

# Radical Marriage

Your  
Relationship  
as Your  
Greatest Adventure

David and Darlene Steele

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**RCN Press**

*a division of Relationship Coaching Institute*

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**Radical Marriage:  
Your Relationship as Your Greatest Adventure**

by David and Darlene Steele

## **Radical Marriage: Your Relationship as Your Greatest Adventure**

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## **Relationship Experts Praise Radical Marriage**

“Radical Marriage provides clear ideas, easy strategies to follow, and a ‘radical’ new paradigm for creating the relationship of your dreams.”

— Harville Hendrix, Ph.D. and Helen LaKelly Hunt, Ph.D. Co-authors of Making Marriage Simple

“Radical Marriage is for couples in good marriages who envision something wonderful for their future together. The Steeles have given us a manifesto and road map for marriage as a more perfect union.”

— William J. Doherty, Ph.D., Professor of Family Social Science, University of Minnesota, author of Take Back Your Marriage: Sticking Together in a World That Pulls Us Apart

“Radical Marriage is an accessible and clear description of the steps for relationship success with many easy-to-follow strategies for making life and love better.”

— Don Ferguson, Ph.D. author of Reptiles in Love and The Couples’ Manual

“Is your marriage where you want it to be? This book will challenge you to take it to the next level, beyond where you ever thought it could be. Your marriage can be more – wonderfully more, extraordinarily more, radically more!”

— Greg and Priscilla Hunt, BetterMarriages.org

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## About This Book

Before we get started, here are a few things we'd like you to know about this book:

- Much more than a self-help book, Radical Marriage is a movement to promote the evolution of committed relationships and save one of our most important social institutions from (perceived) obsolescence.
- Written by a couple, the term “we” is used in this book to refer to the authors and is not intended to include the members and staff of Relationship Coaching Institute.
- While gender specific terms are used for convenience such as “husband,” “wife,” “him” and “her,” it is our full intention to be inclusive of all committed relationships of all gender and sexual orientations.
- We define “marriage” to be a formally committed lifetime relationship, whether legally recognized or not.
- The word “radical” in Radical Marriage refers to a dramatically new paradigm and does not mean a “do-anything-you-want-without-consequences” approach to marriage, as you'll soon discover in Radical Commitment (Chapter Two).
- Throughout this book are “Radical Actions” to help you start implementing the suggested strategies. These are intended to provide an idea of how to begin and are not a comprehensive list of everything you could do. If you need more support, ideas and guidance to implement the strategies in this book we suggest contacting a Radical Marriage Coach, Radical Marriage Mentor Couple, joining our Radical Marriage Online Community, or joining a Radical Marriage Circle (see appendix).
- While Radical Marriage is a specific paradigm with distinct assumptions and suggested practices, it is our intention for you to take what fits and discard what doesn't. Many of the ideas in this book are challenging to most couples and what matters is that you co-create the Radical Marriage that fits best for you so that you can honestly and enthusiastically declare ***We have a Radical Marriage!***



## Introduction: Beyond Happily Ever After

*“What you conceive and believe, you can achieve”*

—Napoleon Hill (paraphrased)

Napoleon Hill’s “conceive, believe, achieve” quote is a powerful statement and a powerful truth. It says that we can go far beyond our self-imposed limits. But there’s a flip side to those words—this also means that what you *don’t* conceive or believe, you *can’t* achieve.

As relationship coaches, our job is to help singles and couples who want to live *happily ever after*. It’s a worthy goal and a worthy dream. But there are big limits to that dream:

1. You might have a *desire* (love) but not a clear idea, vision, or dream for what it looks like, so you’re stuck with what is.
2. You might have a clear dream, but not really believe it’s possible or realistic, so you’re stuck with what you’ll allow yourself to have.
3. You might believe it’s possible, but your dream is limited to what you can actually envision, so you’re stuck with a narrow range of possibilities.

This is where Radical Marriage comes in.

### A New Paradigm for Marriage is Needed

As coaches, we’re here to help you dream big, reach deep down, and uncover desires you didn’t even know you had. Our role is to help you recognize and reach the next level of your dreams. This is especially important when it comes to relationships.

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*Most couples don’t want an ordinary, boring, routine relationship.*

---



Most couples don't want an ordinary, boring, routine relationship. They want excitement, fun, closeness, love.

When we get married we make vows to be together until death do us part. That's a long time, and sadly, half of marriages don't or can't keep that commitment.

We have a dream or vision of how we want our life together to be, and we become unhappy if we're too far off track from that dream. If we don't believe our dream is possible we feel hopeless, stuck, and eventually leave the marriage, mentally, emotionally, and physically.

The current marriage rate stands at 51 percent, an all-time low, and according to recent surveys about 44 percent of adults under 30 believe that marriage is obsolete. And who can blame them? Looking around at their parents and others, they see more downsides than benefits. Thankfully, as they mature their attitude towards marriage gets warmer.

While it may be on the decline, marriage has many benefits and plays an important role in our society in the most inclusive way possible. What matters most is not your chosen lifestyle, but your life, with whomever you choose to live it. Marriage, in this context, refers to the level of commitment. There is a certain day, time, and place you can point to that says, "There, that's the moment we became committed for life."

---

*We need a new paradigm of marriage  
as a clear path to happiness and fulfillment.*

---

No matter the terms or how you choose to define them, it's clear that it's time for the *scope* of marriage to evolve. We need a new paradigm of marriage as a clear path to happiness and fulfillment, rather than shackles holding us back from living life to the fullest.

## The Radical Marriage Movement

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*rad.i.cal (adjective): very different from the usual or traditional*

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*Radical Marriage* is not just a book or set of ideas and strategies; it's a movement. It's a way of doing and being. It's a cause, and it comes with great meaning behind it.

As we write this, fewer people are getting married; the divorce rate is at an all-time high, and a significant percentage of men and women view marriage as a quaint, obsolete anachronism. They equate it with being locked up in a cage. They view it as dull and routine, suffocating and destined for failure. One of the most popular internet matchmaking websites targets bored married people with over 21 million subscribers, specializing in infidelity with the slogan "Life is short. Have an affair". If marriage is to survive in our culture, this has to change. It's either evolve or die.

The good news is that there continues to be a strong desire for marriage. We recognize its inherent value and we are hard-wired for committed relationships. At the same time, we face an uphill battle due to conditioning and perception. Many people believe getting married means sacrifice and giving up some of the good things in life. And if they do get married and become bored and dissatisfied after a few years, they believe it's the institution of marriage itself that's holding them back.

## The Paradox of Marriage

Our current challenges speak to an interesting paradox of marriage today. On the one hand, people view marriage as wholesome and desirable. On the other, they see it as old fashioned. People are attracted to marriage, but they are also afraid of it. People want the companionship and partnership of marriage, but they also believe it will take away their freedom and ultimately end in divorce. People seek the security of marriage, but they think it means they can no longer have a fun and exciting life.

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*We're here to open your eyes, rock your world,  
and change your reality about marriage.*

---

Radical Marriage has been created to resolve this paradox and promote a much-needed paradigm shift. We're here to open your eyes, rock your world, and change your reality about marriage. Our intention is to introduce you to a new way of looking at marriage where you can never go back.

Marriage is an ancient institution rich with traditions and customs. As appealing as that may be, in today's modern culture, we want to forge our own path and live our life our way. We want to pursue our own destiny and go where our energy wants to go. We don't want to conform to how society wants us to be and we don't want to follow some predetermined path that our parents expect of us.

Our relationship can be the greatest adventure of our life. It can be the vehicle for experiencing the excitement and fulfillment that we have always wanted. We can only get so far on our own. To get the rest of the way, we need a committed partner.

A Radical Marriage is the platform we need to stand on firmly to deepen and evolve our relationship and experience life to the fullest. It's important because we need that security. We need a boat that doesn't leak. We need a car with a good engine and good tires. We need a solid foundation upon which we can build and grow.

Radical Marriage is a model of how we can leverage that foundation and security to have our relationship be our greatest adventure and achieve the kind of fulfillment and live the kind of life together that we couldn't possibly realize on our own. This is an attractive proposition, for sure, but it's not easy. What's easy is to do what everybody else does, or what has always been done in the past. A *Radical Marriage*, by contrast, takes effort, creativity and intention.

The good news is you don't have to do it alone. When you are part of a team, this journey becomes fun and exciting. Yes, it is something that you have to put some time

and energy into, but then again, it is probably one of the best things that you *could* put your time and energy into. Every moment that you invest in your relationship and your marriage—and we use the word *invest* consciously—will pay off in a big way.

### **Evolution is Messy and Inevitable**

Despite the rewards ahead, it is important to note that evolution is not clean and linear. It's messy. When we advance our values, abilities, and expectations too fast, we get out of control. Then we have to back up a bit, start over, and learn how to integrate the changes into our life. This is true for technology, it's true for lottery winners and job promotions, and it's true for the culture at large (remember the 60's?). It's especially true for relationships and marriage.

---

*We can resist change and hang on to things the way they were,  
but we are going to lose if we try.*

---

Still, evolution is inevitable. We can resist change and hang on to things the way they were, but we are going to lose if we try. So, we might as well embrace evolution and help it along so that we can maximize and optimize the growth and opportunity. That's the purpose behind Radical Marriage.

Rather than equating a committed relationship with a loss of freedom, giving up who we are, who we want to be, and how we want to live, Radical Marriage is a form of empowerment. This new paradigm transforms marriage from the mentality of grudging sacrifice to the platform for life's greatest adventure. It brings us from a mindset of misery or boredom and the reality of high risk of divorce to a gateway to excitement and fulfillment far beyond where we could have gone on our own.

It is fundamental to the survival of one of our most important social institutions to be able to view marriage differently instead of practicing failure or throwing it away, and Radical Marriage serves that purpose. It's about evolving marriage to where it needs to go. After all, any social institution, marriage or otherwise, that seems dull, routine, and boring, with a high chance of failing, is not going to survive. And we as a culture will not survive without marriage, for all the reasons why marriage works.

