

February 2026

# GrowInGrace Marriage Newsletter

Issue No. 13



## Life Lessons I'm Learning by Laurie

Is it "yada, yada, yada" or "YADA"? ❤️

Seinfeld has an episode where they refer to casual sex as yada, yada, yada, yet if we look at the Hebrew meaning of the word Yada, it means 'to know intimately'. In Genesis, "Yada" is used to describe Adam "knowing" Eve. You're probably thinking, "Okay Laurie, where are you going with this?" I promise, if you hang in there with me, I will eventually land the plane.

The 'For Women Only' article this month references Emerson Eggerich's book "Love and Respect". Emerson writes, "Just as he should minister to your spirit to have access to your body, so, too, you should minister to his body if you want to gain access to his spirit". I read that and was like, "Hey, that idea is in the "Art of Marriage" study we did at our retreat in 2024, which covered 6-types of Godly Love. In session-5, Yada, Julie Slattery made some very key points. "Husband, you want sex in order to relax. Wife, you need to relax in order to enjoy sex". Also, this is REALLY BIG... Husband, you want sex in order to connect with your wife. Wife, you need to feel connected before you can have sex.

Okay, so here is what I've learned (*I'm bringing the plane in for a landing*)... this was shared by Karen Lorritts in the session, **SEX BEGINS IN THE FRONT OF THE HOUSE, IN THE KITCHEN!!** As we respect, honor, and work on our relationship, then it becomes a celebration in the bedroom. All I know, is that when Aaron and I are connected spiritually, emotionally, and physically [sexually and/or non-sexually] we can face even the hardest of times, because we are **united in Christ**. So for us, that means sharing thoughts regarding what we are reading in the Bible, praying for each other when we are apart, and praying together. Sharing our day with each other, and getting those hugs in 🤗. Do we always get it right? No, but we sure are having fun trying!! 😍 I hope you have fun trying also! ❤️

Happy Valentine's Day!! ❤️

Laurie

Sex begins  
in the  
**FRONT**  
of the house



## Featured Podcast

### - Family Life Today -

Bob Lepine & Dennis Rainey with Ted Cunningham

### Building a Fun Marriage

[<listen to podcast>](#) ... (Oct 3, 2017)



Ted Cunningham is founding pastor of Woodland Hills Family Church in Branson, Missouri. He and his wife, Amy, have been married for over 20 years, and have two children. He is the author of *Fun Loving You*, *Trophy Child*, and *Young and In Love* and coauthor of four books with Dr. Gary Smalley. He & Amy also recently co-authored *Come to the Family Table*.

Listen in and find out how to turn some of those little things that bug us in our marriage into the source of a lot of fun.

### THINK ABOUT IT – DISCUSS IT – APPLY IT

- 1.) Would anyone describe you as a fun-loving person? What things can prevent us from being silly and having fun?
- 2.) Ecc. 9:7-9 doesn't say "endure life" but to "enjoy life with your wife". Life can be a grind but Ted & Amy compiled a list of reasons that it's fun loving each other (*Fun Loving You*). List the reasons it's fun loving your spouse.

## Putting the “Man” in Manipulation

‘Ladies, do you know the difference between manipulation and “man”ipulation?

Probably not. Because manipulation is a real thing. And “man”ipulation is something I just made up.

Manipulation is a destructive form of control that’s abusive and toxic to relationships. That’s never okay in a marriage. I love what Tim Kimmel says in The High Cost of High Control:

God never intended one person to control another. He didn't wire us to respond well to it, either. In each of our hearts is an innate aversion to a person or persons from the outside compelling us to do things that primarily benefit them.

Did you catch that last phrase? Things that primarily benefit them.

We all do things to sway each other, to request what we need: “Pass the butter.” “What do you think about this shirt?”

I find Kimmel’s distinction intriguing. It begs the question: What if my wife seeks to influence me by focusing on things that primarily benefit me? Is that okay?

For example, sex ... food ... respect. Most men I know would be quite okay with these forms of “man”ipulation.

Obviously, when I say this I’m only being ... completely serious! Most men refill their happiness tank with a predictable short-list, and sex, food, and respect sit right near the top.

Emerson Eggerichs summarizes it this way in his classic book Love and Respect: “Just as he should minister to your spirit to have access to your body, so, too, you should minister to his body if you want to gain access to his spirit.”

Manipulation = tricking your husband into doing things you like = bad.

“Man”ipulation = influencing him by focusing your energy on things he likes = good.

So on behalf of your marriage, please never manipulate. But for the love of God and your husband, “man”ipulate us any time.

[Click to hear why the simple physical act of sex carries such emotional weight for your husband.](#)

**The Good Stuff:** “Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct.” ([I Pet. 3:1-2](#))

**Action Points:** Your guy may be an exception to this, but don’t assume that he is. Ask him. You may discover something good for him, you, and the marriage.

