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The Realities of Your Relationship

By Michael Myerscough

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Relationship Reality

One of my aims in life is to break down any sense that we are alone, that our challenges are in any way unique or special. It's all just stuff that gets in the way of us being our best, but just like gum on your shoe, it can be scraped off.

Every relationship you get into is going to move through three nicely predictable stages. Romance is first up, being of course the absolute best bit. It's like the cherry on your cake, knowing you've met Mr. or Mrs. Right and loving everything about them. The next stage, unless you're taking some delusional narcotics, is the inevitable power struggle. This is the time when we start to establish whose needs come first in the relationship. Trust me, this is where it gets messy. Do you know that according to Barbara De Angelis there are four stages a relationship moves through as it hits this struggle? These are resistance, resentment, rejection and repression. The power struggle is a nasty, painful phase and potentially we squabble in way's we're not proud of.

The bad news is that using the examples we grow up with the best most of us ever reach is the stage of repression. We look around and realize there are no better options, we love the home we've built together, we've got mutual friends, and we're more comfortable than we've ever been. We then settle for what we've got using the tired refrain, "you just can't have everything" and "Oh well, it's really not that important". Well at this point I think it's really important to ask yourself who's the it you are referring to?

Potentially, we now have a relationship where we endure each other and live as roommates rather than lovers. It's the norm, most of the people around you exist in it so it's not surprising people feel a little guilty when they begin to want

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more. Fortunately for those brave souls willing to ask for more we've got the potential for co-creativity, a phrase coined by Seana McGee and Maurice Taylor in "The New Couple". This is where the relationship manages to evolve beyond the power struggle into adulthood and we get back to the place where we can ask ourselves what we can give to our partner rather than getting stuck in trying to get our needs met.

It's not a big deal and the skills you need are in no way complicated. Most of us don't need therapy; we just need strategies that lead to happiness. Take a look at my top tips for some easy to implement solutions. Let me know which one's work for you, I'd love to hear from you.

<http://www.thegreatrelationshipcoach.com/download/relationship.pdf>

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Prenuptial Agreements

By Johnette Duff

"Til death do us part" is still the language used in most weddings. Couples enter marriage with the hope of making a lifetime commitment. If this goal is not reached or if a spouse dies, the desire to be a couple is so ingrained that most will marry again.

The inability of the marriage laws to meet the needs of many couples makes the concept of a marital agreement quite positive, despite the bad publicity premarital agreements have reached. The freedom to structure a relationship should not be determined by laws that do not reflect the changing realities of family life in American today.

There is no firm tradition of marital contracts in our country because of the inherent resistance of comparing love to a business deal. Many civilized societies through the ages, however, have documented marital agreements with written documents.

Celebrities and the media have made couples aware of the concept of a contract executed between a married couple, whether terming it a premarital, prenuptial, antenuptial or postmarital agreement. The rich have known about them for years, but middle-class America, alarmed about the rising divorce rate, is anxious to know more.

Who Needs Them?

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Anyone about to enter a marriage who is concerned about the inadequacies of the laws in the face of today's social realities;

Anyone who is remarrying;

Anyone concerned about protecting the assets of children from a prior marriage;

Anyone who has a financially dependent parent;

Business owners, particularly of professional practices and particularly those with business partners, because a spouse effectively becomes a silent partner in the business;

Anyone with significant separate property in states where a spouse is entitled to a share of income from separate property.

Anyone whose intended spouse has significant premarital responsibilities, such as alimony, child support, or tax obligations.

Anyone cautious enough to prefer a written record of the ownership of assets to avoid confusion in the future from creditors or other family members.

It's not romantic; it's practical. And limiting a spouse's take upon divorce is far from the only purpose, despite the perception gleaned from the popular press. Doesn't it make sense to make decisions under the best of circumstances instead of during the emotional upheaval of a troubled relationship?

As with most things, there's good news and bad news about private marital contracts. The openness needed for such an agreement is good for a relationship; the implication of a lack of trust is bad. A marital contract can avoid expensive and emotionally debilitating divorce trials, but it's expensive to enforce any contract in court. Such an agreement will reduce to writing the agreement for division of property upon divorce, although it can prevent a spouse from obtaining marital rights upon divorce.

The love and the law newsletter is written by Johnette Duff, Attorney at Law*

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Ms. Duff is licensed in the State of Texas

Johnette Duff is a matrimonial attorney licensed in the state of Texas. She is also the author of three books on love and the law; *The Spousal Equivalent Handbook*, *The Marriage Handbook* and *Love After 50*. Ms. Duff has been featured on *Today*, *Good Morning America*, in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Self*, *New Woman*, *Smart Money* and *Modern Maturity* and has been a guest on hundreds of radio talk shows.

Preuptial Agreements

Can We Still Be Friends?

Feel Your Grief
Relationship-Making
Ten Ways To Become Your Teenager's Best Friend

How to keep up the SPICE in your Love Life.
Online Dating Secrets Revealed!
The First and Second Adam
How to Gain and Retain More Customers
How To Create HOT Information Products



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