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INTRODUCTION

Marriage, at its most basic foundation, is a sexual contract. Think about it. When a couple stands at the altar and says, “I do,” what they are essentially saying is “I’ll DO you, you’ll DO me, and we won’t DO anybody else!” While marriage has many other wonderful, challenging, and fascinating aspects, it is first and foremost a sexual agreement.

“That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.” - Genesis 2:24

Oh I know, I know, there is more to marriage than just sex...just as a house is much more than its concrete foundation. Indeed, the house may have many beautiful rooms that contain countless valuable treasures of far more interest and allure than the foundation. But remove the foundation and that house will come crashing down—no matter how beautiful the rooms or valuable the contents inside.

Yes, there is more to marriage than sex. There is love; but you don’t need a marriage license to love someone. There is commitment; but you don’t need a marriage license to be committed to someone. There are financial considerations; but you can totally support someone financially for the rest of their life without the need of a marriage license. There is also friendship; but you can be the best friend in the world to someone without marrying him or her. There are even spiritual considerations and perspectives like serving God together; but you don’t need a marriage license to do that either. Only when it comes to sex does God require the covenant of marriage.

Who would have ever thought that something so wonderful, energizing and enjoyable—an act designed to bind two people together for life—could turn into such a focal point of frustration, strife and misery for so many millions of couples? And while there are many aspects of the sexual journey that can be problematic, one of the greatest frustrations is often rooted not in a question of how, why or where, but simply: When?

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The focus of this book is not about *how to have sex*. There are more than enough of those books already published. And for the record, in my opinion, those books seem to generate more frustration than help. They may advocate sexual positions that would require one to be a yoga master. Or they may suggest sexual activities that most normal people would never think of in three lifetimes. While these writers believe they're sharing the recipe for supernatural ecstasy, oftentimes what they are suggesting only triggers the gag reflex.

And seriously. Why do we need all these "How To" sex books in the first place? Good Heavens, we're not talking about playing the violin here! The act is really not all that complicated. I mean, even our most intellectually challenged ancestors, as far back as the beginning of time, have easily figured it out. And here's a more modern question for you: When your 16-year-old daughter goes out on a date, are you happily thinking, "Oh, sex is waaay too complicated for them to figure out, so there's nothing to worry about"? Hardly.

Then we have the idiots who advocate for lots of sex with different people, all in an effort to get "good" at it. Please. How about *not* shredding your heart to pieces, skipping the STDs, and just marry ONE person—and get good at it WITH THEM?? Again, this is really not all that complicated. But I digress...No, this book is not about the *how*, this is about the all-important and elusive: *When*.

The Bead Method

When I heard about Carolyn Evans' Bead Method, my immediate response was, "This is amazing! Finally, a clear, simple and fun way to deal with the initiation/response problem!"

Any couple that follows The Bead Method as she describes it, or adapts a version of their own, can finally put to rest this age-old problem of initiation/response. And if we can reduce or even eliminate the tension caused around the *initiation/response* scenario, we will take a major step in helping marriages to succeed. It's about becoming intentional about your sex life and, in turn, creating the generous marriage we all desire.

In the pages that follow, you will hear a little more from me about the whys of men, women, and sex in a marriage. After that, I'll turn

it over to Carolyn to tell you in her side-splitting, hilarious way, how she developed The Bead Method completely by accident and how it transformed her struggling marriage. Then she'll fill you in on the How-To's of The Bead Method so that you, too, can use this simple, yet profoundly effective way to respond to the age-old challenge of: *When*.

—Mark Gungor

PART

1

sex in a
marriage

The Problem with Initiation and Response

There used to be a popular phrase back in the 50s and 60s that went, “The key to a man’s heart is through his stomach”. Sadly, whoever coined that phrase was several inches too high. And while it is true that a woman is much more likely to be interested in a man’s heart and mind than what’s below his waistband, she is unlikely to reach the one without inspiring the other first. I could apologize for this, but it’s not my fault. It’s just the way it is.

Many women recoil at the idea that sex is so central to marriage. I believe this has a lot to do with sexual promiscuity. Often, a woman has had sex so many times before marriage that she comes to believe sex has little or nothing to do with the marriage itself. Ironically, it is the man who has floated this misguided assumption. Every time a single guy has sex with his girlfriend, he unwittingly (more like stupidly) is saying to her, “Hey, sex has nothing to do with marriage”. Then this same guy will marry the girl, only to be horrified later that she does not give sex much priority in their marriage. Oh, he bitterly complains about it and even criticizes her for it, but he was the idiot who brought this understanding into the relationship.

The Cialis Generation

You don’t need to read many articles about sex before you come across the idea of the need for “spontaneity”. One magazine after another prints articles that exhort and instruct couples in how they can “recapture the spontaneity” in their sex lives.

But what if they are missing the point? What if it is not spontaneity, but rather *intentionality* that couples should be focused on?

Most people are aware of Viagra, that little blue pill that helps men overcome problems with erectile dysfunction. But there is

another type of medication used to treat E.D. called Cialis. You see, one must take Viagra 15 to 30 minutes prior to sex, but Cialis is something you take every day so you can be ready at any given moment, “because one can never be sure when the urge for sex will strike!”, much like one can never be quite sure when or where lightning will strike.

