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GrowInGrace Marriage Newsletter

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Life Lessons I'm Learning by Laurie

"Did You See That Score?!"

I really hate when I have to eat my words, especially since I just had oral surgery last week and I can't even chew food yet!

Why do I need to eat my words, you ask? Well it's because in April, in my 'Lessons Learned' column, I wrote that I'd rather have a root canal than speak in public. Since April, we have had 4 public speaking engagements .. the 2 day retreat on the "Art of Marriage" in Bucyrus, followed by our church's 2 day retreat on "Love Like You Mean It" in July.

This month, we talked on "Oneness in Marriage" at the *Faith and Family Revival* in Fairport Harbor, then the following weekend, we did a 1 day retreat in Cuyahoga Falls on the "Art of Marriage".

Whew!! That's a lot for someone who doesn't like to speak in public. But you know what I'm finding? The more I ask Jesus to help me, the more the focus is on Him and His Glory!

I know that He will do it for you too. Look at your life and ask Jesus "Where do I need to take a step of Faith and step out of my comfort zone?".

Right now the Score is:

Public speaking in Faith = 4

Satan making me doubt myself = 0

Laurie 💜



Featured Podcast - Java with Juli

Mike & Juli Slattery

5 Ways To Navigate Differences & Build a Stronger Marriage. #603

[<listen to podcast>](#) .. (April 13, 2026)

We were blessed to hear Mike & Juli on the 'Love Like You Mean It' cruise

For info or to register

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One of you is ready to leave early. The other is still looking for their shoes. Welcome to marriage.

This week, Juli and Mike are on stage at the Love Like You Mean It Cruise! Live and unfiltered, they talk honestly about how their differences have shown up in parenting, intimacy, and their pace of life—and how they've learned to let those differences draw them closer, instead of driving them apart.

Episode webpage: [Java with Juli](#)

THINK ABOUT IT – DISCUSS IT – APPLY IT

- 1.) Mike and Juli say that our differences are good. Why is this, and how can we use our differences to be better together?
- 2.) In marriage, we tend to try and change each other. What do Mike & Juli say would be the case if we were both the same?
- 3.) In the marriage relationship, we each have 'wonderful strengths' and 'annoying weaknesses'. What is the tip that is given to help us learn to appreciate each other's strengths and weaknesses? (see Phil. 4:8)

Your Unexpected Weapon

'I Do Everyday' Family Life ® - by Janel Breitenstein (9/1/26)

On the lookout for a great husband, I mentally rolled my eyes at "sense of humor" as a necessary quality. Sure, it'd be nice. But I wanted a guy who'd be a great father, a compassionate leader.

But by a happy accident, my husband has this uncanny ability to bring forth laughter in me to the point of tears. It's saved us, and me specifically, in the weeds of uncountable arguments, innumerable gray days.

It turned out to be like one of those things you get as an extra when you purchase a computer: "I don't really need Photoshop, but oh well." But then after a while you think, How'd I ever live without this?

Laughing, particularly at ourselves, hands us a better chance to stay loose and flexible for life's moguls. And that's pretty great news, because both life and marriage are rough.

A sense of humor can help forge a connection between us, even when our arms are crossed. It extends a healthy, stepped-back perspective. And it buffers the inherent stress of relationships, allowing us to relax around each other and move closer to that let-your-hair-down, intimate environment of authenticity.

Humor used correctly—rather than to belittle, as veiled criticism, or as cutting sarcasm—tears down walls, rather than each other.

Bonus: It might even get you silly enough to present random solutions that lead to actual creative problem solving. Employing a little nuttiness can strengthen the bond you two shared in the early days of your marriage, when life was less serious and more of an adventure.

And it follows in the footsteps of the Creator of laughter, doling out joy even in the toughest times.

So pull out your unexpected weapon—and lighten up.

Listen to this quick, minute-long episode of [Real FamilyLife® on why you should laugh more](#).

The Good Stuff: *"A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones."* ([Prov. 17:22](#))

Action Points: Get intentional in finding new ways to laugh with your spouse.

