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*This Genesis Gem has an article you will want to read about dealing with marital differences.*

Recently I gave my wife a present that I knew she would love. If the truth be told, I've known for 30 years of marriage that she'd love this present, but I didn't want to give it to her. That's because in some ways, I was still stuck back in junior high school when I made the decision..."I don't dance."

Of course back then, I couldn't actually get anyone to dance with me at the school dances in the gym, which was a major factor in my lifelong decision (until now) that "I don't dance." However, as the years went by, my unwillingness to get out on a dance floor with my bride became more and more indefensible. Particularly with a wife who loves to dance and with weddings for two daughters on the horizon where, like it or not, I'll be out on the dance floor.

So I finally broke down a few months ago, went to a local dance studio, bought the five lesson minimum package, and made my wife's day (or rather her three decades of marriage) with a dance lesson gift certificate. And guess what they taught us at our first dance lesson? The "two-step." If it's been a while since you have been dancing, that's two steps forwards, two steps to the side, two steps backwards, and two steps to the side. Just two steps – something even I could do – and in no time at all, I was moving Cindy around the dance floor and ready for "Dancing With the Stars" (or at least a dance at a wedding!)

This leads me to a "two-step" I've been teaching couples for years. There is a "two step" process in helping couples deal with their differences. To begin, I have seen time and again how "differences" brought a couple together in the first place.



For example, a young woman may say to herself, "He's so strong and independent!" Likewise, a young man may say, "She's so caring and involved with others." They are drawn to that missing side of themselves that they see reflected in the lifestyle, personality or life-choices of the other...but then comes that subtle powerful shift. From the differences drawing that couple together (and unto the dance floor), those same differences start pushing them apart. (back to girls on one side of the room; boys on the other!) Let time go by in a relationship and that same woman may look at her husband now and say, "He's so inflexible and aloof!" while he looks at her and thinks, "She's too soft on the kids and spends way too much time with friends and her mother!"

Differences absolutely attract. They can also become the basis for attacks. Couples start off drawn to those differences but before long, it's easy to retreat, struggle over who's going to "take the lead" and even end up sitting this dance out (emotionally) in some cases. That's where the "two-step" comes in. In the Book of Revelation, we're given a picture of the Church as a bride who had walked off the floor when it came to loving Christ. Not that she hadn't been drawn to him at first. In fact, we are given a list of seven things she did right at first that really did have her "dancing with the star" (Jesus).

We're told in Revelation 2:2-3, "I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false; and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary." Seven is a very important number when it comes to Scripture, and it's a picture of how "sold out" this church was when it came to being fully engaged and "on the dance floor" with Christ. But then there are those six words, "You have left your first love." It's in the newness of love that we give ourselves completely, looking at strengths as strengths, not as negatives. So what is the answer Jesus gives to the wayward church? Do the two-step. Or, put in Biblical terms, "Therefore remember from where you've fallen" (Remember where you were out there on the dance floor with Me) and do the two-step: "repent, and do the deeds you did at first." It's one step of turning around (repentance) and another of moving forward by getting back to doing "the deeds you did at first." It's a way of dealing with our own marital 'differences.' See you on the dance floor!



*This article was written by John Trent, Ph.D. and produced by the American Association of Christian Counselors.*

**LOL: I stayed up all night to see where the sun went. Then it dawned on me. -come up with an LOL joke/riddle for our LOL corner and you may see it here in the next newsletter! send to:**

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# Genesis Gems

What a challenge this article presents to couples! In other words, remember the positives, when things were uplifting and moving forward in the relationship, even if you have to go back to courtship days to find a time when you were dancing together. Do something positive. See positive traits in each other. If you are on the sidelines, take one step forward. Just take one step and see what it looks like. Wow, couples need to get back on the dance floor with the Lover of our Souls, as well as their life partner in marriage. And then enjoy that closeness we were meant to experience. Get back to doing those small things we did when things were once going well!

**Do you want help with this process? Maybe, if you are struggling as a couple you would benefit from some marriage/couple counseling. Why not contact Genesis? Our trained counselors can help you dance again.**

**239-939-5504.**

## Did you hear the news?

The Genesis counselors have moved!! Yes, we are no longer at our old location in the Villas in the Beacon Executive Suites. We have not gone far, only two miles away to World Plaza II off College Parkway. The move is now in the process but we hope to be completely moved in by May 1<sup>st</sup>. If you are interested in visiting us or taking a tour, be in touch any Monday morning after June 1<sup>st</sup>. We can arrange to meet you at our new offices and will invite you to share a cup of coffee with us!

## Summer is fast approaching...

With the summer months ahead, why not consider a few therapy sessions to improve your outlook? Once again, Genesis Counseling of Fort Myers can offer counseling at no cost or for just a small donation. Throughout the summer, a registered intern with already plenty of experience is joining us. Do

you need counseling or know someone else who would benefit from therapy? This would be a great opportunity. Call Genesis at (239) 939-5504 to set up an appointment with our summer intern. She has openings right away.

## **Another testimonial...**

*It has been awhile now, but there was a time when my life was spinning out of control. My marriage was only holding on by a thread; I barely knew my children; I was always worried that my boss would find me inadequate and fire me. How did it come to this? Then I heard a radio announcement that led me to call Genesis. It couldn't hurt, could it? The counselor that I was scheduled to meet, listened and listened as I unfolded my story. Then I figured it was her turn to tell me what to do to resolve my messed up life. She didn't. She kept asking me what I should do. I got tired of her questions and quit going for weeks. But, the more I thought about it, I realized I had to take control and answer these questions myself. I booked another appointment and we started planning a series of events that changed me and then my life. 'Small steps,' she kept saying. I started coming home earlier from work. I suggested that my wife and I have a weekly 'date night.' She was so excited. I planned some weekend trips with the family and my kids started talking to me again. None of this was easy, but it was all worth it. Thanks to the persistence of my counselor, I did not give up. With a lot of hard work, I am a new me!*

**--You'd hardly recognize me**

**Written by one of our recent interns:**

"Doing a practicum at Genesis under the supervision of one of the more seasoned counselors was

an invaluable experience for me. During my four months with the practice, I was able to sit in on many sessions and learn about being an effective counselor. I attend a Christian University, and have taken many courses on counseling theories and techniques, but to see the counselors apply counseling approaches using not only practical knowledge, but with the love of Christ, was amazing. I also had the opportunity to have several clients that I counseled individually under supervision. The experience at Genesis was an answer to my prayer of working with counselors who were able to integrate counseling theories and techniques along with a Christian worldview.

## **Brussel Sprouts Salad**

Had a chance to try some Brussel sprouts made as a salad. Delicious! Decided to make my own. Try it!

Mix dressing first:

1 Tbs lemon juice  
½ tsp Dijon mustard  
¼ tsp salt, pepper to taste  
2 ½ Tbs olive oil  
1 chopped hard-boiled egg

Add:

¾ pounds Brussels sprouts, sliced thin  
¼ C toasted pine nuts

Spread on top:

½ Tbs grated Parmesan cheese

Makes: 2 to 3 servings

