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Twenty-five years of research on successful love and marriage has taught us many things, but first and foremost -

no love has blossomed or been sustained without

doing the "simple things."

Big things don't matter until your relationship has mastered the art of doing the simple things day in and day out in your relationship with another human being whom you purport to love. All too often in life, people make assumptions about love and relationships that do not stand up under scrutiny – that are not supported by the available evidence. So, what are the facts?

One of the great misconceptions of all time about love and relationships is this – just do the "big" things and everything will turn out well. And what do the Big Things include? For starters the list includes "having financial stability in your relationship," "being in love is all that matters," "having a good job and a house in the suburbs," and so it goes. But the truth is, these "Big Things" are important, but they are only a by-product of "doing the simple things." Here's what we mean.

It is an established fact – successful love is based on an accumulation of the "simple things." If you want your marriage and your relationship to succeed, just do the simple things! Do them day in and day out. When your relationship has mastered the "simple things" you have a chance to make it work. You have a chance to make it last. But if you don't, well, failure is an option.

There is another important fact of life when it comes to love and relationships – there will be big challenges to address in your relationships, of that you can be sure. You might have to deal with financial setbacks, serious illness, the loss of a job, or the death of a loved one. And trust us on this – if your relationship with the one you love has mastered the art of doing the simple things day in and day out, the likelihood of your relationship making it through the tough times are multiplied many times over.

So what are these simple things? Here are a few: always showing respect for the one you love; saying I love you many times a day; engaging in simple acts of kindness (breakfast in bed, flowers on non-special occasions; opening doors for them, etc.); giving your lover lots of daily hugs; treating them with courtesy at all times; helping clean up the dinner table; sharing financial decisions with them, and the list goes on. Read more about the multitude of simple things that matter in our new book, Simple Things Matter In Love and Marriage, due out in August.

The point is, simple things matter and when you practice doing them, they accumulate. Simple acts add up. And always remember, you can't keep turning on then turning off doing the simple things. You have to consistently engage in doing the simple things day in and day out. When you do, you will be surprised at how well this simple notion works. Start engaging in them today.