As the secure basis of a family that raises children to be fully functional, well-adjusted adults, marriage is crucial. It creates the necessary safety and stability for a truly committed relationship and family. We are wired for it. We survive and thrive best in it (see Benefits of a Committed Relationship in the appendix).

### **You Don't Bring Me Flowers Anymore**

Neil Diamond and Barbra Streisand sang a duet that is the lament of many married couples under the old paradigm:

*You don't bring me flowers  
You don't sing me love songs  
You hardly talk to me anymore  
When you come through the door  
At the end of the day*

*I remember when  
You couldn't wait to love me  
Used to hate to leave me*

*Now after lovin' me late at night  
When it's good for you  
And you're feeling alright  
Well, you just roll over  
And you turn out the light*

*You don't bring me flowers anymore*

This is the default for marriage if we don't do anything about it. At this point many people believe that if they can't change their marriage or their partner, the solution is to change partners. But if you have problems or if you find things getting stale and boring in your marriage, it doesn't mean that you throw it out or surf the internet for an affair. It just means that your marriage needs to evolve. Rather than leaving it or bypassing it to go forward alone, you and your partner can now embrace a new model of marriage

together; one in which you maximize your chances of experiencing your greatest adventure, pursuing your dreams and living a life of fulfillment—becoming far more successful as a team than you could by yourself.

Use this book as a road map to discover your truth, explore the possibilities of your dream relationship, and implement the strategies described in these pages to live *beyond* happily ever after. As you read this book try to put aside any fears and resistance that may arise, open your mind and allow yourself to consider a radical approach to achieving happiness and fulfillment in your life, relationships, and marriage. After all, unless you've seen or experienced something, it can be difficult to envision. And unless you can conceive it, you can't achieve it.

Thank you, Napoleon Hill.

### **We're in this Together**

As key players within Relationship Coaching Institute, this material is unusual for us. Not because the topic is foreign territory—it's not; it's just that typically when we address something, it comes from years of study and experience. It's about what *is*. This particular subject, however, is fresh. It's still under exploration and development. It's more about what *will be*.

What you are about to explore is raw and real. It is authentic and it is unique. It is a departure from the norm. It is, by definition, *Radical*. It is as much a discovery for us as it is for you—we are in this together. It is exciting and scary at the same time. It is, we believe, the secret to *living beyond happily ever after*.

### **The Dirty Little Secret of Relationship Happiness**

All couples start out with the most basic of intentions. They start single and want to meet someone. They want to fall in love. They want to be happy. They want a *good* relationship. But is *good* really enough? Perhaps it was in the past, where a *good* relationship was commonly defined as not having problems. In today's world, however, couples seek fulfillment in their relationship, not the simple absence of problems.

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*In today's world, good just isn't good enough.*

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No, in today's world, *good* just isn't good enough.

That's not to say that *good* can't be fulfilling—for a while. Even *good* relationships are exciting when new. But happiness is a moving target, and *good* relationships can quickly become dull and routine. Little problems of everyday living pile up and interfere with the closeness and intimacy that we really want.

As things get stale in our relationship we tell ourselves: *This is as close as I can get to living happily ever after*, while deep down we're asking, *Is this all there is?* We feel selfish, ungrateful, unfaithful and unrealistic for wanting more for our life and relationship. We stick with *good*. *Good* works. *Good* gets us by.

Here's the dirty little secret of relationship happiness: *Good* can become suffocating. *Good* can turn to agony. *Good* can lead to heartache if the relationship is stuck in routine and not continuing to evolve. *Good* can erode your quality of life. *Good* does not equal fulfillment.

Dreaming is for sleeping, but your dreams are for living life to the fullest. This means pushing the envelope with a partner. You are much more capable of reaching your potential in a couple relationship if you realize a fulfilling relationship is a journey, not a destination. The problem is that most of us can't see beyond the norm of what other couples do, so the journey stalls. The good news is that there's an answer.

### **Raising the Bar for Couple Relationships**

As of this moment, right now as you're reading this, the bar officially has been raised. We have known for some time that having a great couple relationship is one of life's greatest adventures. What's different is that we are beginning to understand that to fully realize a relationship's potential, we need to look beyond happily ever after; we need to get *radical*.

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*This is new territory in the field of relationships.*

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This is new territory in the field of relationships. And since each relationship is unique, your *radical relationship* will be unique to you and your partner. You and your partner must be pioneers in your life and relationship and discover your uncharted territory together. Sure, we relationship coaches can provide you with support, skills, and strategies to guide you, but the journey is yours to take.

**Here are five key ideas to keep in mind as you get started:**

1. Your *dream* is what you can currently conceive, but you can go far beyond that.
2. To go beyond, you must be aware that *you don't know what you don't know*. You must be open to possibilities and be willing to continually progress forward into new territory with your partner.
3. "Radical" is not for everyone. Doing so requires a good, strong partnership and a willingness to embrace the journey, the learning, and the adventure. Instead of seeking comfort, tradition, and familiarity, you must be willing to be a pioneer. But if your partner drags their feet, be patient and don't try to do it alone—a big part of the adventure is doing it together, especially when it's challenging.

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*When you get to where you're striving,  
you can see more, do more, and want more.*

---

4. The dream *beyond happily ever after* further reveals itself as you progress. Each step forward allows you to see more possibilities. In that sense, there is no such thing as *achieving* a dream. When you get to where you're striving, you can see more, do more, and want more. You continue striving.



5. A Radical Marriage requires a leap of faith and a willingness to enter and embrace the unknown. There's a great scene from *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* that illustrates this: Indy reaches a huge chasm that he must cross and he isn't sure what to do. It's only after he takes that first, frightening step into the abyss that he discovers the path across. Like the scene in the movie, embracing your fears and not letting them hold you back is a big theme in this book.

As Eleanor Roosevelt once said--

*Do one thing every day that scares you.*

Or, as Buzz Lightyear put it so succinctly-

*To infinity and beyond!*



## Chapter One: Is Radical Marriage Right For You?

### David's Story

The concept of *beyond happily ever after* has consumed my thoughts for some time. When I was a kid my parents divorced. They were very unhappy people, both individually and with each other, which made my home life very unhappy. My escape was getting out of the house.

As I explored my community and went to school, observing other couple and family relationships showed me the possibilities in life. They showed me how great and how miserable things can be. I really *got* that relationships are keys—keys to joy or misery.

Human beings are social creatures and relationships come quite naturally to us. You would think that we would be able to make them work. It's not so easy. While the uncertainty of relationships makes life juicy, it does little to inherently improve the dynamic between the people you interact with on a daily basis.

There are seven billion people on this planet. Some of them are easy for you to get along with and some of them you would love to have as your friend. Others are just plain difficult for you to be around. On top of it all you have family relationships to deal with, which forms the basis of a whole new set of challenges.

And then there's marriage.

### Learning from Experience

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*Most of us don't want to go through life alone.*

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Most of us don't want to go through life alone. We want to live happily ever after with the love of our life. We want that one special person or soul mate, or whatever term speaks to you, to share the human experience with. It's a particular journey which has always fascinated me because of my unhappy family and childhood that fueled my interest in becoming a marriage and family therapist. So I did.

I went to school, completed my internships, passed my exams, got my license, and for many years I was in private practice as a couples therapist. Most of the couples that came to me were on the verge of divorce. They were unhappy together, typically had one foot out the door, and were trying therapy as a last resort. For my part, I tried to save their marriage. Despite my best efforts, it only worked about half the time. They got divorced anyway. So I sought more training. My 50% success rate had me questioning my own abilities and skills. *Well, shoot, if I'm not able to save their marriages, I can't be a very good therapist.*

Looking around at what my colleagues were doing, I discovered that they weren't having any better success. While this made me feel better about myself and my abilities, it did little to quell my passion for helping people. It wasn't okay with me that so many relationships were failing—and so many *marriages*.

As a kid who grew up in a divorced home, a life-long bond was something to which I aspired. So when I got married, as young as I was at the time, I intended to honor those vows. I wanted to be together for life. I wanted to live happily ever after. It didn't work out that way. My first marriage lasted ten years and ended in divorce.

There I was, a brand new marriage and family therapist, going through a divorce. It was not an easy time in my life or my profession. In fact it was devastating. But I was determined not to give up. I gave it a second try and got married again. That one, too, lasted around ten years and ended in divorce.

---

*I am the worst, most inadequate failure  
at this relationship thing in the world.*

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*I am the worst, most inadequate failure at this relationship thing in the world, I thought. I even began to have thoughts of giving up on my dream. Not only that, I began to have thoughts of giving up on myself. I began to resign myself to being alone forever. I'm jinxed or cursed somehow, I thought. As much as I want this for myself it's not going to happen. As much as I want this for other people, it's just not working.*

## **Doubling Down**

Not only did I not give up, I doubled down on my commitment and dedicated my life to studying relationships and helping other people. Regardless of how my own life was working out, I wanted to help others live happily ever after.

In the 90's I was blessed to discover the emerging field of coaching. As a result, I ended up founding Relationship Coaching Institute. I saw coaching as the future for relationships. As a therapist I recognized that trying to fix something that's already broken is not necessarily the best strategy. Addressing something before it breaks, however, can yield tremendous results. That's coaching, and I reveled in its possibilities.

For me, entering the coaching profession and applying my passion and training to coaching relationships was a no-brainer. More than that, it was my salvation. I went all in. I looked around for training programs or mentors, anything or anybody who could teach me how to apply this new-found methodology to relationships. There was nothing. So I took it upon myself to figure it out. I learned how to do it, and then started teaching others. That was the birth of [Relationship Coaching Institute](#) and led me to where I am today.

---

*I couldn't take my clients beyond "good"  
since I couldn't see beyond good.*

---

As a therapist, I devoted my profession to helping people achieve a good relationship. Even when I succeeded, that was as far as it went. I couldn't take my clients beyond "good" since I couldn't see beyond good. Once my clients were no longer in danger of getting divorced, they stopped coming and I felt good about my work. I thought my work

was done, because I didn't know any better. I was never trained in what to do after you help a couple have a "good" relationship.

