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GrowInGrace Marriage Newsletter

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Life Lessons I'm Learning by Laurie .. I mean Aaron 😊

Got Baggage? I sure do. Let me tell you about it.

When I met Laurie, I came into the relationship with so much joy. My entire life changed. I felt weightless and carefree, imagining myself barefoot, carrying a knapsack over my shoulder and having a piece of straw in my teeth. I was blissfully unaware of the load I brought along with me, and she was too.

We all have baggage, whether we want to admit it or not. Fear, anxiety, pride, arrogance, insecurity, selfishness. Over the course of our lives, we add various pieces to our collection thru our experiences and they shape who we are and how we interact with others. I didn't ask for some of the pieces of luggage I carry around, but I have them anyway. They're part of who I am.

We meet someone special and do our best to keep as many bags in the closet as will fit and when we get married, we hope to leave them behind for the new adventure ahead.

The marriage relationship unites two as one and one day we're both surprised to discover 2 closets full of all kinds of stuff we hoped we had left behind us. Ugh.

There are 2 ineffective ways of getting rid of our baggage. I've been working on #1 for years .. trying to help my spouse deal with their baggage. I look right past the log in my own eye and let them know how to remove the splinter I see in theirs.

Another approach is to try and convince or coerce our spouse to deal with our mess. Both of these methods aren't scriptural, we are to deal with the log in our own eye, only then can we see clearly.

The first step out of this cycle is some healthy biblical self-reflection. I realized how I had shifted the gravitational pull of our marriage to revolve around me.

After we attended the Weekend To Remember in March, I journaled, "I'd say 'life' gets in the way but what really gets in my way is 'me'. My selfishness. Somewhere along the way I got complacent thinking it's all about me." .. and there's one of my largest checked-bags .. P-R-I-D-E

The Good News: God knows we're not perfect. He loved us *while* we were still sinners. Christ died for the ungodly, even with all our heaping piles of ugly baggage.

Thru the power of Christ in us, as we learn to die to ourselves (and learn to value others), we need to humbly ask Jesus to help us put others first. He transforms us and helps us extend His grace and forgiveness to others.

It's actually quite a nice new piece of luggage we picked up when we got hitched. We both just need to see its value and cherish it.

The content in this article was adapted from Aaron's 2025 journal entries, Ron & Nan Deal's book titled 'The Mindful Marriage', and the 'Blended and Blessed Livestream 2025' by FamilyLife.



Featured Podcast

- Family Life Today - (Mar 10, 2025)

Dave & Ann Wilson with Nan Deal & Ron Deal

Unpacking Your Marriage Baggage - LLYMI 2025

[<listen to podcast>](#)

We all bring baggage into our relationships, but some baggage is heavier than others. Ron and Nan Deal explore the often unspoken burdens couples carry, including pride, the scars of abuse, and even the profound grief of losing a child.

We'll examine common but ineffective approaches to dealing with this baggage, such as expecting your partner to fix you or trying to eliminate their issues.

Discover the power of humility, the importance of submitting to God, and how trusting Him with our pain can lead to guidance, direction, and healing within your marriage. ☐



FOR WOMEN ONLY

“Sarcasm, Sighs, and Other Contemptuous Things”

[I Do Every Day <link>](#) 3/23/25 by Laura Way

“Fighting” doesn’t really describe my marital conflict style. By nature, my husband and I are both fairly soft spoken, easygoing, and conflict averse. That being said, we can quickly go from chill and calm to snippy and sarcastic—zero to 60 in seconds.

The thing is, sarcasm can actually be a form of contempt, the feeling that something (or someone) is vile or worthless. It can also take the form of eye-rolling, mimicking, and hostile humor. It says “**you** are bad” instead of “**an action** was bad.”

And contempt is absolute poison to marriage.

Read the full article [<link>](#)



FOR MEN ONLY

So You Want to Stop the Stupid Conflict

[I Do Every Day <link>](#) (3/25/25) by Justin Talbert

We were 30 minutes into the argument. The gloves were off.

At this point we were acting more like demons than humans. You resonate, don't you? Literal screaming. Name-calling. Warping each other's words to mean different things.

Then she opened the pantry door too fast. It smacked her right on the nose.

She whimpered, turned toward me, and buried her head in my chest. Then we went and watched a movie.

What?! I'll explain .. Read on [<link>](#)

Receive 'I Do Every Day' daily [<here>](#)

God opposes the proud but gives grace
to the humble ... and so do spouses
-Ron Deal (James 4:6)

Love in Action!



*Take a moment and think
about a time you and your
spouse fought over
something stupid.*

*Write them a note asking
for forgiveness (again)
and pair it with their
favorite snack or treat!*



Couples Corner

We're in your corner
praying for your marriage

Please pray for us as we
move forward leading this
Marriage Ministry

Dates on a Dime

Explore another culture

Pick a country, and then
find a recipe & movie from
it. Make the recipe at home
and stream the movie. As a
bonus, learn a few sexy
phrases in the country's
native language!

"Je t'adore" (I adore you)
- French



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