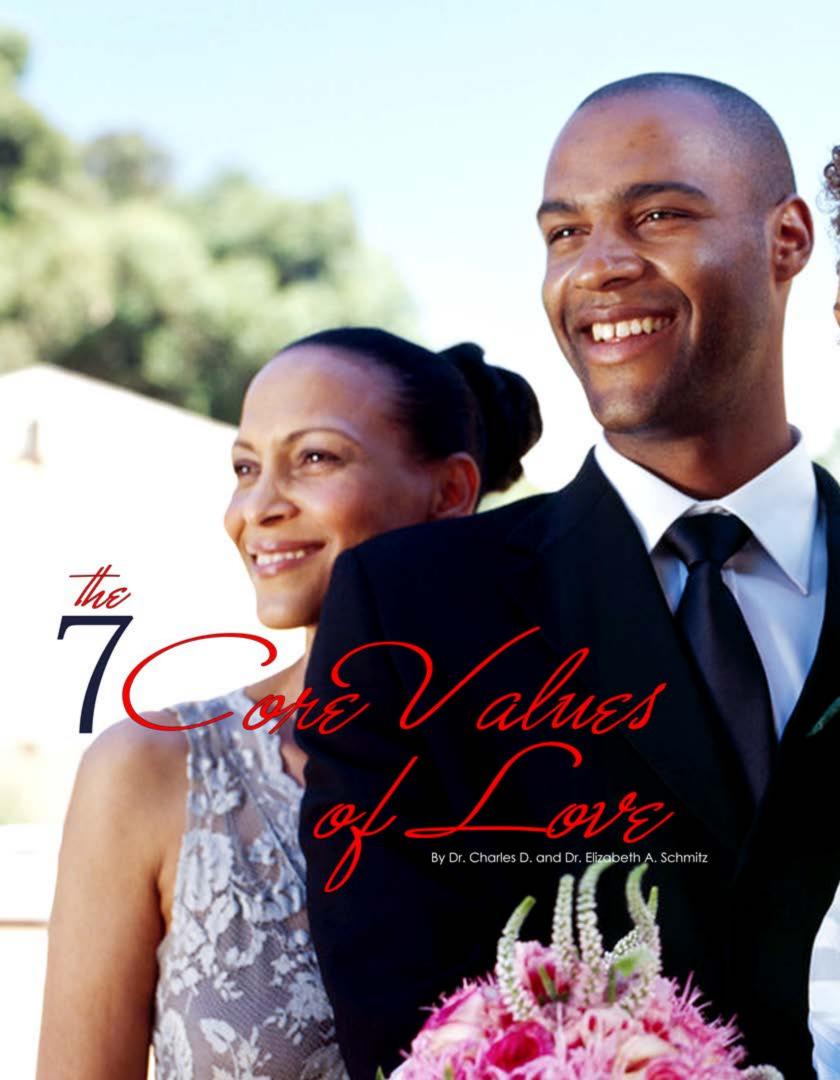


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Over the past 25 years, we have learned much about what makes great marriages tick – about what makes them successful.

Even in spite of ominous odds from time to time, the best marriages survive and thrive, and we know why! They survive and thrive because they are committed to the *Core Values* present in all great marriages and successful loving relationships. Here they are in a nutshell.

- 1. The couple in love is committed to always putting each other first in their relationship with each other. The first thing you notice in all highly successful loving relationships is that those who purport to be in love recognize that their relationship is not about you and me, it is about US. Discovering that YOU are not the center of the universe is the hallmark of a great relationship.

 Actually putting another human being number one is a powerful indication that you are truly in love.
- 2. The couple in love is committed to democracy in their relationship. Always remember, successful loving relationships are egalitarian. Namely, the best relationships understand that theirs is a shared relationship. If one person has all the power and makes all the decisions, it is NOT love! True love is a very democratic thing!
- 3. The couple in love is committed to ensuring their mutual happiness. Remember, true love is not just about ensuring your happiness. More importantly, and often for the first time in your life, you actually enjoy and are motivated by ensuring the happiness of someone other than yourself. It is a good feeling!
- 4. The couple in love values absolute trustworthiness and integrity in their relationship with each other. If you cannot trust the one you love, then it is

not true love! Trust us on that. The most successful loving relationships report that they trust their mate unequivocally and without hesitation. To violate that trust is to undermine and, ultimately destroy, the relationship with the one you say you love.

- 5. The couple in love is committed to caring and unconditional love for each other. When you truly love someone you do so without conditions. It is not about loving you IF . . . True love is unconditional.
- 6. The couple in love is committed to being mutually respectful towards each other. There is a Golden Rule in true love and it is like the one you learned early in your life "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Do not expect to be treated with respect when you are disrespectful to the one you love. Respectfulness is at the heart of all great loving relationships.
- 7. The couple in love values their mutual sense of responsibility for each other. People in love care for each other in ways that they have never cared for another human being. They feel a sense of responsibility for another person that they have never felt before. It feels so good to put another's needs above your own. To do so is to love deeply.

The Core Values of all successful loving relationships are at the heart of the matter. If you and your mate master these values, your love will, in all probability, last a lifetime.







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One of the most common mistakes that engaged couples make is choosing the right wedding location.

This decision, along with selecting a quality wedding officiant, will possibly be the most important factor in determining the success of your wedding day.

It is imperative when choosing your venue you ask for references. Don't be embarrassed to request several names and contact phone numbers from couples who've used the facility previously.

Don't go strictly on price. The most expensive location is not always the best. Ask to tour the facility paying special attention to the cleanliness and upkeep. Check the

restroom facilities making sure everything seems to be clean. Take notice as to how the representative treats you after you have called back a few times to ask additional questions. This will give you an idea of how you might be treated after you sign the contract. You may also want to talk to wedding officiants who have performed ceremonies at the venue and obtain their personal feedback.