My eyes were opened reading Gay and Katie Hendricks' book, *Conscious Loving*. It inspired me with possibilities. It helped me see that there is a spiritual level to relationships, a level beyond what we can see and know. I became aware that the couple relationship is the ultimate adventure in personal growth and in living life to the fullest.

Of course, it's not simply a matter of partnership itself. You can partner with somebody and your life can be exciting and fulfilling, or you can partner with somebody and your life can be miserable. As a relationship coach, I help people not just find the love of their life, but have a fulfilling and exciting life. That's what *Radical Marriage* is all about, and much of it rides on the notion that *what you see, depends on where you're standing and where you're looking*.

### **What You See Depends Upon Where You're Standing and Where You're Looking**

For a long time, the reality in my marriage and family therapy office was struggling couples. So the best I could see was getting them to *good*. That's also what I wanted for myself. Again, about half the couples crumbled, and I got divorced *twice* during that period.

Fast forward to Relationship Coaching Institute, exploring relationship coaching and new possibilities for relationships, and I'm standing in a different place and looking in a different direction. I applied to my own life what I learned about relationships and about singles, and I developed a whole relationship coaching program. I wrote a book for singles called *Conscious Dating*, exploring a few fundamental questions: How do you find the love of your life when you're single? How can you set yourself up for success? How can you live *happily ever after* from a standing start when you're single?

I applied these questions and philosophies to myself and found the love of my life, my soul mate, Darlene. We've been married now for seven years. She is a registered nurse, and she ended up leaving her profession to work with me at Relationship Coaching

Institute. She is our Chief Operating Officer and runs everything behind the scenes at RCI. She is coauthor of this book and a tremendous value to our members. Together, we are having the grandest time exploring the possibilities for relationships.

Darlene and I also launched a web TV program called Let's Get Real ([www.gettingreal.tv](http://www.gettingreal.tv)), where we address people's relationship problems and challenges and explore the look and feel of radical relationships. We have been exploring these concepts for ourselves and wanted to share them with our viewers in an open format. We developed Radical Marriage through our relationship as we went along and I could not have done it by myself. I also could not have done this as a marriage and family therapist. I'm doing this now as a relationship coach and as somebody who finally has the relationship and lifestyle that I dreamed about and desired.

---

*What you see depends upon where you're standing  
and where you're looking.*

---

So whether you're standing in a place where you feel *happy* and satisfied with a clear view of an even brighter future, or you're in a place where you feel frustrated and unfulfilled with only darkness on the horizon, that's your reality. What you see depends upon where you're standing and where you're looking.

### **You Have a Choice**

The beauty of it all—and I couldn't see this before—is that we have a choice where we stand and where we look. We can stand in the belief that we will never live happily ever after or that our partner is who they are and they won't change and therefore we are stuck. Or we can stand in the possibility that a Radical Marriage is absolutely possible and we are going to do everything we can to make it happen. We can look at possibilities rather than limits. What you see depends upon where you're standing and where you're looking. It's a powerful concept, and you absolutely have a choice about that.

In exercising that choice, for the purposes of this book, we're not going to address dysfunctional relationships and what to do when one partner is not on board and doesn't want to do something. If this is your situation, you're not ready for Radical Marriage.

There are many qualified, talented marriage and family therapists, social workers, and counselors who specialize in helping couples in trouble. Here we're not addressing how to fix a problematic relationship; we're focusing on the possibilities for a highly exceptional relationship.

### **Darlene's Story**

When David suggested we write a book together about Radical Marriage, my first reaction was *I'm not a relationship expert, who am I to co-author a book about marriage?* But as we explored the concept further and started working on this project, my contribution became clear. In a way, it's better that I don't have a professional background in relationships because it frees me to look at things differently, from the end user's point of view, and not be constrained by academic study or clinical training.

It's not like I'm a blank slate when it comes to relationships.

### **Living in Possibility**

All of my life I've been fascinated by how the world works and am naturally curious, especially about psychology. From the time I was a teenager and questioned "Why is everyone so stupid?!" I have been fascinated with what it means to be human. I took every psychology course offered in high school and Psychology 101 was the first college course I signed up for. I read everything I could get my hands on.

---

*What we learn from books, teachers or experts  
is often the current wisdom of the day.  
But, what else is there?*

---

But my curiosity has always been deeper than simply to learn *what is*. I've always been aware of the potential of *what could be*. What we learn from books, teachers or experts is often the current wisdom of the day. But, what else is there?

If “x” and “y” are true, couldn't we do “z” instead?

What else is there?

What if we...?

What would happen if I...?

To me, this is what makes life exciting. I love the idea of discovering what's around the bend that you can't yet see.

### **Letting Go of Fear**

Fear seems to hold people back—especially when it's about themselves. Great strength comes from truly accepting ourselves for who we are, but it's hard to acknowledge and accept our perceived flaws and weaknesses.

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*I became, and still am, emotionally fearless.*

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A pivotal moment for me was during my Psych rotation in nursing school. Each morning before rounds the class would meet in a conference room and our instructor had us share what we were learning, thinking or feeling. We were encouraged to be open about ourselves as was expected of our psychiatric patients. I embraced this exercise and had never been so open before in my life—just laying out all of my fears of inadequacy and more. And I realized it was okay. What at first felt scary turned out not to be so scary at all. In fact, it was freeing and the possibilities that opened up were intoxicating. I saw how my fears were holding me back, and in that moment I completely let go and can honestly say that I became, and still am, emotionally fearless.

### **I Married My Father**

My relationship story started out quite differently than David's. My parents had what appeared to be a pretty typical marriage for the times. My Mom was a housewife and my



Dad the breadwinner. My father loved us, there was no doubt about that. But, we certainly didn't have the fairytale. Our family was extremely father-centric and revolved around his moods and what he wanted. We all typically went along with it, but if we didn't, he would raise his voice to keep us in line, including my Mom. The whole family catered to his desires to keep him calm and happy.

I spent a lot of time and energy trying to get my mom to stand up for herself. It made me angry that my sweet mother's needs were put on the back burner. So I would often ask her "Why do you put up with it?!"

Ironically, I ended up marrying a man with similar traits as my father. I met my first husband at work. We had a similar sense of humor and spent a lot of time laughing and having fun together. By this time I had dated a number of young men and had a couple of year-long relationships. One thing they had in common was they were all nice guys and I never argued with any of them. Ever. But, within a few weeks of meeting my husband, we argued, a lot. And I cried, a lot. And that pattern repeated itself over and over for two decades and raising a family of two children. Funny how, like my mother, I accepted the situation for the sake of the family and felt responsible to make him happy, trying to "be better" so we wouldn't argue.

I guess I wasn't successful—we divorced 23 years later.

### **From Fantasy to Reality**

For me the concept of Radical Marriage began many years ago—long before I met David. During my first marriage I imagined what a great marriage would be. I imagined waking up each morning with a feeling of peace knowing that my partner and I would work together to create an incredible, fulfilling life.

I knew we would have mutual respect and a shared vision. I fantasized about being able to talk about anything and really listen to each other. I imagined being passionately in love.

I knew that type of marriage was possible—and I really wanted it.

I still remember the exact moment when I realized that my dream was unfolding in front of me. David and I had been dating a short time and were already starting to talk about a life together. I was driving over to his house one afternoon and the realization hit me with a wave of excitement and peace. *Oh, my gosh—this is it! This is the start of what I've always wanted.*

Fast forward about five years. By this time, David and I were not only married, but pretty much together 24/7 as I left my job as a nurse to work with him full-time. There wasn't any doubt what a great marriage we had, and it was everything I had dreamed of.

Actually it was more than I had dreamed of.

### **Discovering my Superpower**

We often hear people say "*It's complicated*" when explaining why they tolerate a bad relationship. Relationships are complex. They aren't linear and nothing happens in isolation.

I came to realize that "*It's complicated*" also accurately describes the possibilities in a good marriage. While I had been dreaming about this for two decades, I couldn't have anticipated how we would evolve as partners or exactly what path our life together would take us.

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*Yes, marriage is complicated, wonderfully complicated.*

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Just as a challenging relationship can hold you back from accomplishing wonderful things or reaching your potential, a strong relationship gives you the strength and platform to grow in ways that you couldn't on your own. Yes, marriage is complicated, wonderfully complicated.

So, I'm proud of my contributions to Radical Marriage. I recognize that I hold the space for exploring untapped potential and discovering and embracing possibilities. And I am

clear that I was put on this earth to look deeply and fearlessly inside myself and my marriage, to explore what else is possible and do my part in paving the way for others.

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*I've been preparing for Radical Marriage all of my life.*

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This is what I'm great at, this is my superpower, and I've been preparing for Radical Marriage all of my life.

## **Jack and Jill's Story**

In the typical love story, two people meet, fall in love, and live happily ever after. As we touched upon earlier, this could just as easily be Jack and Jack or Jill and Jill—your soul mate is your choice—but for the sake of example and at the risk of using a cliché, we're going with Jack and Jill.

### **Scene One: Jack and Jill Meet**

Jack and Jill are single. They find each other, meet, and something clicks. There's an attraction. You have been hoping to find somebody and when you finally do and it seems like a relationship is a possibility, it is exciting. Your hormones, thoughts, and fantasies are going, and now you have the reality right in front of you and it's fantastic.

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*Every choice we make has consequences.*

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The choices we make in this moment determine what happens in the next moment, which ultimately determines your outcome. You would think this is somewhat intuitive. And to many, it is. Every choice we make has consequences, and we must be more conscious of our choices to make them effectively so we get what we want. The problem is, no matter how obvious that may be, we often have a difficult time doing it. (We, the authors, are raising our hands here.)

When we're attracted to someone, we often miss or overlook red flags. Despite the presence of serious problems, we tend to believe that love conquers all and that we can

“make” it work. Similarly, many people brush problems aside because they genuinely see value in what they have and don’t want to be alone.

### **The 80% Relationship**

The phenomenon of overlooking issues puts people in what we call the 80% relationship, where 80% is great and 20% is a challenge. That 20%, however, is what often dooms the relationship. It’s problematic, it’s unsolvable, and you can’t live with it over the long term.

