

Continuing my two cents' worth of reflection on Marriage

On 3rd December 2017, we had a gathering among couples who were mentored by Wong Mui and Beng Lay. Most of us underwent pre-marital counselling with them before our wedding. It was a good mix of couples ranging from a few months into their marriage life to as long as 23 years, not including Wong Mui and Beng Lay, who will be celebrating their wedding anniversary of 28 years in December 2017.

We had a good lunch, lovingly prepared by Beng Lay, after which we gathered to share about our experiences on marriage life. Wong Mui asked us to share our experience of marriage and perhaps lessons we may have learnt in our marriages and family life, as well as an area that we would like to work on in our marriage.

I'm the sort of person who takes a long time to reflect and process on such reflective questions. Though I gave my two cents' worth of reflection within 5 minutes, a few days after that gathering I'm still pondering about lessons learnt in my marriage through the years. So, I thought I'll share part two of my reflections here.

Our marriage had its ups and downs like most marriages. Joys shared in marriage are doubled and sorrows or struggles shared are halved. But what impacted me the most in my marriage were the down periods.

Until now, it is still difficult for me to share verbally about my personal struggles for the past 9 years and I find that easier through writing. Through the down periods of my life, I've learnt to adjust my expectations of my spouse. Maybe I've read too much romance novels in my teenage years and watched too much sappy Hallmark romance movies. I've come to realise and accept that my other half is not the mushy romantic type. Through the course of my personal struggles, he has stuck through it all and not run away. He is very patient and has never rushed me in my recovery process. That, I've come to realise, is more important than giving me roses or mouthing the three words we girls love to hear. Don't get me wrong, romance is good for a marriage. Please do add some spice and romance to your marriage. To my other half's credit, he did give me sunflowers after I gave birth to my son in the hospital. It meant even more to me because I know he's not really the kind to get flowers. He shows his love by feeding me well, thus explains my current shape.

I have learnt to focus more on the strengths of my other half than his weaknesses. Just as he has accepted me and chosen to stay with me in the times

when I've been the weakest. After all, the test of a person's character and strength of their marriage is during the tough times.

Looking ahead in our marriage, both my other half and I had discussed after the gathering, that we would both like to make more time alone with each other and be more spiritually in tune with one another. Starting this Advent in 2017, both of us will be reading and reflecting on the same Advent devotional by John Piper.

Do pray together with us that married couples in our church, with God's help, will continue to honor the commitment we made to each other before God and in the process, we will be transformed in our marriages.

Thank you, Wong Mui and Beng Lay!

Saw Peh Ern