Possibly the most important tip that can either make or break a wedding day is one which seems to be the most often overlooked. If you plan for an outdoor wedding you had better have a back-up plan. Ask the representative what the facility does in case of rain or adverse weather conditions. Is there an inside room or hall into which the ceremony can quickly be moved to? This is an absolute must if missed it could end up ruining the most important day of your lives!

The final step is really very simple but one which cannot be overlooked. When you find the location that you really feel strongly about, go ahead and choose a date/time and book it! So often brides shop for venues endlessly and then when they are ready to make the commitment it is already taken.

When you find the location that suits you – reserve immediately; especially if you are getting married on the most popular days of Saturday-Sunday or months of May-June or September-October. Plan, question, investigate, and celebrate your special day!







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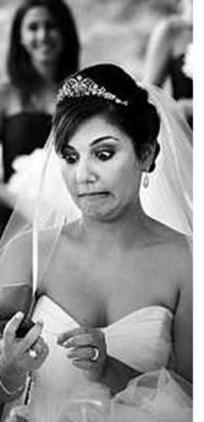














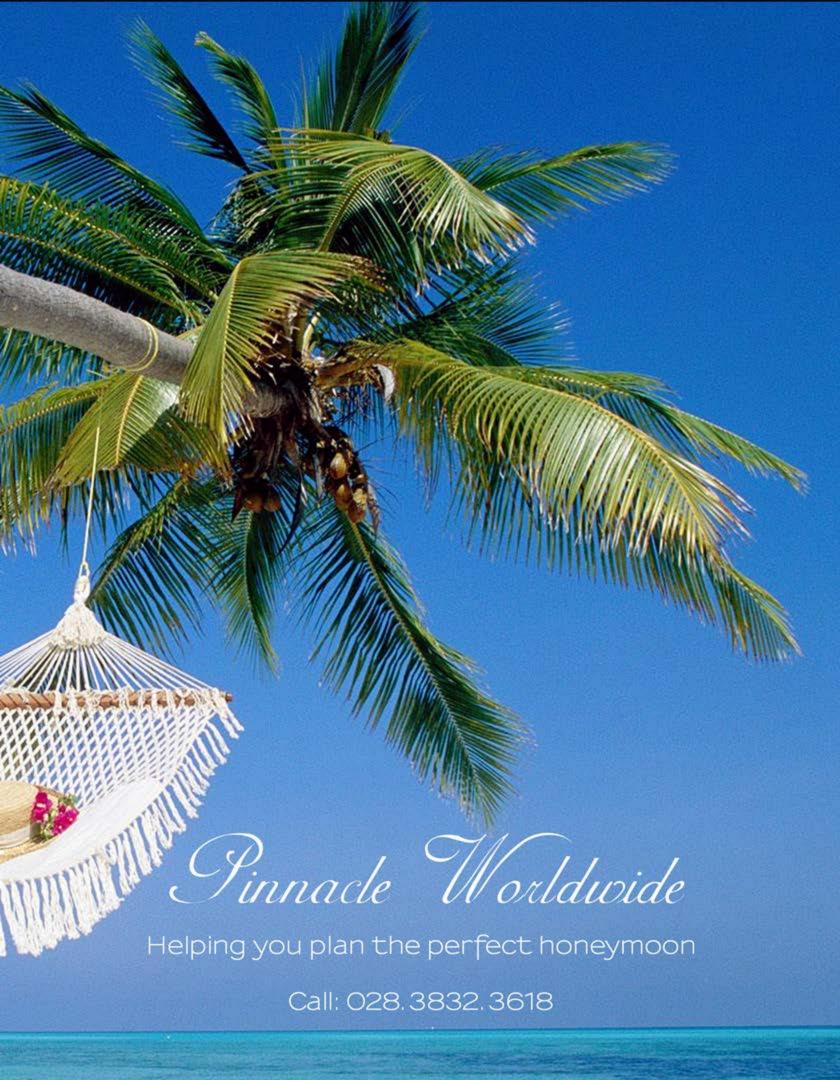












GOD KNOWS THAT MARRIAGE IS IMPORTANT ...

...and so do we!

