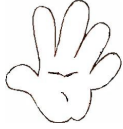


# The 5 Keys to an Incredible Marriage

Smart Marriages, Orlando, 2010



## **5<sup>th</sup> Key: SERVE** (hold 5 fingers out flat, holding serving tray)

- A. My success as a waiter depended on how well I served.
- B. It is the same way in marriage;
  - 1. People get married believing that just received this big, beautiful package full of all sorts of wonderful things; In reality, that box—is empty.
  - 2. the only beauty you received is the wedding day which is like the beautifully set, table at the restaurant.
  - 3. What you get in your marriage is what you put into that big, beautiful box, by serving.
- C. Loving our mates, means serving our mates.
- D. MARK 10:45: “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”
- E. How often do I put my mate’s needs above my own?
- F. Why don’t we serve our mates?
  - 1. The only answer comes down to the biggest problem in my marriage - me.
  - 2. Problem of selfishness.
- G. It’s hard to serve when we’re angry.
- H. If you and I want an incredible marriage, then, first, we must choose—it is a choice - we must choose to serve!
- I. Battle of “who goes first?”
  - 1. Wives can feel that ALL that they do is serve the family
  - 2. Husbands can feel that way outside the home
  - 3. This is not about keeping score!
  - 4. Research shows: we always give ourselves more credit than our mates AND that the happiest people in marriage are those who put serving their mate first!
- J. I am pretty sure that Jesus did not keep score.
- K. Ask yourself, “how can I serve my mate?” What can I do for them that I know would mean a lot to them? Make their life better?
- L. You want an incredible marriage?
  - 5<sup>th</sup> - Then learn to serve your mate.

# The 5 Keys to an Incredible Marriage

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## **4<sup>th</sup> Key: LISTEN** (cup 4 fingers next to ear)

- A. There are some dangerous questions in the world. One is this – Ask your spouse: how can I be a better husband/wife? Then LISTEN.
- B. What is listening – not parroting: Test for listening is learning
- C. Speaker/Listener technique of PREP (S. Stanley, H. Markman).
- D. Listen, learn, love
- E. Listening is accepting what your mate says without trying to change them!!!! Acceptance does not mean agreement.
- F. Why do people yell? Think they're not being heard – goofy isn't it?
- G. Listening means knowing your mate's world
- H. A time to fix and give advice, and then there is more time to listen
  - 1. Majority of fights are unresolvable arguments
  - 2. Would you rather be happy or rather be right?
- I. Research – the value of 15-20 minutes a day just listening
  - 1. Make the time to listen – Can't microwave relationships
  - 2. Can't multitask & Listen
  - 3. Can't shortcut listening
- J. Think of dating days – spend hours talking, in marriage therapy that's what people reminisce about
- K. This is not about not going to bed angry – that's silly; that just makes you fight tired; it's knowing you will be listened to
- L. Make a date to communicate
- M. James 1:19: “My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,”
- N. Eccles. 5:1: “Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong.”
- O. Do you want to have an Incredible Marriage?
  - 5th Key: Serve
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Key: Listen

# The 5 Keys to an Incredible Marriage

Smart Marriages, Orlando, 2010



## **3<sup>rd</sup> Key: COMMIT** (3 fingers up, Scouting Pledge)

- A. You must make a commitment to having a great marriage – and do not quit!
  - 1. Not a blind commitment to marriage; about being committed to a person – like you said you'd do on your wedding day.
- B. Marriage is certainly about love
  - 1. In Hebrew and Greek, three words for love
    - a. Intimacy + Passion + Commitment
      - i. Intimacy = friendship
      - ii. Passion = strong emotional and physical desire
      - iii. Needs the 3<sup>rd</sup> (base of the triangle) commitment
- C. Commitment to Protect the marriage
  - 1. No other people allowed into your mind or heart
  - 2. No pornography
  - 3. Tell the truth
  - 4. Proverbs 4:23: Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.
- D. Two types of commitment of PREP: Constraint & Dedication
  - 1. Constraint like joining the military
  - 2. Dedication like training for running a marathon
- E. Research studies: Oklahoma, Indiana – respondents cited lack of commitment as the primary contributor to divorce
- F. Contract vs. Commitment
  - 1. Malachi 2:13-14: the wife of your marriage covenant.
  - 2. Contract vs. Covenant
  - 3. Commit is saying, I would marry you all over again
- G. Do you want an Incredible Marriage?
  - 5<sup>th</sup> - Serve your mate
  - 4<sup>th</sup> - Listen to your mate
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> - Commit to your mate

# The 5 Keys to an Incredible Marriage

Smart Marriages, Orlando, 2010



## **2<sup>nd</sup> Key: Keep the PEACE** (2 fingers up, "Peace Sign")

- A. Keeping the Peace is NOT about Not fighting or avoiding conflict
- B. Peace is not the absence of conflict or, worse, avoiding conflict
- C. Peace is a sense of harmony
- D. My wife and I have a very real marriage with very three very real teenagers in the home
- E. Question is: How do you fight?
  - 1. Do you attack each other?
  - 2. Do you see unity?
  - 3. Build on the common ground of trust
- F. Peace brings a home Security & Safety
- G. Research
  - 1. PREP - 3 types of safety: physical, emotional, commitment
  - 2. Gottman: Fights end like they begin
- H. Scripture
  - 1. Romans 12:18: If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.
- I. Cancer in Marriage (Gottman, EFT Couple's Therapy)
  - 1. Criticism
  - 2. Contempt
- J. A commitment to peace keeps you from damaging your relationship
- K. Keeping the Peace understands Perpetual Problems
- L. Peace is about remembering that we are on the SAME TEAM
- M. Don't take yourself so seriously
- N. Power of Forgiveness; Peace is a choice
- O. Given the purpose of loving our mates
  - 5<sup>th</sup> - Serve
  - 4<sup>th</sup> - Listen
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> - Commit
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> - Keep the Peace

# The 5 Keys to an Incredible Marriage

Smart Marriages, Orlando, 2010



## **1<sup>st</sup> Key: TWO SHALL BECOME ONE = ONENESS**

- A. The Problem of Loneliness
  - 1. The Creation Ordinance of Genesis 1 & 2
  - 2. God created loneliness & then solved it
- B. “We” is more important than “Me”
- C. Sense of togetherness
- D. Research
  - 1. Shared meaning
  - 2. Power of rituals
  - 3. Importance of traditions
- E. Power of purpose and adventure
  - 1. Marital Mission
  - 2. Exploring new things “together”
- F. Provides stability in the home
- G. Marriage as Covenant – two parts
  - 1. Verbal Declaration
  - 2. Oath sign
  - 3. “Let man not separate” - Jesus
- H. Love: what matters to you, matters to me
- I. This isn’t about a stand-off
  - 1. It’s not, “You FIRST,” (as in “you go first being nice”)
  - 2. It’s, “YOU first,” (as in, “I will put you first”)
- J. Life is short, life is precious, Lighten up and enjoy the marriage that God has given you
- K. You want an Incredible Marriage?
  - 5<sup>th</sup> - Serve
  - 4<sup>th</sup> - Listen
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> - Commit
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> - Peace
  - 1<sup>st</sup> - Live as One