

Life, Love and Family Daily Fact Sheet
Dr. Tim Clinton

“Transforming Your Marriage”

- **5 Steps for Transforming Your Marriage** (Clinton & Trent, 2009):
 - **Reframe Your Marital Story**—identify any problems that have led or may lead to disaffection in your marriage. Any number of things can lead to your love growing cold, including feeling unappreciated by your spouse or having expectations for your spouse that he/she is unable or unwilling to meet.
 - **Respond to Each Other as Christ Would**—have a heart of grace and charity. Be sure that you are gentle, supportive, and kind to your spouse. Invest real time in and attention to him/her. Reduce your criticism and negative interaction with one another and increase positive and emotionally invested communication.
 - **Find a Marriage Mentor**—believe it or not, the most stable and strong couples have also gone through dark periods. It is wise for a couple battling disaffection to learn and gather support from experienced couples who have been there—and who have successfully found their way back.
 - **Have a Pursuable Dream for your Marriage**—having a dream for your marriage means you set specific goals and expectations that you both share and agree to. It is never too late to create a marital dream!
 - **Remember What God Has Done**—God gives us a spouse so He can work through him or her to create in us an image more like that of Christ. As you work together on your marriage, don’t lose focus on your autonomous personal development. Your sanctification process of becoming more like Christ is crucial, and the marital union should play a constructive, not destructive, role in it.

- **Making Deposits into a Love Bank** (Clinton & Trent, 2009):
 - You can’t withdraw money from a bank account where you have not made a deposit. Love is often viewed in the same way.
 - Love banking involves making more emotional deposits than taking emotional withdrawals from a relationship.
 - Recent research shows that couples need between four and twenty positive interactions to outweigh one negative interaction.
 - A lot of marital conflict and struggle results when one spouse feels “used”—is giving while the other is only taking.
 - 1 Corinthians 13 is known as the great “love chapter” in the Bible. Couples would do well to memorize and live out God’s instruction found there. To have a secure and healthy relationship, marriage partners should display the following positive characteristics:
 - Forgiveness
 - Patience

- Kindness
 - Love of truth
 - Loyalty at all costs
 - Belief and faith in partner
- To have a secure and healthy relationship, marriage partners should not display the following negative characteristics:
 - Jealousy
 - Envy
 - Selfishness
 - Irritability
 - Holding grudges
 - Disrespect
- **Quotes:**
 - *“Chains do not hold a marriage together. It is threads, hundreds of tiny threads which sew people together through the years.”*—Simone Signoret
 - *“The art of love is largely the art of persistence.”*—Albert Ellis
 - *“Let the wife make the husband glad to come home, and let him make her sorry to see him leave.”*—Martin Luther
 - *“Trials teach us what we are; they dig up the soil and let us see what we are made of.”*—Charles Spurgeon
 - *“Love is a better teacher than duty.”*—Albert Einstein
 - *“Keep love in your heart. A life without it is like a sunless garden when the flowers are dead.”*—Oscar Wilde
 - *“Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired, and success achieved.”*—Helen Keller
 - *“The course of true love never did run smooth.”*—William Shakespeare
 - *“It is not a lack of love, but a lack of friendship that makes unhappy marriages.”*—Friedrich Nietzsche
- **Key Thoughts** (Clinton & Trent, 2009):

- Disaffection refers to the negative transformation of marital love and commitment—the process by which love grows cold and the desire to leave the marriage or hurt one’s spouse replaces former love.
 - Often disaffection involves an unintentional severing of emotional ties of love and affection.
 - All marriages go through times when love grows cold or lacks the depth it once had. When marriages get into trouble both partners hurt, and many times they can’t even pinpoint what went wrong.
 - If you are willing to step back and review your marital story, you will usually find a pattern of thoughts and behaviors that led to the disaffection.
 - Since harmful patterns are predictable, you and your spouse can work to stop them and save your marriage. More than just keeping your marriage afloat, you can reverse the process and breathe new life into your relationship.
- **Verses:**
 - *“Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”—1 Corinthians 13:4-7*
 - *“Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun.”—Ecclesiastes 9:9*
 - *“Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.”—Colossians 3:14*
 - *“Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.”—Ephesians 5:33*
 - *“But the Lord said the Samuel, ‘Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.’”—1 Samuel 16:7*
 - *“He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord.”—Proverbs 18:22*
 - *“For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.”—Genesis 2:24*

Endnotes

Clinton, T. & Trent, J. (2009). The quick-reference guide the marriage & family counseling. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.