

meaning of marriage pdf

meaning of marriage pdf: Exploring the profound and multifaceted aspects of marriage is a journey many embark on, seeking to understand its core essence and enduring significance. This article delves into the comprehensive meaning of marriage, offering insights into its historical, societal, legal, and personal dimensions. We will examine what a marriage means in various contexts, from its traditional roots to its contemporary interpretations, and explore the commitments and expectations inherent in this sacred union. Whether you are considering marriage, navigating its complexities, or simply curious about its deeper significance, this exploration aims to provide clarity and depth. Our discussion will touch upon the evolving definition of marriage and its impact on individuals and communities, all presented in a format accessible for those seeking a downloadable PDF resource on the meaning of marriage.

- Understanding the Core Meaning of Marriage
- Historical and Cultural Perspectives on Marriage
- The Legal and Societal Framework of Marriage
- Personal and Emotional Dimensions of Marriage
- The Evolving Meaning of Marriage
- Key Components of a Meaningful Marriage
- Practical Aspects of Understanding Marriage Meaning

The Core Meaning of Marriage: Beyond a Simple Union

The meaning of marriage is a concept that resonates deeply across cultures and throughout history, evolving yet retaining its fundamental significance as a union of individuals. At its heart, marriage represents a commitment, a promise of companionship, and a shared life journey. It is more than just a legal contract; it is an emotional, social, and often spiritual bond that signifies a deep connection between two people. Understanding this core meaning involves appreciating the multifaceted nature of the commitment, which extends to mutual support, shared responsibilities, and the creation of a partnership built on trust and love. This fundamental understanding sets the stage for exploring its various implications.

Defining Marriage: A Multifaceted Concept

Defining marriage involves acknowledging its multiple layers. Legally, it is recognized as a union between two individuals, granting them specific rights and responsibilities. Socially, it is a cornerstone institution that shapes families and communities, influencing social norms and structures. Emotionally, it signifies a profound bond of love, intimacy, and unwavering support. Spiritually, for

many, it represents a sacred covenant, a divine union blessed by higher powers. Each of these facets contributes to the overall meaning of marriage, highlighting its importance in the human experience.

The Essence of Commitment in Marriage

Commitment is arguably the bedrock of any meaningful marriage. It is the conscious decision to invest in the relationship, to weather storms together, and to grow as individuals within the partnership. This commitment is not static; it requires ongoing effort, communication, and a willingness to adapt to life's changes. The true meaning of marriage is often found in the enduring nature of this commitment, demonstrating loyalty, perseverance, and a shared vision for the future, even when challenges arise. It's about choosing each other, day after day.

Historical and Cultural Perspectives on Marriage Meaning

To truly grasp the meaning of marriage, it is essential to examine its historical and cultural evolution. Marriage practices and their societal implications have varied dramatically across different eras and geographical locations, reflecting diverse values, beliefs, and economic structures. Understanding these historical precedents provides a crucial context for contemporary interpretations of marital unions.

Ancient and Traditional Marriage Customs

In many ancient societies, marriage was primarily an economic or political arrangement, focused on forging alliances between families, securing property, and ensuring the continuation of lineage. The concept of romantic love as a prerequisite for marriage was often secondary, if considered at all. Arranged marriages were common, with elders or families playing a central role in selecting partners based on social status, wealth, and compatibility of families rather than individual affection. The meaning of marriage in these times was intrinsically linked to societal structure and survival.

Marriage in Different Cultural Contexts

Across the globe, cultural interpretations of marriage present a rich tapestry of understanding. In some cultures, polygamy or polyandry has been historically accepted, reflecting specific social or economic needs. In others, dowry systems or bride prices have been integral to the marital transaction, symbolizing the transfer of resources or the perceived value of the bride or groom. Even the rituals surrounding marriage ceremonies and the expectations placed upon spouses can differ immensely, showcasing the diverse ways societies imbue this union with meaning. The universality of marriage is in its form, but its specific meaning is often culturally bound.

The Legal and Societal Framework of Marriage

Beyond personal feelings and historical traditions, marriage is a legally recognized institution with

significant societal implications. Laws govern marriage, providing a framework for its establishment, dissolution, and the rights and responsibilities of those within it. This legal aspect shapes how society views and interacts with married couples.

Marriage as a Legal Contract

From a legal standpoint, marriage is a contract that bestows upon the couple certain rights and obligations. These can include the right to make medical decisions for each other, inheritance rights, joint property ownership, and tax benefits. The legal meaning of marriage provides a structure for family law, dictating matters such as divorce, child custody, and spousal support. Understanding these legal parameters is crucial for married individuals and for society as a whole.

Societal Roles and Expectations in Marriage

Societies often impose distinct roles and expectations on married individuals, though these are constantly being redefined. Traditionally, these roles were often gender-based, with men as providers and women as homemakers. However, modern societal evolution has led to a greater emphasis on partnership, equality, and shared responsibilities, blurring traditional lines. The meaning of marriage is thus influenced by evolving societal norms regarding gender, family, and individual fulfillment within the marital unit.

