

PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

His Needs, Her Needs

BUILDING AN AFFAIR-PROOF MARRIAGE
(A SIX-SESSION STUDY)

Willard F. Harley, Jr.



a division of Baker Publishing Group
Grand Rapids, Michigan

© 2013 by Baker Publishing Group

Published by Revell

a division of Baker Publishing Group

P.O. Box 6287, Grand Rapids, MI 49516-6287

www.revellbooks.com

Printed in the United States of America

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—for example, electronic, photocopy, recording—without the prior written permission of the publisher. The only exception is brief quotations in printed reviews.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is on file at the Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

ISBN 978-0-8007-2100-8

The internet addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers in this book are accurate at the time of publication. They are provided as a resource. Baker Publishing Group does not endorse them or vouch for their content or permanence.

13 14 15 16 17 18 19 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

In keeping with biblical principles of creation stewardship, Baker Publishing Group advocates the responsible use of our natural resources. As a member of the Green Press Initiative, our company uses recycled paper when possible. The text paper of this book is composed in part of post-consumer waste.



Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Welcome to a Brand-New Marriage | 7 |
| How This Works | 9 |
| 1 The Love Bank | 13 |
| 2 Affection and Sexual Fulfillment | 17 |
| 3 Intimate Conversation | 23 |
| 4 Recreational Companionship | 29 |
| 5 Family Commitment and Physical Attractiveness | 35 |
| 6 Honesty and Admiration | 41 |
| The Wrap-Up | 47 |
| Emotional Needs Questionnaire | 49 |

Welcome to a Brand-New Marriage

What must a couple do to stay happily married?

Dr. Willard F. Harley, Jr., poses that question in the preface to his bestselling book *His Needs, Her Needs: Building an Affair-Proof Marriage*. Why? Because everyone wants a happy marriage, but less than 25 percent of couples actually experience that. By the time most couples have been married five years, they're wondering if a happy marriage over the long haul is even possible.

Marriage in the real world is a lot of things, but truthfully, we all know it isn't *always* happy. In fact, over half of marriages end in divorce and another one-third remain disappointing throughout life. That leaves about one successful marriage in five. Romantic love is fragile and requires special care to continue throughout life.

Most of us have very little, if any, training on how to make marriage work. Despite the fact that marriage is the deepest relational commitment we make in life, it often feels like we're just winging it—sometimes with disastrous results. Passionate and fulfilling marriages are not achieved by chance. Leaving things to chance creates problems.

You and your spouse can do what it takes to be in love with each other for the rest of your lives. The key is to rekindle romantic love for one another, and the key to that is learning to *identify and meet each other's most important emotional needs*. In this series, Dr. Harley will give you a program that will help you create and sustain romantic love.

Dr. Harley is a nationally acclaimed clinical psychologist, marriage counselor, and author. His signature book *His Needs, Her Needs*

has been called the best book on marriage ever! More than three million copies of *His Needs, Her Needs* have been sold, and there is no telling how many marriages have been revived, restored, or enhanced because of the principles Dr. Harley shares in this classic book. On their daily radio call-in show, *Marriage Builders Radio*, Dr. Harley and his wife, Joyce, offer practical solutions and suggestions to almost any marital problem. But perhaps the most impressive qualification he and Joyce bring to the topic of marriage is that they themselves have remained happily married for over fifty years. If you spend any time with them at all, you will quickly discover that their relationship continues to be fresh, vibrant, and fun.

Do you want a marriage like that? Or have you given up hope that a romantic and passionate relationship is even possible anymore? Well, Bill and Joyce Harley will not give up on you.

His Needs, Her Needs identifies the ten most vital emotional needs for men and women and shows husbands and wives how to satisfy those needs in their spouses. In this series based on *His Needs, Her Needs*, you'll learn to love each other more creatively and more sensitively, and you'll see that it's possible to virtually eliminate the problems that often lead to extramarital affairs and divorce. As you watch these videos and work through the sessions together, you'll be given the amazing opportunity to improve the present condition of your marriage—regardless of how great or how challenging it currently is.

As the director of this video series, I can tell you that since meeting Bill and Joyce Harley and working on these principles, my twenty-five-year marriage to my wife, Judy, has never been sweeter. I appreciate the Harleys—and I'm sure you will too.

John Grooters

How This Works

The Group Experience

- ◇ *Step 1: Watch the videos and learn from Dr. Harley and his wife, Joyce.*

These videos were produced in a style that simulates how the Harleys would teach if they could personally lead your small group. By filming with three real-life couples (one in their twenties, one in their thirties, and one in their forties), they were able to share with and react to couples who were willing to engage in this process.