### Wifely Wisdom

*- The Bible tells us to love our neighbors as ourself (Matthew 22:39) The amplified Bible adds that it means ‘to unselfishly seek the best or highest good for others’.*

*Last time I looked, Aaron is my closest neighbor. Trivial as it may seem that means when he wants to watch the Super Bowl, I’m going to make him some of his favorite snacks and sit with him and keep him company, even though I don’t really understand the game. Have fun thinking about something you can do with/for your hubby! You’ll be glad you did. 😊*

~ Laurie



### Couples Corner

Send us your prayer requests

We’re in your corner praying for your marriage!



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# You're As Cold As Ice

*There's a spiritual battle going on, but Christ gives us victory by Aaron Eckard*

"A few Words of affirmation would help fill my love tank". Laurie texted me this as we sat on opposite sides of the living room at the end of a long day.

My heart was not in a good place and I didn't know why. I didn't even want to look in her direction much less say nice things at the moment. I didn't want to talk and wasn't sure how I even felt.

There was a lot going on in my mind and my heart, and I felt angry, alone and cold hearted.

As I tried to analyze what was going on and why I might feel the way I do, I reminded myself of the power that is available to me in Christ, just a word, a thought, or a prayer away. I slowly willed myself to want to be in a better place, and I could gradually feel a gentle warmth come over me and begin melting the outer layers of my frozen heart.

I reminded myself also how much I knew that Laurie loves me and how faithfully she prays for me. I unlocked my phone and looked for a Bible verse about a good wife and I found one.

Still not looking her way, as she sat there across from me, I texted it to her

"

"A truly good wife is the most precious treasure a man can find!" Prov. 31:10

As I reread the verse, my heart began to soften and now I remembered how much I loved her .. so I texted her a short but sweet "I love you".

I don't know what was going on in my heart that night, but once the Word of God came into the picture, everything changed, and we were reunited (and it felt so good).

-Aaron



## Love in Action!

*Valentine's Day is a great opportunity to express appreciation for your spouse .. but can also create unwanted expectations*

*Communicate openly and focus on meaningful gestures*

*Keep in mind quality time spent, acts of service or word of affirmation in a hand-written note go a long way!*



**Love** is patient, love is kind.

*It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.*

**1 Corinthians 13:4-5**

**AND FURTHERMORE,**  
**DID YOU KNOW?**  
*that a 6-second kiss is proven to boost bonding, reduce stress, and strengthen connection, fostering trust & intimacy ..*

*.. Experts advise focusing on the enjoyment of the kiss rather than strictly counting!*

## So I Married a Bank Robber

'I Do Everyday' Family Life ® - By Bruce Goff (1/12/26)

One time I discovered my wife robbed a bank. I was driving her car when I noticed a chain dangling from a pen in her visor. Now I'm no super-sleuth, but those chains are put on pens to keep them somewhere.

I confronted her and she confessed to everything. She had "accidentally" taken it from the drive-thru at the bank and intended to return it. I told a friend and he said, "So your wife robbed a bank?"

Yes! She did! Okay, maybe that's not the most charitable way to frame it.

Uncharitable framing—that's something I do to her way too much.

"You NEVER listen to me!" .. Really? Never? She's never once listened to you?

"You're so emotional. You're making too big of a deal out of this." .. Really? It's about some emotional ratio? Not the fact that she's upset?

Sometimes it's just how I frame it in my mind. She never gets enough done at home while I'm at work. She's just lazy and doesn't respect me. .. Really? You do know she's keeping your two little girls alive on a minute-by-minute basis. Remind me again how much work around the house you get done when watching the girls? (Hint: It's somewhere around none).

Let's try re-framing these charitably.

- "Hey, I noticed you seem distracted. Is something up?"
- "This is really affecting you. Help me better understand why."
- "I'm so thankful to God for a wife who gives so much of herself for our children while keeping our home from burning down."

There can be resentment underneath uncharitable framing. But the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 13 that love (or "charity" in the King James) is not resentful—rather it bears all things and believes all things. **Marriages need charity.**

It's not about creating excuses for your spouse's sin, but *changing the lens* through which you view your spouse. When you want your spouse to change, first try changing your framing. Ditch resentment and choose charity.

It's possible she just accidentally borrowed the pen.

[In this FamilyLife Today® podcast episode, Ted Cunningham encourages couples not to resent each other's quirks but to find humor in them.](#)

**The Good Stuff:** "I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." ([Eph. 4:1-3](#))

### Action Points:

- Think of a time when you framed your spouse uncharitably. How could it be reframed?
- I heard this from a pastor once, try reading 1 Corinthians 13 but replace the word "love" with your name. See if it still sounds true. (If it doesn't, you're not alone.)
- Pray that God would make what's true of love true of you.

✉️ [Receive the 'I Do Everyday' email daily <link>](#)



### Is This True of Me?

"[Aaron] bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" ... how about you?

*I Cor. 13:7*

### - Husband Hack -

When we began courting, I jotted down different observations and details I learned about Laurie .. like her **favorite color**, her **favorite ice cream**, or her **favorite movie**

I recently came to the realization that I don't observe things about her like I used to .. and I have to ask, why not?

Study your spouse & take notes as though you're trying to get an "A" on the exam 😊

- AE ❤️