

How To Solve Marital Disputes

BY VAL FARMER
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I am continually amazed at the number of intelligent, well-meaning couples who fail to communicate and resolve differences in their relationships. On the job, they are great. With their friends, they are great. With each other, they are like squabbling 10-year-olds.

Usually on a job, there is agreement about goals and clarity about who is responsible for certain activities. Communications center around decisions on how best to get the job done and how much money, time and energy are going to be devoted to various projects.

It's not like that in a marriage. A lot of the conflict has to do with trying to decide what is best - or right - or good. Also, it is not etched in stone who should do what. Each partner has strongly held opinions and emotions about these matters, primarily from his or her experience from growing up in their own families.

"What is the best way to handle a teenager's violation of curfew?" "Do we really need to buy that?" "How important or how often do we show affection between us?" "Is the hunting trip that important?" "Who does the work around here, anyway?" "How clean do we keep the house?"

The answers are not obvious, even though each partner seems to think so. These differences can be alarming and threatening.

Happily married couples address their painful differences and work through them. It is a test of their love. Too many unhappily married couples either avoid conflict or else the process blows up in their faces. One of

the main pathways to divorce is when one partner is convinced that he or she cannot solve problems with his or her marriage partner.

Trust. Successful communicators take risks in talking about sensitive subjects when there is a backdrop of love, trust and mutual respect. Security in the relationship grows when each partner appreciates the other's abilities, opinions and essential goodness. A spouse who senses this bedrock of commitment and love will dare to bring up sensitive issues because he or she knows that the marriage isn't continually on trial.

The willingness to talk about delicate problems also depends on whether the overall tone of the relationship is positive and mutually rewarding. Touchy subjects bring pain, uncertainty and temporary alienation. The process is painful but beneficial.

Agree to disagree. These couples also know that they don't have to agree on everything, only on the important things. As a 19th century psychologist, William James, said, "The art of being wise is the art of knowing what to overlook."

Some things are never going to change. There are some things about one's spouse that are going to be forever exasperating. These qualities or strongly held values or opinions need to be accepted.

Minimize defensiveness. You can minimize the defensiveness of your partner by telling how a specific situation or behavior makes you feel. Focus on issues,



Val FARMER

not personalities.

"I feel something is wrong." "This is my opinion. I'm interested in how you feel about this." "I may be wrong but this is how I see it." "Help me understand how you see this issue?" "What do you think?"

Get a commitment. Sometimes people recognize there is a problem but refuse to do anything about it. Further discussions won't be helpful until there is a willingness to work on the problem.

Listen to understand. There are two kinds of listening, listening to understand and listening to argue back. There are two different attitudes involved - one of winning an argument and the other to genuinely know what one's partner thinks and feels.

Show courtesy and respect. Don't interrupt. Make sure that your spouse's point of view comes out fully and completely. Respecting the right for their partner to finish his or her thoughts and to draw them out is a gift.

Use conversational etiquette to transfer the floor back and forth as you share perspectives. How your partner feels about the process of communicating with you is more important than finding a common solution.

Reflect main points. Help bring feelings into the open. Reflect back a summary of his or her main points before answering.

Don't be mechanical or technical. Show respect and concern in the way you reflect back their points. Body language means a lot.

Allow your partner to correct any misunderstandings of what you have heard. Understanding your partner's ideas are key to finding a mutual solution that meets both your needs.

Allow time to allow for tensions to decrease and each of you to think about what you've heard. Some conversations take place over time before issues finally take shape.

Problem-solving. When you come to a common definition of the problem and understand each other's views, then you are in a position to propose and generate solutions. Too many people skip the understanding and listening part and jump into problem-solving. That doesn't work well.

The question becomes, "Now that we agree on what is wrong, what can we do about it?" It is time to brainstorm for alternatives. Solutions and alternatives should meet both your needs. Thinking time is important.

Pros and cons are weighed. A decision needs to be clearly made and commitments given toward a specific plan. Details need to be fleshed out. The plan can be implemented on a trial basis. A time frame is set aside to review how the plan is going and to make any necessary adjustments.

For more information on marriage, visit Val Farmer's website at www.valfarmer.com.

Val Farmer is a clinical psychologist specializing in family business consultation and mediation with farm families. He lives in Wildwood, Missouri and can be contacted through his website.

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VISITING HOURS

Dealing With A Breast Cancer Diagnosis

BY DARLA GULLIKSON, OCN
Avera Sacred Heart Cancer Center Director



A diagnosis of breast cancer can bring about many emotions in a woman - fear, anger and depression to name a few. One emotion that must remain stable, however, is that of hope.

The diagnosis itself will be made from the results of a biopsy and then the cancer staged (from 0-IV). A biopsy is a small sample of tissue taken from the breast for laboratory analysis. This is the only definitive procedure to detect whether or not a malignancy is present. This procedure, which can be performed a number of different ways, can also determine whether or not surgery is necessary and what type of surgery should be performed.

