

MARRIAGE ADVICE FROM A DIVORCE LAWYER

Kelly Chang Rickert, Attorney at Law
Law Offices of Kelly Chang, A Professional Law Corporation
Copyright 2006-2008

My disclaimers:

I have been practicing law for over eight (8) years, over five (5) years of which I specialized in divorce and family law.

I have been married for almost a year.

Based on my background, I will share with you the secrets of having an everlasting marriage. Remember, good tips are specific. I can tell you to communicate, don't go to bed angry, be honest, be loyal, blah blah blah...but blanket statements, in my opinion, are not really helpful. Also, everything should be taken with a grain of salt. (I've only been married for a year - what do I know?)

1. Before you marry, define marriage with your to-be. WHAT does marriage mean to you? Here is a good tip. MARRIAGE IS FOREVER. It's not temporary, not "just for now", not "until he does something horrible". NO. It's forever. Before you enter in the sacred bond of marriage, you both need to understand that. If you have a fear of commitment, get over it, or stay single. If both of you have been married before, understand and accept that statistics has you pegged at 60% likelihood of getting divorced again. Discuss that. CONQUER your fears. Get a [Prenuptial Agreement](#) .





Copyright 2006 by Randy Glasbergen.
www.glasbergen.com

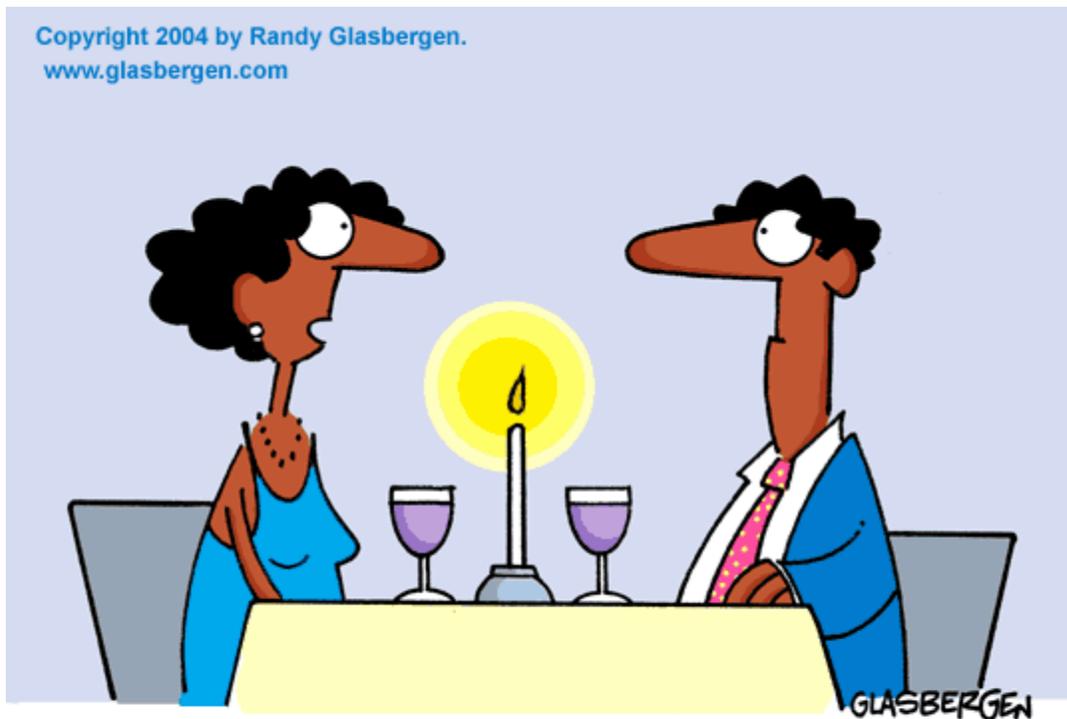


**“You have a 30 year mortgage, a 5 year car lease,
and a lifetime gym membership...but you’re
afraid of commitment?”**

2. Discuss the tough, nasty topics that people tell you NOT to talk about.
Yes, that's right. Talk about your ex'es, your seedy past, your addictions, fears,

past arrests - whatever you are hiding, TALK ABOUT IT. I mean, I probably wouldn't do on the first couple of dates, but somewhere between that and engagement, you should definitely have an unveiling of all the crap that is out there. Here is a tip: EVERYONE has crap. Just because your crap is different than his crap, doesn't mean you are incompatible. As Leo Tolstoy said, "What counts in making a happy marriage is not so much how compatible you are, but how you deal with incompatibility." And by the way, fighting is GOOD, if it's done right. I have learned that just because two people argue, it doesn't mean they don't love each other. And just because they don't argue, it doesn't mean they do. (More on this later).

Discussing taboo subjects will reveal your true tolerance for the person. Let's face it, time will reveal lots of things. But if you can expedite the process, why not do it before entering into forever?



**“My last boyfriend said I’m a control freak.
Do you think I’m a control freak? If so, say yes.”**

3. Cherish your status as "eternal lovers, more than friends". I cannot count how many clients have uttered this line to me, "We love each other, but we are not in love." I empathize with that sentiment. I really do. But seriously, you're ending your marriage with a cliché excuse? Here is news for you - you and your spouse SHOULD BE the best of friends. That's expected. But, if you don't cherish your status as always "more than just friends", your marriage may be in trouble. There are many ways to remain as intimate as you were in the first two

months of courtship, or even the first two years. Be affectionate towards each other. For some, that means taking out the garbage. For others, that means buying jewelry. For my husband and me, this means hugging and kissing every day. Whatever it is, find it. Don't ever lose your status as "eternal lovers, more than friends".



On that note, I read an article about [Sexual Incompatibility](#). If your sex life is unfulfilling, TALK ABOUT IT. Sex is a taboo topic that NEEDS to be discussed, per my Advice Tip #2. If you are both honest and open, and keep an open-mind, any weirdness in the bedroom should be resolved. When you talk, you will realize that a lot of sexual problems stem from emotional roadblocks. I am a licensed attorney, NOT a psychotherapist, so I cannot tell you HOW to talk about it. Just do it.



4. Find a higher meaning to life (including your marriage), and share it with your spouse. In this world, nothing is certain except for death and taxes. You can never truly depend on someone - and that doesn't mean they don't love you. It only means that they are human. The sooner you accept that in people, especially your spouse, the happier your life will be. So, therein lies the dilemma: how do you reconcile my advice #3 with advice #4? How can you accept fault and still retain intimacy? I actually don't know the answer to that. But I can tell you that our faith has helped my marriage greatly. I believe that sharing a faith strengthens marriage. Yes, statistics out there do show that Christian couples have the same divorce statistics as non-Christians. And I am not, in any way, selling Christianity as the answer to a solid marriage. (Ha! I've handled several Christian divorces). I just know, from my professional and personal life, that you have to have a higher focus than what is in this life. I encourage struggling couples to seek counseling, and to find a faith. It doesn't matter whether it's Jewish, Muslim, Buddhism - just find a faith. Many problems in marriage arise because people don't understand themselves and their stances on some of the major issues in life. If you don't know what you believe in, how do you understand a completely different person?

5. Rule out divorce as an option. I didn't say murder. Just divorce.

Remember, marriage is grand! Divorce is ten grand. (If you're lucky. Over 60% of my cases end up billing over \$15,000).

So, five (5) tips for now. I may pipe in with more later. And for those who want more sage advice, I highly recommend the book [Everlasting Matrimony: Pearls of Wisdom From Couples Married 50 Years or More](#) . You can buy it on Amazon.com!

