

January 2012



# Marriage Matters



Great Marriages for Sheboygan County | 612 Center Ave., Sheboygan, WI 53081 | Ph: 920-783-3660 | www.Great-Marriages.org

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Pg. 2 The Editor's Corner
- Pg. 2 Moments and Memories
- Pg. 2 Celebrating Marriage Week
- Pg. 3 The Power of Words
- Pg. 3 *10 Great Dates: Date Two*
- Pg. 4 Upcoming Events, Seminars and Programs
- Pg. 4 Invest in Your Marriage

## GMSC Highlights Our Library and New Education Center

We are happy to announce that our resource library continues to grow in our new facility. We now have 106 different book titles, 30 different DVD titles and 14 different CD titles. Our lives are a process of continual learning. Learning to communicate and understand our spouses is so important. Come and check out one of our relationship enhancing resources!

### Here are some of the favorite resources at Great Marriages:

***The 7 Stages of Marriage***, Sari Harrar and Rita DeMaria, Ph.D.

Discusses the seven natural stages of marriage and how to enjoy both the challenges and pleasures of each.

***10 Great Dates***, David and Claudia Arp

Takes you through a series of ten dates to put life back into your marriage. Currently highlighted in our monthly newsletter.

***The Five Love Languages***, Gary Chapman

Explains the five love languages and how understanding both your own and your spouse's language can help you feel more loved.

***Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage*** (DVD set), Mark Gungor

Most popular resource in our library. A humorous presentation discussing the difference between the way men and women think and marriage conflicts.

***Now You're Speaking My Language***, Gary Chapman

Discusses ways to improve communication and deepen intimacy in your marriage.



You can view our award winning cable television show on WSCS, in the Sheboygan cable area every Tuesday at 9:30 am and Thursday at 8:30 pm.



**Our Education Center is now renovated and ready for use. We are excited to be able to utilize the area for all of our seminars.**





Marriage is like yoga.

-Linda and Charlie Bloom

Do you have a story about life and love for our Marriage Moments and Memories column? Married life has many surprises, joys, and challenges. What are yours? We would love to hear the secret to your success. It can be kept anonymous. Send your story to [editor@great-marriages.org](mailto:editor@great-marriages.org) or stop by our office.

Ultimatums and threats do more harm than good.

-Linda and Charlie Bloom

## Marriage Moments and Memories

### Rainbows

My two sons, Chris and Matt, were born fourteen months apart. While physically a most challenging experience, they ended up being best friends, a blessing for brothers that does not always happen. For that, we will forever be grateful. They shared space, love, and a history as well as this moment of male bonding.

When they were four and three years old, they were out playing in the backyard. As it got very quiet out there, I went to check on them. I found them in the middle of experiencing the male bonding rite known as "Peeing on a Tree". Amused and shocked, I walked up to Chris and asked, "Christopher, what are you doing?" He looked down and said, "Mom, I'm making a puddle." Then, I turned to Matt and asked, "And Matthew just what do you think that you are doing?" He looked up and said, "Mom, I'm making a rainbow."

Such wisdom... While we both may be doing the same thing, attitude determines just what it is that we are experiencing. My New Year's Resolution this year is to make plenty of rainbows.

JCM

### Not Kodak Moments

They were not Kodak moments.  
No one framed them in scrapbooks,  
For cameras savor happiness.  
And yet the moments in  
Which we became family  
Were moments of tears, pain and crisis.  
In those hard times,  
No one thought to snap a picture,  
Because we hoped to forget  
The times when you supported me,  
The times when I supported you,  
The times we held onto each other,  
Unglamorous, unmentionable,  
Unforgettable but essential  
In building a marriage.

*Marty*



Quotes were found in:  
*101 Things I Wish I Knew*  
*When I Got Married;*  
*Simple Lessons to*  
*Make Love Last*  
by: Linda and Charlie Bloom



## Celebrating Marriage Week in February



and become a fan of  
**Great Marriages**  
for Sheboygan County,  
and  
follow us on Twitter:  
at **gm4sc**



*Jim Brickman*

*America's Romantic Piano Sensation*

**Wednesday, February 15, 2012**  
**7:30 PM**

Jim Brickman, songwriter and pianist, will be performing a concert at the Stefanie H. Weill Center that will showcase his romantic piano music and will take place on February 15 at 7:30 pm.

Great Marriages for Sheboygan County has reserved 100 seats for the concert. For every ticket purchased, one free ticket will be given to the February 10 showing of *Out of Africa*. To order your tickets, contact the Weill Center at 920-208-3243 or visit [www.weillcenter.com](http://www.weillcenter.com). **Mention Great Marriages to obtain the specially priced tickets!**

**Reserve your spot now for a preconcert gathering** hosted at the Great Marriages Office at 6:15 pm. Refreshments will be provided and Love Letter packets handed out to make the evening special. **Reservation is required, so call Great Marriages at 920-783-3660 by February 8.**

# The Power of Words

“There is no more lovely, friendly and charming relationship, communion or company than a good marriage.”

— Martin Luther

“There is no remedy for love but to love more.”

— Thoreau

We need the ability to communicate between spouses and within the family like we need our body’s circulatory system. If we do not listen to each other, our relationships become lifeless.

We cannot change our spouses. The “you” and “I told you so” approaches are ineffective. At the right time, the “I feel” approach works much better than making a demand of your spouse.

