues are not the primary cause of divorce. Undoubtedly, financial management techniques and proper budget management

are important, but experience shows if a couple satisfy each other's emotional needs, money issues can rarely ruin their marriage. Sexual skill training has also significant effects on marital satisfaction; therefore, each person has to learn the required skills before marriage to avoid having problems in bed.

Besides, you should know relationship red flags and what words to remove from your marriage vocabulary. You should also learn how to show compassionate love and express your deep love in words. The emotional element is of paramount importance, as marriage without emotional intimacy cannot survive despite financial and spiritual growth. As a result, love and emotional intimacy must constantly increase and never cease.

Above all, spiritual strength can help couples enjoy long-lasting relationships. Indeed, **spiritual development** means sustaining a connection with **God** and trying to gain His attributes such as **forgiveness, covering faults, mercy, etc.** The more we try to gain God's attributes, the more we can ignore the faults of others and adapt to different and changing circumstances. According to religious teachings, the more the husband loves God, the more he expresses love for his wife.

In conclusion, the family environment in which we grow up has a large impact on where we will end up later in life; therefore, we should be careful who to choose and learn the necessary skills before we get married and start a family, otherwise our marriage would fail and we would not raise good children.