

The LCF Connection

February 2014

How to Nurture Long Term Love

Advice from LCF's Marriage Pros

By Candice Mast

As the shine on our wedding rings grows a little duller over the years, we might ask ourselves: how do we keep our marriages loving and strong? How do we keep from falling into routines that make us insensitive to the needs of our partner? How do we support each other as our lives go down unexpected paths? How do we continue looking for the good in our partner and nurture their best qualities?

Our church is full of couples with long-term, happy marriages. Have you seen Rob put his arm around Doris in church or heard Steve talk proudly of Phyllis's accomplishments? Have you heard Vicki laugh at Rueben's sermon jokes? We are witnesses to some faithful and fun marriages. At Valentines this year, what if we expand on the idea of spending one day focused on romance, and instead ask ourselves how we can make our marriages what God intended- a partnership of true love, respect, and faithfulness. To get us thinking, we asked a few of the long-team married couples of LCF: **What do you do that gives the most life to your marriage?**

Steve and Phyllis Swartz, married 38 years

- Walk most evenings in the spring, summer, and fall to debrief and buy a McDonalds ice cream cone
- Keep talking and talking and talking until we get an issue resolved. (Some issues have taken us as many as twenty hours of conversation—not all at once—until we have found the resolution.)
- Apologize regularly
- When facing difficult challenges (like a school term or trips away from each other or a meeting we've dreaded), plan a reward on the other side
- Do projects together (weekly housecleaning, folding laundry, cooking ahead for groups, lawn and garden work)
- Appreciate and benefit from our different ways of relating to God

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Bob & Bettyjo Zachrich, married 25 years

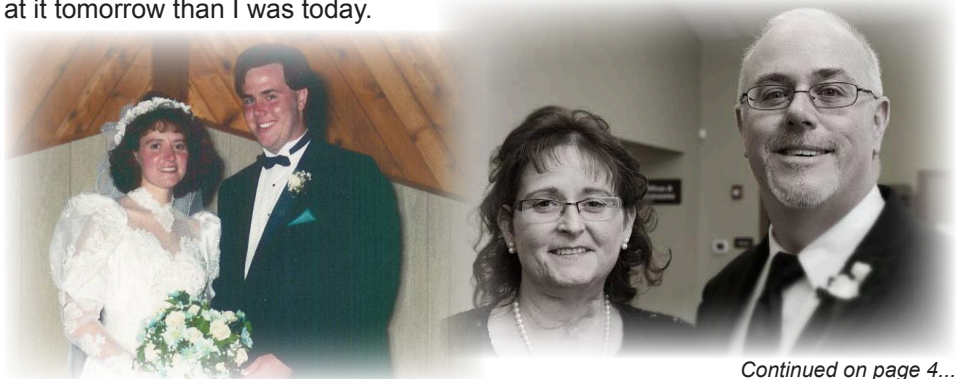
Live out Ephesians 5:33...*"Let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband."* When I say to "live this out", I actually mean in every single encounter that one has or will have with their spouse, this verse must be the standard to measure the action by. The problem is that we live in a culture that not only does not support this idea but is, in fact, hostile to it. Sadly, I have by no means mastered this either. But, when I am successful, my relationship with Bettyjo is solid. My goal is to be a little better at it tomorrow than I was today.



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Getting to Know... *Tim and Pam Shay*

Interview with Candice Mast



Where did you each grow up?

(Tim) I was born and raised in Springfield, Ohio.

(Pam) I was born in Hazard, KY, grew up in Springfield, and then moved back to Kentucky for several years. Tim and I were high school sweethearts who went our separate ways after graduation. But, ten years later our paths crossed again in Springfield. We knew it was meant to be and were married in 1994. We lived in Corbin, KY, until moving back to Ohio in 2004.

And what brought you to this area?

Our parents were getting older and we felt it was time to move closer to home to help care for them. Pam's job led her to Columbus, and family was in Springfield, so London was a happy middle ground between the two locations. We've been in London almost 10 years.

What do you each of you do for a living? And what is your favorite part of your job?

(Tim) I custom design and build wood furniture. After owning various businesses I finally made woodworking my fulltime business about 12 years ago. I love the creative and problem-solving aspects of building furniture. I love to take a customer's vision and bring it to life.

(Pam) I serve as Vice President for Accreditation & Institutional Effectiveness at Franklin University in Columbus. I work with all government and regulatory organizations to assure the University is operating within the required standards. Since Franklin serves students worldwide, I have the privilege of traveling to meet with regulators and get the necessary approvals and permissions. I also consult with other colleges, universities, and government agencies on a wide variety of higher education and business practices. I first went into higher education as a faculty member to share my love of learning and business with individual students 25 years ago. But now, with my focus on administration and consulting, I help influence a large number of students by working with other schools and government organizations worldwide to help them accomplish their educational goals.

