

IMPORTANT NEEDS IN MARRIAGE

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FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Most people marry before financial security becomes much of a consideration for them. They **do not marry for money** because their new spouse has none.

And yet, as years go by, when they find their spouse unemployed, or underemployed, or (wasting-misusing) whatever money they have, they become very frustrated and unhappy.

Their need for financial support seems to develop after they are married for a while, especially after children arrive.

- **Conflicts around finance arise.**

“I’m marrying him not his job - not his money.” But in reality you are marrying his work and yours.

Your job or career

How would you feel about spending the rest of your life with a **young idealist not interested in accumulating any material** things, including a home to live in?

ILLUSTRATION

Jim is content surfing the net, listening to music, and working part-time at a local business. In the beginning of their relationship, his lifestyle initially appealed to Christine.

*However, **after** they had been married a few years, Christine began to mature while Jim remained content as he was. They became more and more incompatible, and eventually both wished they’d never married.*

Consider how many ways your job will impact your marriage.

- Your job and your spouse’s job **will occupy about one-third of your lives**. If you are not happy there, you probably won’t be happy at home either!

- Your job and your spouse’s will determine your income which in turn will determine the type of home and neighborhood, vacations, clothing budget, school of your children, etc.

- How much financial support is enough? Different couples will answer this differently. –

- Like many other emotional needs, this need is hard to talk about.

Many couples have hidden expectations that may turn into resentment and frustrations. These conflicts usually come out negatively during crisis.

What if someone else than your spouse were to meet this need for you?

Would you fall in love with that person?

- If a job takes the spouse from home often or for long periods at a time, it is difficult to build intimacy, and the other spouse may have to assume more than his or her share of responsibilities.

ILLUSTRATION- A LADY IN HK, ABANDONED BY HER HUSBAND WITH 3 CHILDREN AND HE DRIVES THE MERCEDEZ OF HIS NEW GIRL-FRIEND

- Stability in your family life can be impacted by your work. Certain occupations may place heavy social obligations upon the spouse.

- **And what about two-career marriages?**

Have you talked through the implications of a two-career marriage on your free time, your time together, your children, your roles at work and at home, and your level of family stress and pressure?

Two-career marriages may work beautifully, but it's important to think through the implications as thoroughly as possible ahead of time.

What about this situation? --

As a woman, you have professional aspirations, but your husband expects his wife to be a homemaker. Would it be wise for you to give up your vocational goals? Can he guarantee that he will always....

Domestic support

The **need for domestic support is a time bomb**. At first it seems irrelevant; a primitive concept. But for many couples, the **need explodes** after a few years of marriage, surprising both spouses.

Domestic support involves the creation of a peaceful and well-managed home environment.

- It includes cooking meals, washing dishes, washing and ironing clothes, house cleaning and child care.
- If you have the need for domestic support, when your spouse does some of these things, you feel very fulfilled, and when it is not done, you feel very annoyed.

In **earlier generations**, it was **assumed** that all husbands had this need and **all wives would naturally meet it**.

- **Times have changed** and needs have changed along with them.
- Now many of the men I counsel would rather have their wives meet their needs for affection or conversation, needs which have traditionally been more characteristic of women.
- And many women, especially career women, gain a great deal of pleasure having their husbands create a peaceful and well-managed home environment for them. But on average, men still express this need more often than women.
- Marriage usually begins with a willingness of both spouses to share domestic responsibilities. Newlyweds commonly wash dishes together, make the bed together, and divide **many household tasks**.

When does the need for domestic support explode?

When the children arrive! Children create huge needs – both a greater need for income and greater domestic responsibilities.

The previous division of labor is now obsolete. **Both spouses must take on new responsibilities** – and which ones will they take?

Reflection

At this point in your marriage, especially if you do not have children, you may find no need for domestic support at all. But if you find yourself very appreciative of your spouse's cooking, cleaning, washing and childcare, and are very frustrated when they are not forthcoming, make sure that domestic support is on your list of important emotional needs.

Family Commitment

In addition to a greater need for income and domestic responsibilities, the arrival of children may *create in you the need for your spouse to become active in the moral and educational development of the children.*

I call that need **family commitment**. As is true for the need for financial and domestic support, if you do not have any children just yet, you may not sense this need. But upon their arrival, a change may take place that you didn't anticipate.

Evidence of this need is a *craving for your spouse's involvement in the training of your children.*

- When he or she is helping to care for them, you feel much fulfilled, and when they are neglected you feel very frustrated.

- This is not just childcare – feeding, clothing or watching over children to keep them safe. Child care falls under the category of domestic support.
- Family commitment, on the other hand, **is taking a responsibility for how the children will turn out**, teaching them the values of cooperation and care for each other.
- It is spending quality time with your children to help insure happiness and success for them as adults.

But the need for family commitment is not met by just any form of training. It is only met *when the training is enthusiastically approved by you.*

- It can all be ruined if your spouse uses training methods and objectives that violate your standards .
- Your participation and agreement regarding training methods and objectives are essential before this need can be met.
- We all want our children to be successful, but if you have the need for family commitment, your spouse’s participation in family activities that guarantees that outcome will deposit so many love units that it will trigger your feeling of love for him or her. And you spouse’s neglect of your children will threaten that love.

Life Goals

Having compatible goals and understanding each other’s plans for the future is vital for a happy marriage.

- Goals affect every area of our lives.
- They involve having children (yes, no, and how many), our education, where we choose to live, our decision to reach out to help people, our spiritual interests, and a host of other factors.

Like two front wheels of a car, the more a couple can have similar goals and head in the same direction, the more likely they are to run a straight course in their marriage.

Education and Cultural Interests

The impact of education on marriage goes far beyond jobs and finances. Couples that share a desire to learn and grow can challenge and enrich each other.

ILLUSTRATION

An ambitious young woman fell in love with a handsome young man. Greg dropped out of school to take a job with no future. She thought she could "motivate" him later.

After a few children were born. Greg wasn't any more motivated. And more, she found that Greg wasn't interested in most of life. He didn't care about getting a better work. He didn't want to be involved in church. He didn't care about politics. And he didn't want to spend time with mutual friends.

When he wasn't at work he just sat around, watched TV, or slept. That wasn't at all the way she had planned to spend her married life.

- Many marriages are in danger of becoming unhappy just because of a lack of motivation to grow and learn.

- Couples enriched their marriages through shared recreational interests. This doesn't mean that couples with different interests can't enjoy and enrich each other. They can. But common interests help build togetherness. We need to share in our recreational, social, professional, and spiritual lives.

When spouses go their way—each other with their own friends & activities.

- This is a FORMULA FOR DISASTER.
EXAMPLE- Carole & Sylvain