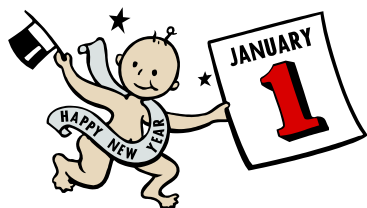
Remember to use praise (thank-yous and compliments) throughout the day. This will help defeat conflicts that arise. We have a tendency to find faults in our spouses instead of commenting on their many positive attributes. We need to use positive body language as well to maximize our praises.

## Tips on giving criticism:

1. Be soft and gentle
2. Ask questions
3. Persevere and pray
4. Listen to your spouse’s thoughts and feelings
5. Avoid judgmental attitudes
6. Give praise before and after a negative comment

Remember, it takes time to truly understand your spouse’s perspective. But, the discussion you have and the decision you make will produce unity in your marriage.

Source: <http://smalley.cc/i-told-you-so>  
Words Build Us Up or Tear Us Down Emotionally  
By Gary Smalley



## 10 Great Dates To Energize Your Marriage

By David & Claudia Arp

### Date 2: Learning to talk

#### Three Patterns of Communication

1. **Chatter**—basic, shallow, surface conversation, shouldn’t be the primary pattern
2. **Confrontive Style**—“you” statements and “why” questions, attacking in nature, not healthy
3. **Companionate**—primary pattern of a healthy marriage, sharing true thoughts and feelings with each other.

If you think you and your spouse use the confrontive style, try to think of a signal to let the other know that you feel attacked and don’t feel the need to defend yourself.

#### Feelings Formula

Tell your spouse how you feel. Say “I feel...” or “I am...” Then ask how they feel. Some may need a word list to get started. Remember, feelings are not right or wrong.

#### The Total Message

Listen to the whole message. Communication is 55% nonverbal, 38% tone of voice and only 7% words.

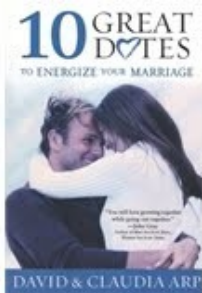
Don’t attack your spouse. Attack the problem. Trying to understand each other’s perspective will help resolve conflicts. Good communication takes time and effort.

#### The Date

Before the date, read the chapter and do the exercises. Dress up and pick a quiet place to talk.

During the date, discuss the exercises, sharing feelings about favorite topics and less favorite topics, talking about which feelings words to use, and how you feel about getting a compliment, receiving a smile, being touched by your spouse, etc...

After the date, keep complimenting each other, stop the confronting pattern and use the companionate pattern more, and practice expressing feelings.



Enjoy a synopsis from the popular book:

### 10 Great Dates

To Energize Your Marriage

The book outlines 10 great dates to take to rejuvenate your marriage.

## Upcoming Events, Seminars and Programs

### Invest in Your Marriage

#### Make a New Year's Resolution!

##### Some ideas to commit to:

1. Read a relationship book together
2. Attend a marriage course together
3. Make a yearly budget and discuss financial priorities
4. Set a time every week to talk and pray together
5. Commit to "regular" dates
6. As a family or couple, get involved in one or more service projects this year.

Pick one or more or make some that work for you and your spouse. Strengthen your marriage and enjoy the benefits every day of the year.

#### Song of Solomon

It's known the Bible provides wisdom for righteous living and spiritual growth. But it can guide us in our dating, courtship and marriage relationships as well. As you learn about the relationship of the Bible's most passionate lovers, you'll see how you, too, can find the deep emotional, sexual, and spiritual satisfaction that God created to be enjoyed in marriage. Please bring a Bible to class. Presented by Rev Andy Shanholtz.

**Date:** Wednesdays, 1/11/12-3/7/12

**Time:** 6:30-8:00pm

#### Four Seasons of Marriage

Which season of marriage are you in? Marriages are in a perpetual state of transition, continually moving from one season to another. This free, one day program is designed for all married couples to help them better understand and manage the natural cycles of marriage.

**Date:** Saturday, 1/28/12

**Time:** 9:00am—12:00 pm

#### Empowering Couples

This program helps create more depth and meaning in communication between yourself and your partner. It is a powerful, and practical guide to building new and lasting relationships. The course is packed with insights, exercises and examples to help you empower your relationship.

**Date:** TBD

#### 7 Principles of Making Marriage Work

Through a series of quizzes, checklists, and exercises, this class provides the framework for coping with differences and strengthening your marriage. Learn the seven principles that will reinforce the positive aspects of a relationship and help your relationship endure during the rough moments.

**Date:** TBD

#### How to Avoid Marrying a Jerk(ette)

This program is for adults who want to make smart choices in dating including: individuals who have experienced a divorce and are dating again; never married singles, and anyone who wants to know how to find a mate who is compatible for a healthy relationship.

**Date:** TBD

#### Prepare & Enrich *\*\* (call for appointment)\*\**

Unlike our regular monthly programs, this program is *not* a group program, couples meet with marriage mentors as a couple and it includes a marriage inventory that is specific to them. Prepare and Enrich is for both engaged couples who are preparing for marriage and married couples that may be struggling in an area or who just want to strengthen and enrich their marriage. This program is the most advanced couple assessment tool available. The couple will learn skills that aid in overcoming the challenges in order to build a happy, healthy relationship and strong marriage.

**NOTE: Most programs are free. Registration is required. Call (920) 783-3660.**

A HAPPY  
NEW YEAR