Sadly, today we have created what I call “The Cialis Generation” – people who are waiting for sexual magic to strike at any given moment. Desperately seeking *spontaneity* when what they should be focused on is *intentionality*. These are the people most likely to watch the ice age form around them and completely freeze up their sex lives. Instead of being intentional about having great sex, they sit back and wait for spontaneity to pay a visit.

If there is one thing I have noticed about people who have great sex lives it is this: *They have sex on purpose*. They don’t wait around for magic to strike. They are intentionally striking the magic. This, in part, is what The Bead Method is all about.

But even intentionality can have its pitfalls, the biggest being the challenge of *initiation* and *response*.

Initiation

For most couples, the sexual advance is initiated by the male. It would be great if his desire were driven solely by his passion, love, and care for his spouse—the kind of mind-numbing sensitivity and tenderness that many women fantasize about while reading romance novels. But oftentimes, it is driven by his physical need for a sexual release. That’s just how it is. Oh, he will wrap it in as much passion, love and tenderness as he can possibly muster at the time, but that doesn’t change the fact that he needs a release. And I mean: *He needs a release!* If women could feel for only five minutes the intense physical misery a man feels when in need of a sexual release, I dare say they would be *much* more compassionate in this area. And maybe not so quick to relegate their husbands to lower life forms, say like a swine of some sort. At the same time, if a man could feel how awkward and difficult it is for a woman to just “flip” on her sexual switch, he would be much more understanding. But I’m getting off-track here...back to initiation.

So, driven by his physical need, he steps out and offers his version of initiation. For some, this advance is not very clear.

“Hey, you wanna snuggle for a while?”

Others are a bit more direct with, “Good lord, woman! I need to get laid or I’m gonna die!!” (Naturally, the latter version is not likely to generate the emotional connection his wife is hoping for, but at least he is clear.)

No, the *real* problem lies with the vast majority of men who are *not* clear. They think that their subtle hints are super-obvious, but they are obvious only to them. His spouse doesn’t pick up on the hints and goes along her merry way. The result: He feels rejected, stops exhibiting kindness, becomes cold and critical towards his wife, who doesn’t understand his problem. Indeed, she is probably asking herself, “What’s his problem?!” and then retaliates in many a varied way (too many to list here), causing a great divide to settle in-between them.

Ah yes...the problem of initiation. And you thought that only happened in your marriage.

Response

Next comes the issue of response. Because often, even if the initiation is clear, the response quickly becomes the problem. You see, when a man is suggesting sex, he is not suggesting:

- a) Later tonight.
- b) When you feel pretty.
- c) After the cares of life have settled.
- d) Or when Hell freezes over.

No, he is suggesting RIGHT NOW!

The Beatles said it the best. No, not the female favorite, “All We Need is Love”, but the more male accurate, “Why Don’t We Do IT in the Road”. You see, when a man is out with his wife, flirting with her as they pick up items at the grocery store, she may be thinking, “He’s wanting some loving tonight.” When actually he’s probably thinking, “I just saw this great spot back behind the meat counter.”

Many men assume that their wives just don't want to have sex. No boys, the problem is: SHE DOESN'T WANT TO HAVE SEX RIGHT NOW! So when she doesn't respond RIGHT NOW, he assumes rejection and begins to spiral downward. The wife, on the other hand, might have two responses to his demand for immediate sex:

- a) He is an idiot.
- b) There must be something wrong with me.

Believe it or not, most women choose answer "b". She assumes there is something wrong with her because she doesn't want to have sex RIGHT NOW! (After all, she already feels bad enough after reading all those stupid "How to..." books.) She takes her own lack of immediate sexual response as a sign that there is something wrong with her, gets tired of being criticized, and eventually feels like giving up on her sex life.

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Men and Sex

For most men, sex has a wonderful "addictive" quality to it. Now, when I say "addictive" I don't mean a destructive kind of addiction. Make no mistake, at its worst, a destructive sexual addiction *can* drive a man into a world of pornography, prostitutes, endless affairs and many associated damaging behaviors. But that is not the kind of addiction I'm referring to here. No, when I say addiction, think coffee, not cocaine. At its best, sex with his wife is the wonderful coffee-like addiction that keeps a man connected to his wife for a lifetime.

Let's continue with the coffee analogy for a moment. Coffee can be a great stimulant. And despite a period of negative press, recent studies now show that coffee drinkers outlive non-coffee drinkers. In short, it can be a positive addiction. And as any committed coffee drinker knows, there is indeed an addictive quality to it. Oh, nothing like heroin, but make no mistake, when a faithful coffee drinker is deprived of her coffee, she knows it! What happens? She gets irritable, a slight headache, and grows increasingly more grumpy. Her husband can open the Bible to her and reason with her as to why she should NOT be irritated and NOT have a headache and NOT be grumpy (after all, "The joy of the Lord is our strength!"). And you know what? On some level he would be absolutely correct. But my advice? Just give her some coffee!

This coffee analogy pretty accurately describes what sex deprivation does to a man. In fact, it's almost exactly the same: He gets tense, can literally feel enhanced physical discomfort, and definitely gets grumpy. All of which makes his wife NOT want to have sex with him. And she, too, can whip out her Bible and tell him how he should NOT feel that way and why he should LOVE her no matter what.