A spinoff of the doomed 80% relationship is the salvageable 80% relationship, where the remaining 20% is composed of stuff that can be solved. It can be fixed. It’s something you can live with over the long term. The choices we make here, when we first meet somebody and decide whether or not to see them again, are crucial.

### **Scene Two: Jack and Jill Fall in Love**

This is where things get exciting. You have met somebody and you have made a connection. The hormones are going and the fantasies and desires are in overdrive. You are having experiences together that bring you closer together; maybe you are even having sex. You are falling in love.

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*Sometimes people interpret attachment as love.*

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Sometimes people interpret *attachment* as *love*. Well, you can be attached to your favorite pair of sweatpants, too, but that doesn’t necessarily make it love. Still, we human beings are imperfect and we have this instinct and desire to partner. We feel what we feel and it feels overwhelming and strong and sometimes we interpret that as love and we want it to work.

### **Pre-commitment**

The law of inertia compels us to stay together and try to make things work. We call this stage in a relationship the “pre-commitment” stage. It’s a wonderful and exciting stage, and it’s also an important stage to decide, *Yes or No? Is this the right relationship for*

*me? Should I make a commitment here? Is this going to work for me? Is it going to meet all of my requirements? My needs and wants? Am I going to be able to have the relationship and life that I want with this person? Should I stay or go? Yes or no?*

People at this stage, when they're falling in love, don't want to break up and move on. However, it's worth noting that if the relationship doesn't appear to be a good fit, even though breaking up is hard to do, the decision to move on is much easier here than later. We have learned the hard way that the fit of a relationship is *everything*.

If you go to the store and you get a jacket that's too small or too big, it's always going to bug you. The jacket could keep you warm, but if it's not the right fit, it's never going to feel quite right. It's the same with the fit in a relationship. If it's not the right fit, it's never going to feel quite right.

### **Scene Three: Jack and Jill Get Married**

This is where Jack and Jill decide to make a commitment. This, too, is exciting, because for many people it's the realization of a dream. There is security in knowing that you have your special person now, you are not alone anymore, and that you and your partner are going to be together for the rest of your life. You get married or have a commitment ceremony. You take vows and have lots of hopes and dreams together. Over time, when those hopes and dreams don't get realized and problems and frustrations build up, it can become not so exciting anymore.

### **Scene Four: Jack and Jill Become Routine**

Jack and Jill, now a married couple, have been together for a while and everything has been exciting up to this point. Here, things are getting routine and comfortable. This is what we call a *good* relationship. Sure, at times the routine is frustrating or not so great, but it's their routine and they are comfortable with it. This is common for couples because they don't know any different. The road to eventual divorce starts at this stage for many couples when they recognize the presence of problems and are unable to solve them.

### Scene Five: Jack and Jill Have a Good Marriage and Live Happily Ever After

Like many couples, Jack and Jill met and fell in love. They got married and they live happily ever after. They believe that if you don't have problems in your relationship, then you have a *good* relationship. They are comfortable. Their basic needs are met. They have shelter, air, food, and all their basic physical and emotional needs are satisfied.

If the relationship ever needs something, if it's been a while since they have been on a date, if they have some confusion over paying a bill or not, if there is some frustration or an argument, then they focus on their relationship as needed, in a reactive way. It's what most people do. In this state, compromise is often the primary strategy for making the relationship work.

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*If you are not moving forward, you are moving backward.*

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The problem is that if the only time you focus on your relationship is when it's needed, and if you are comfortable and being comfortable means that you don't put effort into things, eventually you become uncomfortable. It's as if you have a plant that you are not watering. After a while it wilts and dies. It's the same with your life and your relationship. When you are not nurturing your life and your relationship they tend to atrophy. Anything standing still is not going to stay the exact same way forever, because things always change. If you are not moving forward, you are moving backward. If you are not growing, you are dying. There might not be any problems now, but if you don't put some effort into your relationship, you are going to have problems later.

### Compromise (aka lose-lose)

In David's first marriage, before he knew any better, his primary strategy for making his marriage work was compromise. As an example, he and his wife always compromised on movies. She loved animal movies about horses, cats, dogs, dolphins; real and animated. She also wanted to watch love stories—chick flicks. But it was hard for him to sit through that stuff. He loved action-adventure movies and sci-fi, which she hated.

As a result of their different tastes in movies, they compromised. So for ten years of that marriage, David saw nothing but dramas and comedies. It wasn't until he divorced that he caught up on Star Wars, Star Trek, Indiana Jones, and other great movies. Essentially, he had given up a part of who he was for the sake of the relationship.

If you rely too much on compromise and are constantly meeting in the middle, giving up what you really want while your partner is doing the same thing, it's lose-lose. Neither of you are happy or fulfilled. Granted, if you do that every once in a while about something important, it's okay. If you do that all the time, on movies, restaurants, sex, you name it, you are not really living happily ever after; just ever after, unhappily.

Unfortunately, this is often the default. It's what most people do and what most people call a *good* marriage.

But there's another option.

## Radical Marriage

As coaches, often we ask our clients, "Well, what do you want?" Underneath that is, "What would make you happy? What would make you feel good? What would make you truly satisfied with your life?"

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*What would make you ecstatically,  
radically happy beyond your wildest dreams?*

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Now, we're asking a different question. We're going beyond *good*. We're going beyond happily ever after. We want to know what would make you ecstatically, radically happy beyond your wildest dreams.

Remember: What you see depends upon where you're standing and where you're looking. If all you see is *good*, and ask, *How can I have a good relationship? How can I have a good life?* Then that is as far as you are going to go. We don't just want good. We want *extraordinary*. We want a *radical* life, and along with that, a *Radical Marriage*.

## Three Kinds of Dreams

There are three kinds of dreams. There are the ones that you are aware of, the ones that you are unaware of, and the ones that evolve.

*Dreams that you are aware of* are the ones that are on your conscious mind. These are the ones that you can see and that you know. It's like the tip of the iceberg poking through the water. Accomplishing these dreams gives you a *good* life.

*Dreams that you are unaware of* rest beneath the surface. They're there, but they're not readily visible. The cool thing is that once you start achieving your dreams, then you start uncovering more. It's an important concept to living beyond happily ever after. It is not until you get there that you can even see it and achieve it, which in turn helps you see and achieve even more. Once you have achieved *good* then you are ready for *radical*.

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*Our dreams evolve as we achieve them.*

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*Dreams that evolve* take more time to develop. As human beings, we change and evolve over time. What we wanted when we were twenty is different from what we want when we are thirty, forty, and fifty. Our dreams evolve as we achieve them, which is a good thing. It's not like we climb the mountain and reach the summit and then that's it. There's another mountain, and another mountain, and another mountain after that. To some people that may be a discouraging thought: *What? You mean that I'm never going to get there?* Others have a different take. To us, the fact that there are always other challenges and adventures ahead is what makes life exciting.

This doesn't mean that you have to live an extreme lifestyle and jump out of airplanes, but it does mean that if you focus on possibilities and allow yourself to go beyond good, happy, or okay, then life becomes exciting. Life becomes fresh, and you'll never become bored. You'll always be challenged and you'll always be alive.



The key to living beyond happily ever after is to recognize and accept that life is a journey, not a destination. It's not finding somebody, getting married and then, if you're lucky, you have a *good* relationship where you are content and comfortable. A Radical Marriage requires you to continually evolve with your dreams and with your partner.

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*What makes you happy today is not exactly  
what's going to make you happy tomorrow.*

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If you just stay comfortable you are going to go backward. You are going to end up being bored, at the very least. "Beyond happily ever after" means you embrace life as a journey that is ever evolving. What makes you happy today is not exactly what's going to make you happy tomorrow.

We need to take responsibility for our life, our relationship, and our fulfillment, and be willing to embrace that journey. Sure, it's challenging, but again, that is the spice of life. For us, this is where we live as relationship coaches, because it's what we want for ourselves and it's what we want to support you to do.

What's clear, and one of the things we've learned along the way, is that no one is successful alone. You cannot achieve the success and happiness and fulfillment in your life that you want all by yourself. It doesn't necessarily mean you need a coach, but it does mean you will need support or mentoring or a team on your side. Please don't do this alone. Please don't think you can do this alone. This is a big shift for the independent lone rangers that our culture promotes.

### **What Does a Radical Marriage Look Like?**

With all of the possibilities swirling around, you may be trying to form that picture in your mind: *What does a Radical Marriage look like?* There really is no pre-set image. You and your partner get to define it for yourselves. That's the beauty of it. Still, you can see glimpses of it in other couple relationships. They're the ones that seem incredibly connected and in love, long after their honeymoon. They're the couples that inspire you to think, *I want to be like THAT!*

Have you ever had that experience? Do you know any couples like that?

When you step into the unknown and view your life and marriage as a constantly evolving adventure, when you're living on the edge just a little bit each day, you know you're getting closer. It takes work and ingenuity. Just like good physical health requires discipline to eat well and exercise regularly, a Radical Marriage requires continual effort, by both partners, in six fundamental areas, which are included in the chapters of this book:

**1. Radical Commitment (Chapter 2):**

Beyond your marriage vows, you both are absolutely 100% committed to your marriage, no matter what, and you are as committed to your partner's happiness as your own. You each take 100% responsibility for the relationship, your experience in the relationship and for your outcomes in the relationship.

**2. Radical Communication (Chapters 3-6):**

You know how to effectively exchange information so that it is thoroughly understood, and you know how to assert your needs, resolve differences and conflict to get on with the serious business of fulfilling your dreams together.

**3. Radical Intimacy (Chapter 7):**

You are completely transparent to your partner, you don't censor yourself or hold anything back. You share all your thoughts, feelings, wants, needs, fantasies and desires.

**4. Radical Romance (Chapter 8):**

You continually express your love, appreciation, attraction and adoration for your partner in words and actions and don't take your relationship for granted or allow passion to be replaced by routine.

**5. Radical Sex (Chapter 9):**

Beyond satisfying physical urges, you consciously seek and experience emotional, physical, and spiritual connection every day, continually exploring new ways to express love and pleasure your partner and allowing yourself to be loved and pleased.