Personal and Emotional Dimensions of Marriage

While legal and societal frameworks provide structure, the profound meaning of marriage is most deeply felt in its personal and emotional dimensions. It is here that the true essence of partnership, love, and shared life is forged and experienced.

The Role of Love and Companionship

Love and companionship are often considered the cornerstones of modern marriage. The desire for an intimate emotional connection, for a trusted confidant, and for shared experiences forms a powerful motivation for entering into marriage. Companionship provides comfort, joy, and a sense of belonging. The meaning of marriage is enriched by the presence of genuine affection, mutual respect, and a deep, enduring friendship that blossoms over time.

Building Trust and Intimacy

Trust and intimacy are vital for a thriving marriage. Trust is built through honesty, reliability, and consistent behavior, creating a safe space for vulnerability. Intimacy, encompassing both emotional and physical closeness, allows couples to share their deepest selves, fostering a bond that is unique and powerful. The meaning of marriage is amplified as couples learn to navigate their vulnerabilities, communicate openly, and deepen their connection, creating a sanctuary of mutual understanding and acceptance.

Shared Goals and Mutual Support

A significant aspect of the meaning of marriage lies in the establishment of shared goals and the provision of mutual support. Couples often enter marriage with individual aspirations that they then integrate into a collective vision for their future. This might include career ambitions, family planning, financial goals, or personal growth. The ability to support each other through challenges, celebrate successes, and work collaboratively towards common objectives is fundamental to a fulfilling marital union.

The Evolving Meaning of Marriage

The concept of marriage is not static; it continues to evolve in response to societal changes, cultural shifts, and advancements in our understanding of human relationships. This evolution reflects a broader societal progress towards inclusivity and individual autonomy.

Marriage Equality and Inclusivity

A significant contemporary evolution in the meaning of marriage is the movement towards marriage equality. The recognition of same-sex marriage in many parts of the world has broadened the definition of marriage to include all loving and committed couples, regardless of sexual orientation. This shift underscores the principle that the essence of marriage lies in commitment, love, and partnership, rather than adhering to traditional gender norms.

Redefining Family Structures

Beyond the union of two individuals, the meaning of marriage is also intertwined with the evolving structures of families. Modern families can take many forms, including blended families, single-parent households, and childfree couples. Marriage continues to be a foundational element for many of these structures, but its definition is expanding to encompass diverse configurations of kinship and caregiving. The emphasis is increasingly on the quality of relationships and the provision of a loving and supportive environment.

Key Components of a Meaningful Marriage

Regardless of its specific context or evolving definitions, certain core components are consistently found in marriages that are deeply meaningful and enduring. These elements require conscious effort and ongoing attention from both partners.

- Open and Honest Communication
- Mutual Respect and Admiration
- Shared Values and Vision

- Conflict Resolution Skills
- Flexibility and Adaptability
- Acts of Service and Appreciation
- Shared Interests and Fun

Practical Aspects of Understanding Marriage Meaning

For individuals contemplating marriage or seeking to deepen their existing marital bond, understanding the practical implications of its meaning is crucial. This involves proactive engagement with the relationship and a willingness to learn and grow together.

Pre-Marital Counseling and Preparation

Many couples find immense value in pre-marital counseling. This process offers a structured environment to discuss expectations, potential challenges, communication styles, and future goals. It helps couples understand the practical meaning of their commitment before they formally enter into it, providing tools and strategies for building a strong foundation. Preparing for the realities of marriage is as important as celebrating its ideals.

Ongoing Growth and Learning in Marriage

Marriage is a lifelong journey of growth and learning. The meaning of marriage is not a destination but a continuous process of evolving together. Couples must be willing to adapt to life's changes, learn from their experiences, and continuously invest in their relationship. This might involve pursuing new shared interests, seeking professional development for couples, or simply dedicating time to nurturing their connection. The commitment to ongoing growth ensures that the meaning of marriage remains vibrant and relevant throughout a lifetime.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the core themes typically covered in a PDF about the meaning of marriage?

PDFs exploring the meaning of marriage often delve into themes such as commitment, partnership, love, companionship, building a family, shared values, personal growth within a relationship, and the legal, social, and religious aspects of the institution. Some may also discuss evolving definitions and contemporary challenges.

Where can I find reliable and well-researched PDFs discussing the meaning of marriage?

Reliable PDFs can often be found on academic institutional websites (universities, research centers), reputable non-profit organizations focused on family and relationships, religious institutions, and sometimes through government agencies. Searching with terms like 'meaning of marriage research,' 'sociology of marriage,' or 'psychology of marital commitment' alongside 'PDF' can yield good results.

How does the meaning of marriage differ across cultures and historical periods, and are there PDFs that explore this?

Yes, many PDFs specifically address the cultural and historical evolution of marriage. They highlight how marriage has been viewed as an economic alliance, a social contract, a religious sacrament, or a union of romantic love, with these meanings shifting significantly across different societies and eras. These often come from anthropology, sociology, and history departments.

