

Coaching: Marriage Matters



Week 50

Happiness and Marriage

What should a good marriage feel like? Is it a good marriage if a couple is not happy? Is feeling happy the best measure of a good marriage? Being happy in life and in marriage is a good thing, but being happy is not always possible.

Marriage is intended to be a partnership where two people “pool their resources” in facing the challenges of life, but being married does not exempt anyone from sadness and hardship nor make adversity any easier to bear. Many a couple have survived, even thrived, during times of war, economic depression, unemployment, illness, moral failure, and lengthy separation. How is this possible?

It may well be that the best feeling for a married couple is that of being anchored and at peace. A feeling of confidence in one another and in the source of their hope and direction may actually be preferable to a feeling of happiness. With the right frame of reference and a realistic expectation about life, a couple can experience a sense of well-being, even when there is hardship, when they are able to work constructively together through better or worse, richer or poorer, in sickness and in health.

Could it be that to look for happiness in marriage is to settle for something less than is otherwise possible in the relationship? Is there a state of marriage that transcends mere happiness and that can actually be more endearing to the relationship over the long-run?

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