**6. Radical Living (Chapter 10):**

Beyond survival and comfort, you consciously design your lifestyle together, develop your shared vision and goals, devote time and resources to realizing your dreams in

each moment together as well as prioritizing your goals and preparing for your future. You are aware of how short your time is on this planet and savor each precious moment of life and being together.

## Characteristics of a Radical Marriage

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*A Radical Marriage has partners who consider their relationship their greatest, most important asset.*

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Here are the primary characteristics of a Radical Marriage in our opinion:

1. A Radical Marriage is unique to each couple.
2. A Radical Marriage is absolutely committed.
3. A Radical Marriage is consciously co-created.
4. A Radical Marriage is driven by shared values and vision.
5. A Radical Marriage has intentional relationship rituals and practices.
6. A Radical Marriage is always evolving and challenging its partners.
7. A Radical Marriage has partners who always make decisions in connection with each other.
8. A Radical Marriage has partners who prioritize each other's needs and happiness.
9. A Radical Marriage has partners who take responsibility for their own needs and experience.
10. A Radical Marriage is inclusive and a role model and source of support for their family and community.
11. A Radical Marriage has partners who don't settle for "stuck," seeking creative solutions to their relationship challenges and get outside support as needed from friends, family, community, mentors, and professionals.
12. A Radical Marriage is 100% positive and "I can't", "I won't", "It's impossible", and "It's your fault" are not in its vocabulary.
13. A Radical Marriage relies on compromise as a last resort for resolving differences and is rarely needed.
14. A Radical Marriage has partners who consider their relationship their greatest, most important asset and source of fulfillment, meaning and adventure.

## Is a Radical Marriage For You?

Radical Marriage isn't for everyone. It requires a strong relationship, so if yours is struggling, focusing on functional basics must be your priority. Radical Marriage requires a willingness to take risks, overcome resistance and experience a bit of fear, which can induce stress and anxiety when you're more wired for comfort and security. It requires inviting and embracing evolution and change, which is against the grain for those who crave routine.

Radical Marriage requires TWO willing participants, so if your partner isn't on the same page, that's where you must start. It requires growth, effort, and learning; while strongly desired by some, others would rather watch TV, drink beer, and fall asleep on the couch.

Radical Marriage is for couples with a good relationship who strongly believe that they are together for a reason, which is to experience life to the fullest through their relationship.

If you're still reading this, chances are good that a Radical Marriage is for you.

Now that you can conceive it, let's take a more detailed look at how to *create your ultimate relationship, live beyond happily ever after, and achieve a Radical Marriage.*



## Chapter Two: Radical Commitment

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*Commitment is the glue that makes marriage work.*

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If there's one thing we've learned—and the research backs this up—it's that commitment is the glue that makes marriage work.

When you take vows and stick to them, you are on the right course. When you give yourself completely to your partner, you have found the right formula. When you are all-in, you find ways to stay together. When you are 100% committed, you accept and embrace your partner unconditionally. If a *Radical Marriage* is what you seek, any less than *Radical Commitment* just won't do.

If even one partner in the relationship has an 80% commitment, you are opening yourselves up for trouble. Even if you have a *good* relationship with less than 100% commitment your marriage will end up getting sabotaged. *Well, you know, I'm here as long as it's going to meet my needs. If it doesn't work out I can always leave.* Mental and emotional exit strategies tend to become self-fulfilling.

*Radical Commitment* requires 100% investment, physically and emotionally, in attitude and behavior. It's a state where you're not even looking at other partners, you're not even thinking about other partners, you're not even thinking about another reality of what it would be like if you weren't with your current partner, you're not even considering what it would be like if you had a different lifestyle in a different place with someone else. Only then will you be totally present and capable of achieving fulfillment.

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*If you're not accepting your partner for who they are,  
you will not have the connection you want.*

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For some people, true commitment is hard. *Well, I love this person, but I really wish they were different in this way and that way.* No, if you make the commitment to a relationship and to a person, to make it work you need to accept and embrace your partner for who they are. If part of you wants your partner to change, you are not accepting them for who they are. If you're not accepting your partner for who they are, you will not have the connection you want. You will not have the relationship you want. You will not be able to go very far. It will limit you, and you certainly will not have a Radical Marriage.

The cool part is that 100% commitment is a choice. It's something you can absolutely find in your life. This is not to say that people are perfect, far from it. And that's okay. We can judge that our partner is imperfect and still be 100% committed and embrace their imperfection. We have a word for imperfections. We call them quirks. They are things about your partner that might bug you that you can accept and embrace if you choose to.

For example, David and Darlene have very different driving styles. Like most people, David drives a bit over the speed limit while Darlene is a "rule-follower" who respects the posted limit. This could easily turn into a conflict with either of them nagging the other to drive differently. But they respect each other's "quirk" and allow each other to have their individual styles. The point here is that when you're in a *Radical Marriage* you might not always agree, you might not always like it, but you can still embrace your partner fully for who they are. You don't try to change them and you don't reject certain parts of them. That's *Radical Commitment*.

### **Committing to Your Partner's Happiness**

In today's immediate gratification, "Me, Me, Me" culture, we tend to focus on our *own* needs and our *own* happiness. In a Radical Marriage, you prioritize *your partner's* happiness. It doesn't mean you're being codependent and giving up your own happiness; it just means that you have a symbiotic relationship. If you and your partner

want to be happy together and have a Radical Marriage, it is essential that you prioritize each other's happiness. It's also fantastic.

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*Imagine this:*

*You have a partner who is committed to your happiness.*

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Imagine this: You have a partner who is *committed* to your happiness. They want you to be happy. They put energy and priority into you being happy. Wouldn't you love to have that kind of partner? Wouldn't your life be great if you had somebody that was committed and devoted to your happiness? Well, you *can* have that. But first, you need to be committed to *their* happiness.

Let's say you have a 60/40 split, where you prioritize your partner's happiness 60% and your own happiness 40%. It's not that you're giving yourself up and that you don't care about your own happiness—certainly you will pursue having your needs met—but you are just prioritizing the relationship and your partner's happiness. Remember, we are talking about *Radical Marriage*, which requires *Radical Commitment*, which requires prioritizing your partner's happiness, which takes you beyond *good*, which takes you *beyond* happily ever after.

### **Is Lifelong Commitment Even Possible?**

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*44% of people in their 20's believe that marriage is obsolete.*

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While it's clear the role of commitment is huge, there remains a lot of confusion about what commitment is. The marriage rate today is 51%, its lowest point. The divorce rate, however, remains at around 40-50%. In other words, despite the fact that there are fewer marriages, half of all marriages still end in divorce. What's more, the attitude toward marriage and commitment in young people is also at its lowest. In fact, a recent survey showed that 44% of people in their 20's believe that marriage is obsolete.

What is going on here?

For starters, in the past thirty years, cohabitation has increased by over 1,200%. It has become the most popular Step 2 in relationships. So, Step 1 is to find somebody and date a few times, and then it's, BOOM, Step 2, move in together. The problem is that moving in together is not *actual* commitment. It may look like commitment, and you may act like it's commitment, but it's not commitment. The reality is that, although there are exceptions, it generally doesn't work. In fact, the failure rate of cohabitation is over 80%. And no wonder. If your mindset is—*Well, if it doesn't work I can always leave*, this is the opposite of commitment. It's clear that what we are doing in relationships today is just not working.

Some time ago David published an article titled *What is Commitment in Relationships?* In it, he explored this question in great detail. Now, David has published a lot of things throughout his life and career. He has published many books and articles. He has published multiple websites for singles and couples. It's what he does. He's quite passionate about it and rather prolific at his work. But this one article—*What is Commitment in Relationships*—is without question the most popular article he's ever written. It's been clicked through and read by tens of thousands of people all over the world.

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*Is lifelong commitment even possible?*

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This tells you that the concept and question of commitment in relationships resonates with people who are struggling. And although they see commitment as important and seem to want it, there is a lot of skepticism and cynicism that also leaves them wondering, *Is lifelong commitment even possible?*

Personally, we believe that lifelong commitment is possible. But to make it work, we also believe that you first have to practice *Conscious Dating*. This means that we have to be clear about who we are and what we want and find a person who is aligned with that. Here's what's interesting, though: Even if it is a square peg in a round hole, research shows that you can make it work with *Radical Commitment*.



## Research on Marriage

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*Committed relationships tend to be successful and fulfilling,  
even when the couple is unhappy.*

---

Research on marriage and commitment shows that *committed* relationships tend to be successful and fulfilling, even when the couple is unhappy. In fact, one of the most surprising research statistics we've stumbled across over the years is in the book, *The Case for Marriage*, by Maggie Gallagher and Linda Waite.

In this book there is a study that was done to track thousands of unhappily married couples. It was basically a series of simple survey questions: *Are you happy? Are you unhappy? Are you very happy? Are you very unhappy?* They identified unhappily married couples and then, five years later, asked them the same questions: *What's the deal? How are you feeling now?*

Guess what? Of the unhappily married couples who were still together five years later, two-thirds reported being happy. 67%! That blew us away. In their book, the authors called it the *Marital Endurance Ethic*, demonstrating that if you endure an unhappy marriage long enough, you have a good chance of being happy five years later.

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*Things change. Nothing stays the same.*

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There needs to be more research about this, but it's an intriguing and logical idea. Things change. Nothing stays the same. If you are unhappy today, even if it seems like it's an unsolvable problem that you can't live with, if you hang around long enough, chances are it will change. So the questions we have for you are, *How committed are you? Can you hang around long enough? What will you do in your relationship while you're sticking it out and trying to deal with an unsolvable problem?*

## **Beyond Happily Ever After**

From a relationship coaching perspective, the concept of commitment is fascinating enough. But it also directly correlates to our personal relationship journey. Like Jack and Jill, these authors met and fell in love. We got married and seven years later were enjoying the most incredible life and relationship that we had ever experienced, far beyond what we had dreamed. Then another intriguing idea occurred to us: *What's next?* We had achieved and were already enjoying life happily ever after. *Now what?* Again, things don't stay the same. Things evolve. Things grow. It's passion evolution. It's in this spirit that we realized there is such a thing as *beyond* happily ever after.