Pam, I heard you have a doctorate degree! Can you tell us a little about your field of study?

I love to learn. And, I've been an entrepreneur since a small child. So I've always wanted to take the theory of business and education and teach others how to apply to their everyday life—either in their workplace or the educational institution. So, I've earned several degrees in business, culminating with my Doctorate of Business Administration from University of Sarasota/Argosy University with emphasis on strategic planning, leadership, marketing, and technology.

Tim, I'm curious, what is your favorite type of furniture to make?

I love all types of stand-alone pieces, such as desks, tables, hutches, and customized entertainment centers. Basically, I love building anything and everything. But what excites me is to design a unique piece of furniture for a client. My motto is "You dream it, I build it" so I help clients pick their likes and preferences from a wide variety of pictures and then I craft it to meet their needs. While there is a fun artistic side to woodworking, to me it is also a puzzle for problem-solving. I love combining the art and science to create heirloom pieces of furniture.

Do you have any pets?

Yes, we have a 2 ½ year old black lab named Jasper. He LOVES playing tug of war and playing with balls. He's a rescue animal and a big part of our family.

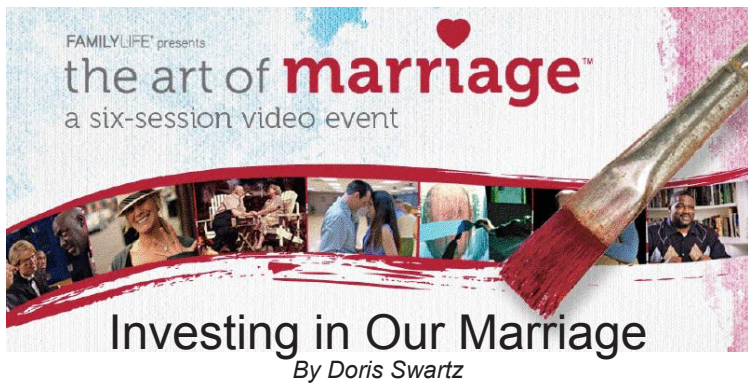
Are your families close by?

Many of our family members are close by in Springfield and Cincinnati. We are fortunate to get to spend a lot of time with our families including our large number of nieces/nephews and great nieces/nephews. We were fortunate to be able to care for Tim's parents in their last years before they passed. Pam's mom is our only living parent. So we get to spend lots of time with her including taking her on many of our trips.

What are your favorite things to do when you have spare time?

We love to attend auctions to find unique items to add to each of our collections—Tim's antique tools and Pam's antique kitchen utensils. We also look for great deals and stockpile items that may be of use to others someday. We've helped many family and friends set up housekeeping with furniture, housewares, and other items. We also enjoy cooking, especially when we can serve others. We've always cooked for large family events, church events, school fundraisers, and many other types of

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Last week Rob and I celebrated our 26th anniversary with a little getaway to a cabin in Hocking Hills. Anyone who is married, knows that another year of marriage to a loving spouse is something to celebrate. It does not "just happen". It takes a commitment to keep working at your relationship - learning, communicating, forgiving, and...loving!

That reminds me of what Rob and I did when we attended "The Art of Marriage" conference last September. It was held on a weekend that was super busy for us, with kids' soccer games, LCF's first night of worship, etc. We felt so busy and tired that we *almost* decided not to go. Thankfully we went and were so glad that we did! The video sessions were very well done and interesting. There were funny and touching moments, new insights, and good reminders. It helped us to treasure each other a bit more and to refocus on what we want our marriage to be like. The conference felt like a much needed breath of fresh air to our marriage.

Since then, it has been our desire to bring that same opportunity to you, our married friends at LCF. We are excited to be hosting the same conference here at LCF March 14 & 15. (Registration details will be coming soon.) We can't wait to attend again and hope that you join us! Please don't let the busyness of life prevent you from investing in your marriage and spending this quality time with the love of your life!

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food-related events. Every few months we have a cooking marathon to prepare several meals for the freezer. Not only is it timesaving with our busy schedules, but it's a great way to make sure we are eating healthy and spend quality time together.

What has been your favorite vacation of all time?

We are fortunate that I get to travel a great deal with my work and Tim often gets to join me. We both agree our trip to Alaska was simply amazing. It is truly a last great frontier—you can go hundreds of miles without seeing any signs of civilization! That's a rarity these days. We also enjoy cruises and train trips—a fun way to get to the destination and enjoy the journey.

What is something you have never done but would like to do some day?

(Tim) I've always wanted to sky dive or get a pilot's license so I can fly planes or helicopters.

