

## **The Argument-Free Marriage, by Fawn Weaver**

Forward by Gary Chapman

Most of us got married when we were 'in love'. We were carried along by euphoric feelings that we anticipated would last forever. We fully intended to make each other happy for the rest of our lives. But for many of us, life did not go as planned. The euphoric feelings evaporated and were replaced by feelings of hurt, anger, and resentment. Marriage became one long series of arguments with a warm oasis here and there. Unfortunately, many couples never find their way back to emotional intimacy. Some chose divorce, others resign themselves to staying under the same roof, but living separate lives. Essentially they are roommates, though they are likely sleeping in separate rooms.

God did not ordain marriage to make people miserable. God ordained marriage because He knows that "two are better than one". Marriage is designed to be a mutually loving, caring, supportive relationship in which both husband and wife encourage each other to reach their potential for good in the world. When this happens, life is beautiful. This is the kind of marriage most of us desired when we said, 'yes' to marriage.

However, there is one major factor that keeps many of us from reaching this dream. In a word, it is 'selfishness'. We are all ego-centric. There is a positive aspect of this – we feed ourselves, get proper rest, exercise and seek to keep our bodies healthy. But, when self-centeredness becomes selfishness, then, we view all of life with the question: "What's in it for me?" This attitude becomes a major hurdle when it is carried into marriage.

Selfishness is the opposite of love. Love is giving for the benefit of another. Selfishness is demanding that others meet my needs. Two demanding people; two selfish people, will never have the marriage of which they dreamed. The attitude of love is the foundation upon which a healthy marriage

is built. When both husband and wife are seeking the well-being of the other, they will build the marriage they have always wanted.

This kind of love is very different from the euphoria of the 'in-love' experience. You did not work to 'fall in love'. It simply happened. But once the euphoria subsides (the average lifespan is two years), then you must decide to keep love alive. This kind of love begins with an attitude; a way of thinking. Love says, "I choose to seek your well-being. How may I help you?" Every day, you choose to live with an attitude of love or an attitude of selfishness.

This does not mean that I give no thought to my own well-being. Marriage is always a two-way street. We give and we receive. However, too many of us are waiting for our spouse to love us before we are willing to love them. We have failed to reckon with the reality that love stimulates love. It does not matter who starts the process. But when I choose to love you, I make it easier for you to love me.

Selfishness leads to arguments in which each of us is demanding that the other agree with us and do what we desire. Love is seeking to understand the other's thoughts and feelings; to negotiate differences; to focus on solutions rather than on winning arguments. We respect each other as individuals worthy of our time and energy. Two loving people will create a healthy marriage.

Having read the book you hold in your hands, I am convinced that Fawn and Keith Weaver have chosen to walk the road of love. That is why Fawn can write about "The Argument-Free Marriage". You may be thinking what I thought when I first saw the title: "Really?" I have been counseling couples for over thirty-five years and not many couples have come into my office with an argument-free marriage. In fact, most of them are there because they are tired of arguing and don't know how to stop.

If you are willing to call a 'cease fire' on arguments for 28 days, and choose instead an attitude of love toward each other. I believe that this book will help you move toward the marriage you've

always wanted. Don't expect perfection, but you can expect growth. Fawn does not paint a primrose path. She is realistic in her expectations and in her advice.

If your spouse is reluctant to join you, don't try to force them. Rather, simply request that they walk with you for the first seven days, and then decide if they wish to continue. Love makes requests, not demands.

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