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*But let's say you are successful in reaching your goal.*

*Then what?*

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Happily ever after is what we dream of when we haven't yet attained it. It's the vision of what we want our life and relationship to look like, someday, off in the distant future. Naturally, we figure we'll be happy when we get there. But let's say you are successful in reaching your goal. Then what? Is that it? Do you stop?

No!

You keep on going. You build on that. You take your relationship, in its current state of happily ever after, to a place we call *beyond* happily ever after. It's there that you will find yourself in a Radical Marriage. To have a *Radical Marriage*, you must be *radically committed*, because commitment, as research suggests, is an essential ingredient to a lasting successful relationship.

If you are not committed, you open the door to failure, and your relationship will eventually bomb. But if you stay committed, and you stick it out long enough, even if you are unhappy, the odds are in your favor that you'll end up happy. Of course, it helps to

work on it as well, which you have already demonstrated a willingness to do since you are reading this book in the first place.

If commitment is the glue, if commitment is the secret sauce, if commitment is the key to making a lasting relationship be good or great, then *Radical Commitment* is the key to a *Radical Marriage*. Here, in the pages that follow, we have identified what Radical Commitment looks like. We have identified specifically what you can do to be committed in such a way that you can have a *radical relationship* and a *Radical Marriage*.

## Commitment Defined

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*Commitment means you don't have an exit strategy.*

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Commitment means there are no exits. You are all-in. There is no part of you, no matter how small, that's holding back, thinking, *Well, if it doesn't work out, I can always leave*. No, commitment means you don't have an exit strategy. There is no escape hatch at the ready. Having said that, and though it may be intuitive to some people, there remains a lot of confusion about commitment. That's why David's article "What is Commitment in Relationships?" is so popular. In our business we often encounter couples who are confused about commitment, but don't *know* they are confused. When David was a practicing therapist, it would happen on a regular basis.

Here's an example:

One day a couple came into David's office and sat down on his couch. The guy, who was very high energy, leaned forward and said in a Texas drawl, "We've been dating for three months now and we're real committed!"

"Okay," David said. Meanwhile, he looked over at the female partner who was subtly shaking her head and rolling her eyes, as if to say, "Well, maybe *he's* committed. But I'm not so sure." So, the guy had built up the commitment in his own head, but she hadn't bought it. That's not a committed relationship.

As a couple's therapist, David would need to know the relationship status to best serve his clients. If it wasn't offered up voluntarily and they weren't clearly married, he would have to ask: "Are you married? Are you engaged to be married? Are you thinking about it? Where are you as a couple?" He would follow that up with, "Are you in a committed relationship?"

Pop Quiz: What percentage of couples do you think said "Yes, we are in a committed relationship"?

Answer: 100%.

That's right, 100% of unmarried couples that came into David's office, when asked if they were in a committed relationship, said "yes," regardless of their situation, regardless of what their body language might have been revealing.

In their mind they were committed—even if it required some self-convincing to believe. The intent was there, as going to see a therapist does signify that they want to work on it, and does demonstrate a certain *level* of commitment, but it's not full-blown commitment. Over many years of seeing clients like this and further exploring what commitment is, David saw a need to define commitment for couples who *think* they're committed or are confused about commitment, which is really part of why their life and relationship aren't working out. Here's an excerpt from his article *What is Commitment in Relationships*:

### **In My Opinion, You Are *Not* In a Committed Relationship If ...**

1. Your partner is not aware your relationship is committed
2. You are wondering if your relationship is committed
3. You and your partner have differences of opinion about the status of your relationship
4. Your friends and your family have different perceptions about the status of your relationship

5. You and your partner have not acted to explicitly formalize your commitment in some way

6. You are relying on verbal promises without a significant track record of them being kept

### **Promise vs. Commitment**

It's worth noting that there's a difference between a promise and a commitment. A promise is something you say. It's something you intend. A commitment, however, is an act that keeps on going. It's something you do.

As an example, David was working with a woman who sought him out because she wanted a reality check. She said that her boyfriend cheated on her. Turns out, they had a long distance relationship. They had been together for six months and they saw each other on weekends. He ended up sleeping with somebody else.

David asked her the question, "Well, did you guys have a commitment?" She said, "Well, you know, we never really talked about it, but he was my boyfriend. He cheated on me."

Essentially, they were a dating couple, long distance, who hung out for six months on the weekends. They never talked about their relationship. They never made any commitments. They never even made any promises. But in her mind they were committed. Obviously, he wasn't.

Commitment is serious. It is something you can see. It is enforceable. It is an event. If you tell me you're committed and I ask you, "Oh, well when did that happen?" you should be able to tell me when and where and how. Even if it was on the top of the mountain with you and your partner in front of your God and nobody else was there, you should be able to tell me the day, the time, and the place. If you didn't explicitly formalize your commitment then how committed are you? You're merely committed in your mind. A true commitment is formal and there are absolutely no exits from it—not without serious consequences.

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*A commitment in a relationship is infinite.  
It doesn't have an end.*

---

A commitment in a relationship is infinite. It doesn't have an end. People don't commit to being married for five years. When we say "I do" we mean for life. It's part of who we are. It's in our DNA. If you ask people, "Would you prefer a temporary relationship or a permanent relationship with commitment?" and "When you get married, do you want to be married for a limited amount of time or for the rest of your life?" most people will tell you that they A) want commitment and B) want to grow old with the love of their life.

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*True commitment says,  
"I'm not going anywhere. You are safe with me."*

---

Of course there are cynics and "realists" to throw into the equation. They will argue that in reality, the divorce rate is high. In reality, relationships fail. In reality, commitment is an iffy proposition. All of that is true, but that's no reason to dismiss marriage. *Commitment* is what makes a relationship extraordinary and allows a couple to achieve higher levels of fulfillment and happiness than is possible without commitment. Commitment makes it safe, and we need emotional safety to truly experience love—to receive love and give love. True commitment says, "I'm not going anywhere. You are safe with me."

### **Pre-Commitment**

In a relationship, there is a transition from dating to being a couple, and that transition happens when you both decide to be exclusive. The woman whose boyfriend "cheated" on her never had that assurance from him. They didn't agree to be exclusive. When you decide to be an exclusive couple where you're not dating anybody else, but you're not yet committed, you have reached the stage of a relationship we call pre-commitment.

Conscious couples in this important stage are thinking, *Is this the right relationship for me? Should I make a commitment here?* Again, most people want a commitment. They

don't want to hang out in this stage forever, though sometimes they do, or think they do. Then, five or ten years later, they want more. The pre-commitment stage is an important stage where you can explore whether a relationship is right for you before making a commitment you might not be able to keep.

If at this stage you determine that it's not the relationship for you, if it doesn't fit everything that you're looking for, if you can't in good conscience live happily ever after with this partner, then it's probably best to move on and find something that is a better fit for both of you, because it's the best move in the long run.

It all depends upon what you're looking for. If you want happiness and fulfillment, and you realize there has to be a good fit for that to be sustainable and successful over time, then you'll say "no" to what you don't want and to what's *not* a good fit so that you can find what *is* a good fit for you.

In marriage, you make a lifetime commitment, though many married couples are not committed emotionally. When you settle, despite making a commitment to a particular partner, you let go of what you really want and you never forget what you really want. What you want is still a part of who you are so you are continually making sacrifices. There are needs and wants that are not going to happen. Some of those things are solvable, some you can get creative about. Some things you can let go of and others you can't.

---

*We tend not to believe that we can have everything we want  
so we settle for what we have.*

---

As responsible, mature adults we tend not to believe that we can have everything we want so we settle for what we have. We try to be *happy* with what we have. We're here to tell you it is absolutely possible to be ecstatically happy with what you have—but you have to be willing to let go of what you don't have. Many people in the world are frustrated because they are consciously or unconsciously not letting go of something, whether it's their first boyfriend who they never quite got over, or something else.

Here's an example: David loves boats—sailboats in particular. He loves the water. He is most happy being on, in, under, or near the water. Having a boat is just part of who David is. It makes him happy. If he doesn't have a boat, then he's not happy. It would be his dream to live on a boat.

David is married to the most wonderful woman in the world, Darlene, who makes him very happy, even without a boat. But these authors have a Radical Marriage. Darlene, who gets violently seasick, encouraged David to get a boat and made it her mission to conquer her motion sickness. In return, David does everything in his power to make being on the boat comfortable for Darlene (at this writing, so far so good) and they enjoy their boat as their "second home." There's even talk about living on a houseboat someday.

We all have concessions to make. We all make sacrifices. We all need to let go of some things that we might want to be with a particular person. And we can consciously be happy with that or we can unconsciously never let go of what we sacrificed. We can decide to be happy and stay in the moment, or we can tolerate our relationship day to day, staying in touch with how it isn't what we really want, always slightly aware of how our life is not the way we really want it to be.

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*Commitment is a choice.  
It starts with accepting fully what you have.*

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Commitment is a choice. It starts with accepting *fully* what you have in your relationship and your partner, and letting go of the exits, including pining for what you don't have. As a way of accomplishing this and making it real, we have created *five promises*, specifically designed to help you achieve *Radical Commitment*—even if what you have isn't everything you've ever wanted in your life.



## Five Promises of Radical Commitment

### The First Promise: I promise to love you every day

Love is a choice. We get busy, we have moods, and we get frustrated. But if you are truly committed to your partner, you will choose to love them fully every day—even when you're mad at them, even when you're having a bad day. This is similar to *unconditional* love, but this is something more. This is actively making the choice: *I promise to love you every day*.

How many couples are living day to day where a partner gets irritated when her husband leaves his socks on the floor? She's nagged him and nagged him and nagged him. He's promised and promised and promised. It has reached the point where she is resentful and upset and she finds it hard to love him. She finds it hard to accept him for who he is, because 20 years later he still leaves his damn socks on the floor!

What she might do is promise to love him every day, even when he leaves his socks on the floor, which is a big shift for people. Many people can't do it. They can't let go of anger and resentment and judgment and the need for their partner to be different.

So promise number one is *I promise to love you every day*. Love is a choice. You choose to make that choice, always and every day.

