

First to Love

By Nicole Rose

A disgruntled husband complained to his friend about his unhappy, uncompromising wife. The husband, fed up, was considering divorce. His friend, however, didn't support his idea of divorce, and instead suggested that the husband "choose" to Love his wife.

"Love her?" replied the husband. "What on earth do you mean? We hardly speak...."

"I mean *Love Her.*" countered his friend. "*Really, really love her.* Make her needs more important than your own. What's her favorite movie, favorite flower or favorite food? Put a smile on her face! Try it and see what happens."

The husband did as his friend suggested, and to his delight, discovered that he was married to a very beautiful and caring woman.

Now I realize that not all unhappy relationships are resolved this easily, however, in a society where so many marriages end in divorce and many relationships barely "get past go" before they fall apart, this little fable yields a powerful message regarding the deeper ways of love and relationship.

A Course in Miracles states, "Only what you are not giving can be lacking from any given situation." The challenge is to bring to the table of our relationships whatever it is we feel is missing. If we want less conflict, then we must look inside ourselves to see, "Where am I conflicted?" If we want peace, we must be the one who brings it.

All encounters are opportunities to love and be loved—to recognize what is "real" when things feel difficult or painful. Those are "golden" moments—chances to forgive and thus transform and make holy what was once a grievance in the heart. With every resolved grievance, the heart opens further and loves deeper, and love, itself, is increased, amplified and glorified anew.

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