- Watch a favorite sitcom.
- Forward an insane YouTube video.
- Set aside a can-you-believe-this anecdote from your day.
- Read a funny book together.
- Work to make your spouse laugh, creating inside jokes for just the two of you.

Wifely Wisdom

*The amount of good in your husband depends on
YOUR ability to notice it*

LLE ♥



Send us
your prayer
requests

We're in your corner ..
and we're praying for
your marriage!

Couples Corner



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A Protective Barrier

Lessons From the Garden (Editor's Corner by Aaron Eckard)

"Whatever!" "I usually don't "whatever" weeds, but these things are tough"

I found myself muttering this under my breath, while trying to tackle these viney weeds that have overtaken our whole front bed. My lovely gardening partner, and I have worked really hard to try to eradicate these buggers, but try as hard as we might, we just can't seem to remove them entirely. Just when we think they're finally gone, they rear their ugly heads and show us that as deep as we dug, we still didn't get every last trace of the root.

Sin is like those weeds. It deceptively creeps in, so slowly that we may not notice it. When we don't give our attention to it's advances, before we know it, just like the beautiful flowering bushes in our bed, it's wrapped around us so tightly, choking the life out of us. It takes careful devotion of time and attention to break free, and release it's stronghold.

Devoting ourselves to God and His Word, trusting Him, and spending time walking in the garden with Him is like laying down a barrier of weed fabric, protecting the bed from intrusion above while starving the weeds below from the things that rob us of the nutrients that we need to grow.

Work smarter, not harder. Rest in the fabric of God rather than wrestling with your weeds! ♥♥

-AE



Love in Action!

*"See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that **no bitter root** springs up, causing trouble and by it, defiling many"*

Hebrews 12:15

Bitterness is a subtle poisonous weed that infects our heart towards both God and our spouse. Pray and ask God to reveal any areas where this weed has snuck into your heart, then wait quietly for His answer.

Sit down with your spouse to a cup of tea and have an honest conversation of any areas of bitterness between the two of you.

Include a lemon wedge if you want to emphasize the bitterness of sin



9 Words for Winning Any Argument With Your Wife

'I Do Everyday' Family Life ® by Bruce Goff (9/18/26)

Next time you're in an argument with your wife, I have nine words to shut it down. Ready?

"I think this is a blind spot for you."

I mean, what can she say? "No, it's not?"

Exactly. Checkmate.

I employed this tactic in an "emotionally rich discussion" with my wife. She had accused me of regularly not clearing my plate from the table.

I took it as an opportunity to unleash the arsenal I had been saving up of all the times I picked up after her. Her problem was rampant.

(That was my word for the moment, "rampant!" It just felt right.)

Anyway, (spoiler alert) the discussion didn't go well. And I hope by now you're learning from me what not to do.

An argument with your spouse is not a game to win. It's an opportunity to love.

One way we can love is by addressing our own blind spots. Jesus put it this way in Matthew 7:4-5:

"...how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye."

Besides a dish left here or there, my blind spots were keeping a record of wrongs and not counting it a privilege to serve my wife. That's log-sized (not to mention rampant). My wife leaving a mess uncleaned would be a speck.

So maybe next time you have an "exciting verbal exchange" with your spouse, try, "Let me make sure I'm understanding you correctly ..."

Seek to love them well and self-reflect.

Christ laid down his life for his bride (Ephesians 5:25). Certainly we can lay down winning an argument.

[Well over 50% of healthy communication is ... listening. Are you a good listener?](#)

The Good Stuff: "If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame." ([Prov. 18:13](#))

Action Points:

- Watch a favorite sitcom.
- Forward an insane YouTube video.
- Set aside a can-you-believe-this anecdote from your day.

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



- Husband Hack -

Conflict is unavoidable. Our uniqueness guarantees it.

We each have individual temperaments, personalities, upbringings, experiences, gifts, abilities and passions in life.

Those differences create the potential for conflict, but they also give color to life and enrich our relationship.

- AE ❤️