Once the results from the biopsy have been returned and it has been determined that cancer is present, staging tests will determine how far the disease has advanced. This will, in turn, help determine the course of treatment. Cancer is determined to be at Stage 0 if it is non-invasive. Stage 0 cancers have a high success rate for curability. Stage I to IV cancers are invasive tumors that have the ability to invade other parts of the breast tissue and body. A Stage I cancer is small and localized and has a high cure rate. The higher the stage number, however, the lower the chances for a cure. By Stage IV, the cancer has spread beyond the breast to other organs. This is why it's so important to screen regularly - these things can progress rapidly.

Treatment for breast cancer can vary greatly depending on the stage. It's imperative to speak with your health care team and learn as much as you can about your options. Speaking with other women who have gone through the experience of breast cancer is another good source.

Treatments exist for every type and stage of breast cancer. Typically, most women have surgery and additional treatment option such as radiation, chemotherapy and or hormone therapy.

Surgical options for breast cancer include:

- Lumpectomy - This procedure removes the lump plus a part of the surrounding tissue. This option saves as much of the breast as possible. Lumpectomies - usually with radiation treatment - are often chosen over radical mastectomy. In most cases survival rates for both operations are similar. Circumstances that may rule out lumpectomy include a tumor that is very large; having already had radiation treatment; having two or more areas of cancer within the same breast; having inflammatory breast cancer; or having a connective tissue disease that makes you more likely to develop serious radiation treatment side effects.
- Mastectomy (Partial, Simple, Modified Radical) - The removal of the breast tissue, and in some instances the removal of the entire breast tissue and lymph nodes. Most women having partial mastectomy will also

undergo radiation and or chemotherapy or hormone therapy.

• Sentinel Lymph Node Biopsy - The first place breast cancer spreads is the lymph nodes under the arms. With this procedure, the surgeon focuses on finding the sentinel nodes - the first nodes that receive drainage from the tumor(s) and the first place the cancer cells will generally travel. This can spare the unnecessary removal of some lymph nodes and reduce the chance of complications in the future.

Other common treatments for breast cancer include:

- Radiation Therapy - The use of high energy X-rays or charged particles to kill cancer cells and shrink tumors
- Chemotherapy - The use of drugs to destroy cancer cells - treatment often involves using a combination of drugs to fight the cancer cells.
- Hormone Therapy - Some forms of cancer are sensitive to estrogen and progesterone and this therapy, with the use of hormone blocking agents, can help shrink the tumor and control spreading of the disease by eliminating or blocking the source of hormones.

COPING WITH BREAST CANCER

As I've stated earlier, a diagnosis of breast cancer can be overwhelming and will most likely bring about a flood of emotions.

Most people who have been diagnosed with breast cancer (and most other forms of cancer) find that communication is the key component to coping with the disease. Of course you will spend much time with your medical team, but it's also important to build a strong support system. This obviously starts with your family, but could also include support groups - many of which are offered right here in Yankton. Most survivors find it comforting to have a group of people who have gone through the same issues. Fellow survivors are oftentimes the best resources a new cancer survivor can lean on.

Use these resources and keep a positive attitude.

Darla Gullikson, OCN, is the Director of the Avera Sacred Heart Cancer Center.

On the Net:
www.avera.org
www.cancer.org
www.mayoclinic.com
www.health.yahoo.com

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Music

From Page 1

"The show will put you right back in our ancestral homelands of Germany and south Russia," he said. "Decided out in lederhosen for the men and dirndl skirts for the gals, you will enjoy the playing, singing and dancing of this 10-piece orchestra."

"Yes, you will be able to get out on the dance floor and do the polka," he added.

The Elk River German Band was formed about 25 years ago when several musicians assembled to play for a community function. Since then, the band has grown to its present size of 10 musicians, including nine instrumentalists and a female vocalist.

The band features the Bavar-

ian style of German music and has produced several recordings, available on cassette tape and compact disc.

The group bears the name of its hometown of Elk River, Minn., a small community located about 40 miles northwest of Minneapolis. Jerke said. The majority of members reside in the south-central region of Minnesota. Present membership includes both amateur and professional musicians.

The band has played at festivals in Minnesota, Iowa, South Dakota and Wisconsin. It has performed at the Oktoberfest and Heritagefest in New Ulm, Minn.; the Minnesota State Fair; Minnesota Orchestra's Sommerfest; and Germanfests in Milwaukee and Sioux Falls.

The band has also toured Germany, Austria, Switzerland and the Czech Republic.

The Oktoberfest doors will open promptly at 6 p.m. Satur-

day, and guests will be served a German buffet supper. The menu includes German bratwurst, German potato salad, liverwurst, sauerkraut, sweet baked apples, assorted cheeses and crackers, dinner rolls and pickled watermelon. Dessert features a variety of bars, peffernusse, plachinda and kuchen in a number of fruit flavors.