- ◇ *Step 2: Engage in small group discussion.*

Real-life marriage counseling is a private encounter—few couples want to reveal their marital problems to a group. Therefore, it is important that your small group agree to some basic ground rules going into this study to protect each other's privacy.

The Personal Experience

- ◇ *Step 3: Work on this individually.*

Do your homework. Each of you should have your own participant's guide, and you'll find that some questions are specifically designed for you as individuals. Take the time to answer those questions. It would also be helpful to have your own copy of *His Needs, Her Needs*.

GROUND RULES

Atmosphere of Respect

Please remember to always be respectful of your spouse. Nobody should hear you fight! Also, remember that no marriage is perfect. You are not trying to outshine or compete with the other couples in the room. We are here to encourage and support one another, to build up marriages that are blessed by God.

Spousal Privilege

In a courtroom, the private conversations between a husband and wife are not permitted to be aired publicly or entered as evidence. If it's not appropriate in the courtroom, it's not appropriate in the classroom. Group time is not the time for you to air the dirty laundry of your marriage, and particularly not the time to criticize or condemn your spouse.

Confidentiality

What happens in the group stays in the group. By treating one another with respect and confidentiality, you will create a true sense of community and an honest bond between couples. Anything shared outside the group becomes gossip. Don't go there.

Professional Supervision

A note on professional supervision or counseling: if you find yourself or your spouse emotionally upset throughout this process, or if you find yourself reluctant to provide honest reactions, please seek professional supervision. Your pastor, for example, should be able to guide you to a qualified professional.

There are three questionnaires that will be helpful as you work through these sessions. You'll find the first one on page 49, and the other two are available as free downloads at Dr. Harley's Marriage Builders website (www.marriagebuilders.com). Take the time to fill out these questionnaires during the appropriate weeks.

The Together Experience

◇ *Step 4: Work on this together.*

Schedule a date night later in the week when you discuss your homework with one another. For each of the next six weeks (at least), designate a date night when the two of you will share your answers or surveys and talk through the questions in the "To Consider Together" section.

These may well be the most focused and informative conversations you've had with one another since your first date!

What goes on for the rest of your date night is up to you. If you have kids, they are not invited. Get a babysitter.

Good Old-Fashioned Follow-Through

Dr. Harley says that he doesn't believe in "insight therapy" as an effective way to resolve marital conflict—he believes in "action therapy." Insight is a good beginning, but it's what you do that solves your problem.

If a doctor prescribes an antibiotic and you agree that it would kill an infection you have but never actually take the medicine, you will never experience its benefits. It is easy to just listen and agree with sound advice. It's a whole different thing to put it into practice.

Decide to practice this teaching, not just learn it. It's well worth the effort!

The Love Bank

The purpose of this series is to teach you how to discover and meet each other's most important emotional needs. When you were first married, you most likely assumed that your new life partner would automatically meet certain emotional needs. For a variety of reasons, it's possible that you have become disappointed—perhaps disappointed enough to be tempted to let someone else meet your needs. Husbands' and wives' needs are so strong that when they're not met in marriage, we are tempted to go outside of marriage to satisfy them.

Aside from the risk of an affair, though, there are two other important reasons the most important emotional needs of a husband and wife should be met by each other. First, marriage is a very special relationship. Promises are made to allow a spouse the exclusive right to meet some of these important needs. Spouses with unmet needs are left to go through life without ethical alternatives for fulfilling those needs.

But there is a second reason: when you meet each other's most important emotional needs, you create and sustain a feeling of love for each other that is essential in a successful marriage. That feeling is called *romantic love*. Dr. Harley explains how to achieve that kind of love in this session.

- ◇ *Watch the Session 1 video (19:00).*
- ◇ *Group Discussion Questions*
 1. What do you think of the concept of a Love Bank? How would you describe it?

 2. How do the people in your life make deposits or withdrawals in your emotional memory—your Love Bank?

 3. Share with the group how you first met your spouse, and recall the way Love Bank deposits were made in the early days of your relationship.

 4. Share some other times in your marriage when your spouse made some significant deposits in your Love Bank.

 5. What could your spouse do to make you happiest?

 6. Dr. Harley says there is one person that God wants you to care for more than any other. What do you think of this?

7. Read Philippians 2:3–4 out loud. How do you think this verse applies to a marriage relationship?

8. What did you find most helpful in this week’s video session?
Most challenging?

◇ *For Him and Her—The Emotional Needs Questionnaire*

This week, take some time to complete the Emotional Needs Questionnaire found on page 49. This questionnaire is designed to help you determine your most important emotional needs and evaluate your spouse’s effectiveness in meeting those needs.