### The Second Promise: I promise to choose you first

Here you make your partner the most important person in your life and you do not take them for granted. You don't put anything else above them—not work, not home, not family, friends, kids, hobbies, nothing. You put your partner first, always.

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*Loving relationships are inclusive, not either/or.*

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For a lot of people, this scares them to death. *Huh? How can I possibly do that? What about my kids? What about my faith? What about this? What about that?* Choosing your partner first doesn't mean you are not prioritizing your family or anyone or anything else. Loving relationships are inclusive, not either/or.

Here's an example; when you travel by air the flight attendant runs through a series of safety instructions before taking off, one of which is, in case of a loss of cabin pressure, to put your mask on first, then assist your child. This is not a self-centered act, it's because you can't be present or help or be responsible for someone else if you're struggling yourself.

Your family and your kids will be much happier and better off if you're a solid team and have a strong couple partnership. To make that happen, you must choose your partner first. If you put your kids first, you have a kid-centered household and that tends to not work very well. The kids get spoiled and suck the oxygen from the marriage (to continue the air travel analogy) and your partner gets resentful because you end up living parallel lives. Choosing your partner first, always, above everything, is a form of *Radical Commitment*.

This can be especially tough for women. For them, it's important to note that it's not a matter of choosing the man over the child. It's a matter of prioritizing the relationship and the partner. To choose the man over the child is either/or. The goal here, if you are true partners, is to be a team and in this together. If your partner is choosing you first as well, they will support your priorities and goals and together you will be a strong team (and as they say, "there's no "i" in team").

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*In a successful, loving, committed relationship,  
everything must happen in connection.*

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One of David's relationship mentors made a blanket statement some years ago that blew him away. He tried to find holes in it and to this day he can't. She said, "In a successful, loving, committed relationship, everything must happen in connection."

David said, “Everything?”

She said, “Everything.”

*Everything* must happen in connection with *Radical Commitment* and in a *Radical Marriage*.

### **The Third Promise: I promise to take responsibility**

Here is where you understand that your outcomes are 100% dependent upon your own choices and actions. You understand that your thoughts and feelings are your own. If you take 100% responsibility for your life, for your relationship, and for your family, you won't blame your partner when it's not working. You won't put responsibility on your partner to make it work. You will take responsibility for working with your partner to make it work. And, yes, you are going to choose your partner first, and you are going to choose to be in connection with them about your family and everything else.

### **Your “Experience”**

There is this thing that happens inside your body and your mind we call your “experience.” It is your thoughts and your feelings and your physical sensations. And guess what? It's all yours. It's unique to you. Everybody else in the world has their own experience, too. There is the subjective world, which is inside you, and there is the objective world, which is outside you. There is fact, which is measurable and observable and outside you, and there is opinion or judgment, which are the things you make up in your head. Relationships and life go smoother when we are aware of the difference.

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*When you have an opinion or a need or a judgment,  
that's all about you.*

---

When you have an opinion or a need or a judgment, that's all about you. A sock-free floor, for example, is a subjective need. "I need you to pick up your socks. I don't want to pick up your socks. I judge that if you leave your socks on the floor you're sloppy." That's all about you. It's inside you, and if you can understand and own that, it's easier to love your partner, even when he leaves his socks on the floor.

Because, you know what? It's a completely valid form of existence. There are people that leave their socks on the floor and there are people that don't leave their socks on the floor. Both of them are okay. That's taking responsibility. And when we take responsibility for our own thoughts and feelings, wants and needs, judgments and opinions, we acknowledge that it's okay for other people to be different. That's *Radical Commitment*.

Avoiding responsibility boils down to blame and judgment. If we are judging somebody for being wrong or bad, then we are not taking responsibility for our own reality. Short of murder or other horrendous acts or crimes, nobody is objectively wrong or bad. That's reality. Taking responsibility means taking things out of the realm of right or wrong, good or bad, and accepting your partner for who they are. It's also being able to accept and love yourself for who you are.

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*The good news is that you don't have to take responsibility  
for other people's experience.*

---

The most freeing experience of David's life came as an adolescent when he realized, *Hey, my parents are unhappy and it's not my fault ... it's not about me!* You, too, will benefit greatly when you accept that in life there is what you are responsible for, that which is inside you, and there is what you are not responsible for, that which is inside others. Yes, you need to take full responsibility for who you are and what's inside you, but the good news is that you don't have to take responsibility for other people's experience. You can't, even if you wanted to, because that belongs to them.

Taking responsibility for your own experience is freeing, but for a lot of people, it's also scary. It can be scary to think that if your partner is not responsible for making you happy, that means, *OMG, I'm responsible for my own happiness!* For many people this is the scariest thing in the world, so they hold onto making their partner right or wrong and they stay in judgment, because it is scary and unsafe for them to take full responsibility.

Men, especially, often feel like they need to make women happy. It's hardwired in them and it's a challenge to let go of that. But there's always going to be an internal struggle about something, man or woman. As part of our evolution, the struggles become about higher-order things. We no longer struggle with *Should I leave my family vulnerable to predators to go hunting?* Now we struggle with, *My partner's having a bad day. This isn't about me, is it?*

Being there, being compassionate, and being empathic means that you're not taking it all on. You're not taking on the blame or the responsibility and you're not trying to fix it. That way you can be fully present and supportive and compassionate. And that's what your partner really needs.

So if you are feeling responsible for your partner's happiness, it's time to work hard to let go of that and be present with compassion and empathy because that's how you're going to win. That's what your partner really needs. And that's how you will remain committed and fulfilled as a couple.

#### **The Fourth Promise: I promise to say "Yes"**

This is another promise that scares people, and it's one of our favorites: *I promise to say "Yes."* It's not just "Yes" sometimes. It's not just "Yes" when I feel like it or agree. It's "Yes" *always*.

---

*It's hard to be positively received  
when somebody's saying "No" to you.*

---

Think about it: What do *you* want as a person? You want to be positively received, right? And it's hard to be positively received when somebody's saying "No" to you. You want a positive response. A relationship works best when you respond positively to your partner and your partner to you. This doesn't mean that you need to say "yes" to what does not work for you or what you can't do. That's not what this means at all. However, it does mean you don't say "no." So how do you say "yes" to something that you can't do or don't want to do? Simple: You find something that you *can* say "yes" to. Instead of saying "No, I can't because ..." you say, "Well, how about this ..."

Let's say your partner is *in the mood* and you're not. You're not feeling well. You have the classic headache. Rather than saying, "Not tonight dear, I have a headache" you might say, "You know what, I have a headache. How about in the morning?" You are positively receiving your partner's advances. You are saying *what* you can do and *when* you can do it. You are saying "Yes." You are not saying "yes" to having sex right now, because you have a headache. You are saying "yes" to having sex in the morning when you anticipate feeling better.

*I promise to say "Yes"* is responding positively to your partner all the time, every time. Instead of saying "no," you simply let them know what you can say "yes" to, and when. When this happens it creates safety. Remember: We need emotional safety to love and be loved and experience intimacy and fulfillment. If we know that we are going to be positively received, if we know that we are not going to be judged wrong or bad, we feel safe. And that is a wonderful feeling.

### ***The Third Option***

Let's say your partner says, "I'd like us to have another lover." Well, there are a lot of things—and that's one of them—that you might not imagine you could ever say "yes" to. But let's put aside your initial negative response, which, remember, is all about you and your judgment. If you are promising to choose your partner first, and you are promising to love them every day and you are taking responsibility for your own experience, including your judgments, including your repulsion about multiple lovers, then what *can* you say "yes" to?

Now, addressing this hypothetically, we don't know the answer, but there is a wonderful concept in a relationship that we call the *third option*. It states that in relationships it doesn't have to be a matter of black or white, his way or her way. There is always an alternative, and part of the adventure in life and in a relationship is being able to find that third option.

---

*There is always a third option.*

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We don't need to speculate exactly what the third option might be for this hypothetical couple, one of whom wants to take on a lover. The important thing is, rather than responding with an emphatic "NO!", that the partner responds with an open-minded "yes" attitude such as "Hmmm, interesting, what do you have in mind about how that would work?" They might explore why that person wants to take on a lover, and on and on. In principle, though, there is always a third option, and when you promise to say "yes," you are committing to finding the third option. You're not necessarily saying "yes" to polygamy or polyamory or affairs, but wouldn't that be an adventurous and creative conversation to find the third option that fits that scenario? And we don't mean settling or sacrificing. We mean finding a creative solution that truly meets the needs of both partners, 100%.

### **The Fifth Promise: I promise to be your hero**

Life is challenging. Our journey is full of struggle and we all need a hero. Our partner, the person who loves us the most, who knows us the best, who we have a lifelong committed relationship with, needs to be that hero. They need to be our champion, our primary supporter, somebody who will be there for us 100%, unconditionally, no matter what. It's that kind of safety and support that is needed for *Radical Commitment*.

Being your partner's hero means that you show up when they need you, no matter what. Even if it's scary for you, even if you feel out of your league and over your head, even if you feel helpless, even if you disagree with what they're doing, even if everyone else is criticizing them, you will still support them, advocate for them, and show up for them. They don't need to "earn" your support; they deserve your support simply because you're in a committed relationship. You promise to be their hero, no matter what.

This concept goes back to being babies and feeling dependent and secure when our parents are there, meeting our needs. Feelings of insecurity start happening when our parents aren't on top of our needs and we end up crying for an hour because we're hungry. It is soothing and creates emotional safety when you really know that your partner is there for you 100%. They promise to show up and be your hero.

## Challenge Yourself

Each of these promises, when taken together, create *Radical Commitment*. They are also a stretch. They require effort. They are not easy. They are not automatic. This is what a conscious and radical relationship is all about. It's about making intentional choices that are unique in that they maximize your fulfillment as a couple.

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*The more you do it, the easier it will be.*

---

Still, many people look at these promises and say, "I can't do that." They make this choice because they are scared. But our promise to you is that you can absolutely do every one of them. It's like exercise. The more you do it, the easier it will be. You just need practice and discipline.

