

Irrational Beliefs About Marriage

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- **You are going to have only one marriage in your lifetime.**
You will have several marriages, but hopefully all with the same person! Just like people, marriages grow and change. Don't confuse that with "falling out of love."
- **"We don't need any other people. We're in love."**
Okay for the honeymoon and week-end get-a-ways, but not for standard operations over a lifetime. Marriage is a school of love that opens us more and more to love and include others in the world.
- **Husband and wife should do everything together.**
A couple is strongest when there is real dialogue. There is a tremendous difference between the fusion/dependency of *I love you because I need you.* and the mature interdependency of *I need you because I love you.*
- **My spouse should be able to meet all my needs all of the time.**
Just plain nuts. It would stunt growth. Even God doesn't work that way.
- **Jealousy means I love you.** Passionate attachment does not equal love. Love is not a feeling. It is a reality entered into in when persons co-create a 'between' that is held in trust by both.
- **Marriage makes everything better. If my partner isn't right now, he/she will change after we get married.** Research shows improvement in the sense of well-being a few months in anticipation of marriage with return to previous levels a year or two following.
- **My spouse should know what I want or need without me asking.**
When we're three months old *maybe*, but even mom had to guess at times. Better to communicate directly and honestly.
- **No matter how I behave my spouse should love me.**
God is the only one who can do the impossible and love unconditionally. Why expect that of your spouse? *You* must first be the change you wish to see in your partner.
- **If we love each other we should never argue.**
Physical, verbal, emotional or psychological abuse, NEVER. Arguments? Yes. Complaints? Yes. Because freedom to disagree is essential to love and growth.
- **If I don't feel sexual attraction for my spouse it means I don't love him or her anymore.** Sexual desire changes over time in marriages due to a variety of factors. Sex should be the servant of love, not it's master.
- **Marriage should be effortless, like falling in love.**
Falling in love happens. Growth in love requires commitment, intention and attention.