Note: you can also find a copy of the Emotional Needs Questionnaire available for download free of charge in the “Questionnaires” section of the Marriage Builders website (www.marriagebuilders.com).

◇ *To Consider Together*

1. Review your Emotional Needs Questionnaires with one another.

2. How do each of you make key deposits in your Love Bank?

3. How do each of you make withdrawals from your Love Bank?

4. How did each of you prioritize your top ten list? Explain why you made the choices you did.

*For more insight into the Love Bank and the importance of meeting each other's emotional needs, see chapter 2 in Dr. Harley's book **His Needs, Her Needs**.*

Affection and Sexual Fulfillment

2

The thing she needs the most is *affection*. While this may not be true for every woman, Dr. Harley has found it to be the number one emotional need for *most* women. Would it surprise you to learn that this isn't true for most men?

The only known aphrodisiac is testosterone, and generally men have more of it in their bloodstream than women. So, for men, *sexual fulfillment* is nearly always at the top of their list of emotional needs.

Learning to meet one another's needs starts with an open and honest discussion of these biological and spiritual realities.

◇ *Watch the Session 2 video (23:16).*

◇ *Group Discussion Questions*

1. Dr. Harley says that for most women, affection is as critical an emotional need for them as sexual fulfillment is for men. What did you think when you heard that statement?

2. Dr. Harley suggests that a wife should make a list of affectionate acts that she would consider to be impressive, things

that would make Love Bank deposits. Women: what might you put on that list? (Men: how are you doing in relation to the things your wife is listing?)

3. In *His Needs, Her Needs*, Dr. Harley encourages men to start practicing the affectionate behaviors their wives list until they become habits. How do you think such practice might help a man become more creative in the future?

4. Dr. Harley says, “True affection is nonsexual.” What do you think about that? Is it realistic for men to show true affection with no ulterior motives? Why or why not?

5. Dr. Harley asked the question, “Why have sex?” How would you answer that question?

6. What did you think of the suggestion that sex should be scheduled because it has a hard time being spontaneous in marriage?

7. What did you think of Joyce’s observation that there’s often a lack of respect in our culture for the differences between men and women?

8. What did you find most challenging about this week's lesson? Most encouraging?

◇ *Questions for Him*

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being "very affectionate," how affectionate are you toward your wife? How do you think she would rate you?
2. In what specific ways do you show your wife affection? Would you be willing to have her coach you in how to show her more affection in the ways she really likes?
3. Do the primary differences in sexuality between the average man and woman apply to you and your wife?
4. Do you feel entitled to have sex with your wife because you have made a commitment to have an exclusive sexual relationship with her? Has that feeling ever kept you from doing what it takes to motivate her to make love more often (i.e., to be more affectionate and make the experience more enjoyable for her)?
5. According to Dr. Harley, a woman is aroused by her husband's affection, attentiveness, warmth, kindness, and tender sensitivity. Do you consistently try to develop and express

these qualities? What do you think your wife would say in answer to this question?

◇ *Questions for Her*

1. Is affection as important to you as Dr. Harley suggests it might be? Explain.
2. What are ways that you feel most cared for by your husband? If you're not getting enough affection from your husband, are you willing to patiently coach him?
3. Do the primary differences in sexuality between the average man and woman apply to you and your husband?
4. What could your husband do to make you feel more emotionally bonded? To make you feel that he truly cares about you? If your husband did these things, would you find it easier to make love with him?
5. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being "very satisfactory," how would you rate your sexual satisfaction with your husband? How do you think he would rate you?

◇ *To Consider Together*

1. Do you need to show more affection to each other? What is stopping you from being more affectionate right now?
2. Make a list of “Affectionate Habits to Create” and a list of “Affectionate Habits to Avoid.” Practice being affectionate until it become spontaneous and almost effortless to you.
3. Dr. Harley warns men to avoid any sexual experiences that do not involve their wives—especially pornography. There are many reasons for this warning. Think of a few. Do you agree or disagree? Share with each other how you feel about this statement.
4. Dr. Harley says that your sexual relationship is something that deserves to be scheduled on your calendar. What do you think of this suggestion?

For more insight into meeting each other's needs for affection and sexual fulfillment, see chapters 3 and 4 in His Needs, Her Needs.