(Pam) I'd love to write a book on something not related to business or education—I'm not sure of the subject yet, but I am always collecting ideas.

Reflections from My Quiet Time

By Claire Mast, age 10

Recently in my devotions, I read a couple of verses that helped me to see Jesus in a new way. It was Matthew 11: 28-30. It showed me in a whole new way that Jesus cares for me and wants me to see how I can just let my worries go, leave my problems behind, and take an easier path; one where I don't have to do everything by myself. I realized that my very hardest effort isn't enough unless I let Jesus take my hand and lead me.



It reminds me of one of my favorite songs "What a friend we have in Jesus."

"Oh what peace we often forfeit, oh what needless pain we bear. All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer."

One of my struggles right now is with pride. I love how the verses say "I am gentle and humble in heart." When I read that verse I felt completely relieved and I felt like I *had* found rest for my soul. It says "My yoke is easy, my burden is light." He is giving me an opportunity to help him with his plan. It should be exciting, not a duty just like when I spend time with him, I should look forward to it. Sometimes I just need to stop and be still and know that he is God.

Leadership Team Notes

Leadership Team defies polar vortex, shows up for meeting anyway

By Vicki Sairs

Bob Zachrich opened our January 13 meeting with our new gavel (a gift from departing elder Marcus Freed). We all felt very official.

After devotions and prayer, we met with Reggie Cooper, our new youth leader. He shared his vision for developing a youth program at LCF with goals that can be sustained even as the youth leadership changes. Reggie would like to hear from us as a leadership team about what our vision is for the youth of LCF, and we discussed things we would value in a youth group.

We like that Reggie is being intentional and thinking of the big picture, appreciate that he has ideas but also wants to hear from us, and look forward to more discussion.

Next we approved the 2014 LCF budget and talked about renewing building fund pledges. Rob shared his vision for small groups, and Reuben and Vicki said they'd be willing to lead a small group that would have the feel of a late-night book club that would meet once a month.

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Jack and Molly Rosati, married 29 years

- Pray together morning and night (which helps with the next item)
 - Don't go to bed angry (go to bed at the same time, no TV in the bedroom)
 - Acknowledge that you both will feel like you are giving 110% and the other is only giving 85%
 - I will not look twice at another (including online) or make comments on another's attractiveness (see Job 31:1). Fidelity.
 - A healthy life is a balance of work, play and self care. Think about how you can do these things together.
 - Be open to counseling
- TRUST is priceless. Cleave to one other; practice open communication with your spouse and choose them before your hobby, your friends, your parents, and your children.
 - When feelings wane, get back in fellowship with God and create the romantic times you would like created for you.
 - Don't criticize your partner in front of others or use negative humor about them.
 - Take time for recreation - family vacations create life-long memories worth spending time and money on.

Rueben and Vicki Sairs, married 35 years

- Share housework.
- Be two adults—one partner shouldn't have to play the parent role.
- Don't believe other people are having more fun.
- Pray & read the Bible together.
- Be MORE than parents. It is only one role, and it doesn't do kids much good to be all and everything, either.
- Be prepared to surrender, modify, and adapt expectations. There is no big book of *It Ought to Be This Way*.
- Be suspicious of books of marital advice. There are lots of experts who would like to run your life for you. Be the couple you are, the way you want to be, and, in particular don't be snowed by what appears to be super-spirituality that is represented in books—those couples get tired, crabby and juvenile like everyone else, and when they are candid about their real selves it is usually only selectively. Enjoy your life on your terms and allow Jesus to be Lord, and don't try to measure up, compare, or feel like you should be more like some artificial model.
- It's really helpful to sometimes practice 'relentless positivity,' designed to counteract taking each other for granted. Try sending each other five texts/emails a week, in which you tell your husband/wife one specific thing they did recently that really impressed you, or name a quality they have that you love, etc. The key is to be specific and also honest. We did that regularly for a short time and it was quite moving.
- "Marriage is a conspiracy. It's you and your partner against the world" (advice from a former professor). I have found a lot of comfort and truth in that observation.



LT Notes continued...

We have not been able to find a person willing to accept the call to be an elder, so we'll have two elders this year (instead of three); we'll also work at training young people for leadership roles.

Although we do not see women serving as pastors or elders, we would like to be intentional in inviting women into other leadership roles in the church. We considered whether we should have something like a church council or additional ministry teams, such as a congregational care team.

We'll miss Abraham and Naomi at our next meeting. They'll be in Kenya! Please keep them in your prayers.

The LCF Connection

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What did you think? If any of the stories in this Connection sparked an idea or opinion you'd like to share, email us at connection@lcfweb.org. Editors: Doris Swartz, Trish Eaton and Candice Mast
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