Choosing to love your partner even when you are mad at them or disagree with them; choosing to put your partner first, even when you feel pulled by your kids; taking responsibility, even when you're sure it's your partner's fault that you're feeling the way you're feeling; finding something to say "yes" to, even when you're not in the mood and it just would be so much easier to say "no"; and being a hero, even when it's hard, and you're not feeling up to it or when you're feeling like your partner doesn't deserve it—all of these things are stretches. They are not easy. They take effort. They are not automatic. They are conscious choices. And they will absolutely result in *Radical Commitment*, an essential ingredient of a *radical relationship* and of a *Radical Marriage*.





## Afterword: Welcome to the Radical Marriage Movement

### What Will You DO?

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*It's one thing to know what to do,  
it's another to actually do it.*

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It's one thing to *know* what to do, it's another to actually *do* it.

If you and your partner want to truly experience Radical Marriage you must develop the attitudes, rituals, and habits to make it happen. You are not going to live a radical life if you don't go anywhere and don't do anything. You cannot be passive. You need to define your dreams and go after them. You must create and implement the action steps to accomplish your vision. You have to go for it. We've provided a lot of recommendations and strategies, but you have to build them into your routine. You can't just read this book and put it down. You have to put it into action.

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*This book will not change your life.  
What you DO with this book will change your life.*

---

This book will not change your life. What you DO with this book will change your life (and marriage)!

Creating a Radical Marriage is like planting a vegetable garden. You can read books about it, but if you don't get out there, do some work and get your hands dirty, it's not going to happen. You must plant the seeds and make sure your garden has water and sunshine and everything else needed to nurture growth. And you can't just plant things

when you want to eat them, you must make the effort to create a plan and plant things ahead of time. Then, you have to pay attention, make adjustments and respond to obstacles and fine tune things as you go. To get the benefit you desire, your garden, like your marriage, must become part of your life and your lifestyle.

A Radical Marriage takes two and you have to do it with your partner. You must do it together. You must hold each other accountable. It's not easy and you must support your partner and allow yourself to be supported. It will take some work, but you can absolutely enter the next tier in the evolution of relationships. And it's soooo worth it!

### **Welcome to the Radical Marriage Movement**

As we stated from the beginning, *Radical Marriage* is a movement. It is a new paradigm where marriage is no longer seen as a drag, but as a portal to a world of freedom for you and your partner where you can be and accomplish much more as a team than you could as individuals. Make a conscious and concerted effort to incorporate *Radical Commitment, Radical Communication, Radical Intimacy, Radical Romance, Radical Sex, and Radical Living*, and do it together, and you will be well on your way to going beyond happily ever after and into the limitless possibilities and extraordinary fulfillment that await you in a Radical Marriage.

# Get Your Copy of Radical Marriage!

A message from the authors:

Thank you for downloading and reading this sneak peek of our book, we hope you enjoyed it so far!

Be sure to order your copy of Radical Marriage so we can share with you some amazing strategies that we guarantee you've never seen before to enhance-

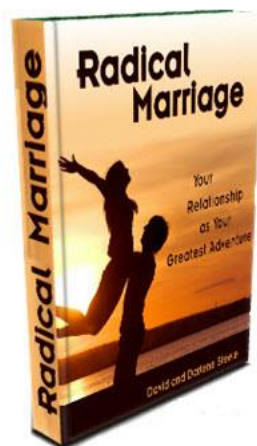
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Our best wishes for making your life together your greatest adventure,

*David and Darlene Steele*



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★★★★★ (12 customer reviews)

## Top Relationship Experts Praise Radical Marriage



**“Radical Marriage provides clear ideas, easy strategies to follow, and a ‘radical’ new paradigm for creating the relationship of your dreams.”**

*— Harville Hendrix, Ph.D. and Helen LaKelly Hunt, Ph.D. Co-authors of Making Marriage Simple*



**“Radical Marriage is an accessible and clear description of the steps for relationship success with many easy-to-follow strategies for making life and love better.”**

*— Don Ferguson, Ph.D. author of Reptiles in Love and The Couples' Manual*



**“Radical Marriage is for couples in good marriages who envision something wonderful for their future together. The Steeles have given us a manifesto and road map for marriage as a more perfect union.”**

*—William J. Doherty, Ph.D., Professor of Family Social Science, University of Minnesota, author of Take Back Your Marriage*



**“Radical Marriage is a pragmatic, how-to manual for courageous couples, presented with the grace and grit of years of experience both as a professional relationship coach and a humble and determined student of marriage.”**

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**“Is your marriage where you want it to be? This book will challenge you to take it to the next level, beyond where you ever thought it could be. Your marriage can be more – wonderfully more, extraordinarily more, radically more!”**

*— Greg and Priscilla Hunt, BetterMarriages.org*

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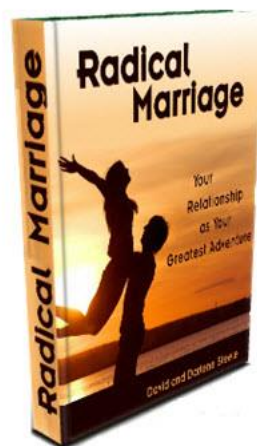
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Our best wishes for making your life together your greatest adventure,

*David and Darlene Steele*



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## About the Authors

David Steele, MA, LMFT, CLC, is founder of Relationship Coaching Institute, the first and largest international relationship coach training organization. David is a pioneer in the field of relationship coaching for singles and couples, author of numerous books, including the ground-breaking book for singles *Conscious Dating: Finding the Love of your Life and the Life That You Love*.

Darlene Steele, R.N. is Director of Training and Member Support for Relationship Coaching Institute. Darlene draws upon more than 30 years of marital experience and a practical approach to marriage and relationships to bring a unique perspective that complements David's for a powerful personal and professional team exploring and sharing insights and strategies for creating a *Radical Marriage*.

Together, Darlene and David are examples of ordinary, down-to-earth people living an extraordinary life through their relationship, passionate about each other and sharing the mission and message of *Radical Marriage* with other couples who want to "live beyond happily ever after."





## Appendix 1: Quiz: Do You Have a Radical Marriage?

Most couples don't want an ordinary, boring, routine relationship. They want excitement, fun, closeness, love. We need security, but we also need adventure. *Radical Marriage* is a paradigm for the next evolution of marriage and new territory for committed relationships.

Do you have a Radical Marriage? Take this quiz and see!

1. \_\_\_\_ Our relationship is unique and different from any couple we know.
2. \_\_\_\_ We are absolutely committed to each other and don't ever think or talk about not being together.
3. \_\_\_\_ We both take emotional risks and share all of our hopes, dreams, feelings, needs, issues, desires, and thoughts without holding anything back.
4. \_\_\_\_ We accept, appreciate, and love each other 100% as is.
5. \_\_\_\_ We consciously and continuously co-create our relationship.
6. \_\_\_\_ We resolve our issues and differences positively and without conflict.
7. \_\_\_\_ Our relationship and lifestyle is driven by a shared vision that we developed together.
8. \_\_\_\_ We have regular rituals and practices for maintaining our connection and enhancing our relationship.
9. \_\_\_\_ We have each other's back and support each other 100%, even when we disagree.
10. \_\_\_\_ We respond positively to each other's requests and never say "No."
11. \_\_\_\_ We both feel safe and loved, even when we're mad at each other.
12. \_\_\_\_ Our marriage seems to always be evolving, providing us on-going challenge and excitement.
13. \_\_\_\_ We always make decisions in connection with each other.
14. \_\_\_\_ We prioritize each other's needs and happiness.
15. \_\_\_\_ We both take responsibility for getting our needs met in the relationship.
16. \_\_\_\_ Our marriage is a role model and source of support for our family and

community.

17. \_\_\_\_ If we have a problem we don't settle for "stuck" and seek creative solutions and get outside support as needed.

18. \_\_\_\_ Our marriage is 100% positive and "I can't", "I won't", "It's impossible", and "It's your fault" are not in our vocabulary.

19. \_\_\_\_ We fall back on compromise as a last resort for resolving differences and it is rarely needed.

20. \_\_\_\_ We successfully fulfill each other's emotional, physical, and spiritual needs.

21. \_\_\_\_ We both consider our marriage to be our greatest, most important asset and source of fulfillment, meaning and adventure.

22. \_\_\_\_ We can enthusiastically, joyfully, and authentically declare to the world "*We have a Radical Marriage!*"

**Scoring:** While each item is important for a highly successful relationship, this is your unique life and marriage, and if you can answer #22 positively, congratulations, you have a Radical Marriage!





## Appendix 7: Radical Marriage Resources

What's next?

- ✓ Keep in touch! Access free Radical Marriage webinars, recorded programs, live events and more when you join our free Radical Marriage Network at [www.RadicalMarriage.com](http://www.RadicalMarriage.com)
- ✓ Keep up on the latest Radical Marriage info on our blog at [www.radicalmarriage.com/blog](http://www.radicalmarriage.com/blog)
- ✓ Visit Radical Marriage on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/radicalmarriage](http://www.facebook.com/radicalmarriage)
- ✓ Follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/radmarriage](http://www.twitter.com/radmarriage)
- ✓ Get a laminated copy of The Communication Map to practice Radical Communication at [www.TheCommunicationMap.com](http://www.TheCommunicationMap.com)
- ✓ Download your free Five Promises of Radical Commitment certificate at [www.radicalmarriage.com/5promises](http://www.radicalmarriage.com/5promises)
- ✓ For info about Radical Marriage coaching, classes, workshops, and retreats – [contact@radicalmarriage.com](mailto:contact@radicalmarriage.com)
- ✓ We welcome speaking engagements, media interviews and other ways to spread the word about Radical Marriage, just let us know – [contact@radicalmarriage.com](mailto:contact@radicalmarriage.com)
- ✓ Interested in becoming a Radical Marriage Coach? Visit [www.RelationshipCoachingInstitute.com](http://www.RelationshipCoachingInstitute.com)
- ✓ Want Radical Marriage coaching for your marriage? For info - [www.radicalmarriage.com](http://www.radicalmarriage.com)
- ✓ Comments? We'd love to hear from you – [feedback@radicalmarriage.com](mailto:feedback@radicalmarriage.com)