"With our good German cooks and this great show, we are putting on a real Oktoberfest," Jerke said.

The evening ends with a drawing for the grand prize of a trip to Branson, Mo., for the Christmas shows. This Branson tour is escorted Dec. 1-4 by Sodak Stamm members Vi Ranney and Donna Zeeb. For a brochure, call Ranney at (605) 665-3596.

Only 500 tickets can be sold to Saturday's Oktoberfest, making advance ticket sales neces-

sary, Jerke said.

"We were completely sold out last year, and I expect the same to happen this year, only sooner," he said.

Tickets can be purchased from the following Sodak Stamm members and sites:

- Gary Jerke, Tripp-Scotland, 583-4544;
- Vi Ranney, Yankton, 665-3596;
- Eugene Weidenbach, Scotland, 583-4470;
- Calvin and Carol Mettler, Menno, 387-2480;
- Donna Zeeb, Menno, 387-5577;
- Alton Tiede, Parkston, 928-3694;
- David Mogck, Tripp, 935-6781;
- Wyona Hofer, Freeman, 925-7218;
- Scotland, Menno and Freeman banks.

Keystone

From Page 1

federal permitting process. The company applied for a presidential permit in 2008 so the line could cross the U.S.-Canadian border.

Pourbaix said the company is now willing to provide and maintain a \$100 million performance bond for the state if TransCanada fails to clean up a spill in the Sandhills. The company said it would build a concrete containment around a pump station in Holt County to keep oil and water from mixing.

The company also offered to locate oil spill response equipment and personnel in the Sandhills region, which it said would reduce spill response time to less than two hours. Federal rules require a maximum 12-hour response times.

Pourbaix said TransCanada would install a concrete coating, rock jacket or other protective materials that would encircle a 35-mile stretch of pipeline in the Sandhills, where the water table is at or near the surface. He said the company would also conduct water-well testing for nearby landowners, and provide an alternative water supply if water quality was compromised.

The company said it would pay a public liaison officer to "facilitate the exchange of information" between TransCanada employees, its contractors, and residents. The liaison would report to the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality.

Pipeline opponents worry that the pipeline would leak and contaminate the groundwater supply, and have raised concerns about the line's impact on wildlife. Gov. Dave Heineman has declined to call a special session, saying that rerouting the line lacks support in the Legislature

and would waste tax money. He also has questioned the state's authority to relocate the pipeline.

Opponents said the letter was disingenuous. State Sen. Ken Haar of Malcolm, a prominent pipeline critic, said the letter still failed to address his concerns about spill risks, and landowners who say the company strong-armed them into signing right-of-way agreements to make way for the pipeline. Haar is pushing for lawmakers to call themselves into special session, which has never been done in state history.

"Did we really have to go through all this work to get these concessions?" Haar said. "Are they agreeing that the pipeline has to be safer? Why did they fight us during the regular session, and now they're willing to give these kind of concessions? It really begs the question: Why don't they just move it away from the Sandhills?"

TransCanada executives have

maintained that the pipeline is safe, and said their meeting with lawmakers was intended to address lingering concerns.

Haar said the \$100 million bond the company offered pales when compared to the cost of recent large-scale accidents, such as the 2010 oil spill into the Kalamazoo River in Michigan. The Michigan cleanup costs are expected to reach \$700 million.

Haar said lawmakers might still need a special session to ensure compliance with the company's offer.

Through a spokesman, Flood declined to comment on the letter.

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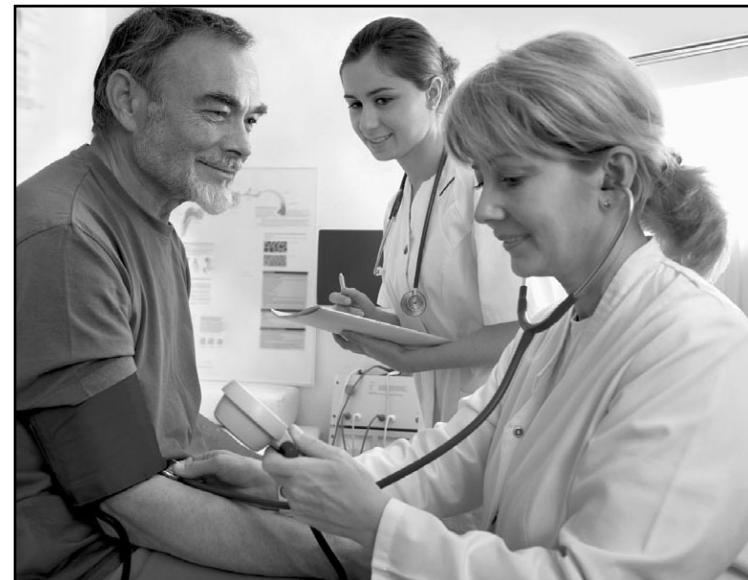
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