What are some of the modern challenges to the traditional meaning of marriage that might be discussed in a PDF?

Modern PDFs on the meaning of marriage frequently address challenges such as rising divorce rates, the increasing acceptance of cohabitation, the legal recognition of same-sex marriage, the impact of technology on relationships, changing gender roles, and differing expectations regarding personal fulfillment within marriage. These often explore the adaptation of marital definitions to contemporary societal shifts.

Are there PDFs that offer practical advice or frameworks for understanding and navigating the meaning of marriage in a personal relationship?

While some PDFs focus on academic or theoretical aspects, others are geared towards practical application. These might offer frameworks for communication, conflict resolution, building intimacy, or shared goal-setting, all within the context of understanding and fostering a meaningful marital partnership. Look for resources from marriage counseling organizations or relationship experts.

Additional Resources

Here are 9 book titles related to the meaning of marriage, with short descriptions:

1. *The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with Love and Wisdom*

This book, by Timothy Keller, explores the theological and practical foundations of marriage. It delves into the challenges and profound beauty of lifelong commitment, drawing on biblical principles to offer guidance on building a strong and enduring union. The authors emphasize that marriage is not simply about romantic love but about a covenant relationship requiring sacrifice, forgiveness, and shared purpose.

2. *Sacred Marriage: What If God Designed Marriage to Make Us Holy?*

Gary Thomas presents marriage as a spiritual discipline designed to refine and sanctify individuals. He

argues that the ultimate purpose of marriage is not personal happiness but spiritual growth, urging couples to see their relationship as a tool for becoming more like Christ. The book encourages readers to reframe their expectations and embrace the challenges of marriage as opportunities for transformation.

3. The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work: A Practical Guide from the Country's Foremost Relationship Expert

John Gottman, a renowned marital therapist, shares his extensive research on what makes marriages succeed or fail. This practical guide offers actionable strategies and exercises for improving communication, managing conflict, and fostering friendship and intimacy. The book provides evidence-based tools to help couples build a lasting and fulfilling partnership.

4. Love & Respect: The Love She Most Needs, The Respect He Desperately Wants

Emerson Eggerichs focuses on the dynamic of love and respect within marriage, proposing that wives need to feel loved and husbands need to feel respected. He explains how these fundamental needs, when unmet, can lead to a cycle of conflict. The book offers insights into understanding and fulfilling these core desires to foster a more harmonious and loving relationship.

5. The Meaning of Partnership: Reimagining Marriage in the 21st Century

This title explores how contemporary societal shifts are redefining the roles and expectations within marriage. It examines the evolution of partnership, addressing themes of equality, shared responsibilities, and mutual support in modern relationships. The book encourages couples to actively construct a partnership that reflects their shared values and aspirations.

6. The Power of Covenant Marriage: Building a Relationship That Lasts

This book delves into the concept of marriage as a covenant, a sacred and unbreakable promise. It explores the historical and spiritual significance of covenantal commitment, offering a framework for building a resilient and enduring marital bond. The authors emphasize the transformative power of a deliberate choice to remain committed through all seasons of life.

7. Marriage: The Mystery of Covenant, Union, and Grace

Raymond J. Collins provides a theological exploration of marriage, examining its multifaceted nature. He discusses marriage as a mystery, a union of two individuals, and a pathway to experiencing God's grace. The book offers a rich and profound perspective on the spiritual dimensions and enduring significance of the marital bond.

8. The Meaning of Intimacy: How to Connect with Your Partner on a Deeper Level

This book focuses on the crucial element of intimacy within marriage, exploring its various forms beyond the physical. It provides guidance on fostering emotional, intellectual, and spiritual connection between partners. The authors offer practical advice and insights for couples seeking to deepen their bond and create a more profound sense of togetherness.

9. When Theory and Practice Collide: Understanding the Meaning of Marriage in Real Life

This title suggests a practical and perhaps cautionary exploration of how idealized notions of marriage fare against the realities of daily life. It likely examines common challenges, misunderstandings, and the adjustments couples must make. The book aims to provide a realistic perspective on navigating the complexities of sustaining a marriage over time.

Meaning Of Marriage Pdf

Meaning of Marriage: A Comprehensive Guide (PDF)

Author: Dr. Evelyn Reed, Ph.D. (Relationship Counseling & Sociology)

Ebook Outline:

Introduction: Defining Marriage Across Cultures and Time

Chapter 1: The Legal and Societal Aspects of Marriage

Chapter 2: The Emotional and Psychological Dimensions of Marriage

Chapter 3: The Social and Economic Impacts of Marriage

Chapter 4: Challenges and Conflicts in Marriage

Chapter 5: Maintaining a Healthy and Fulfilling Marriage

Chapter 6: Marriage in the Modern Era: Evolving Definitions and Trends

Chapter 7: Alternatives to Traditional Marriage

Conclusion: The Enduring Significance of Committed Relationships

Meaning of Marriage: A Comprehensive Guide

Marriage, a cornerstone of human society for millennia, continues to evolve and adapt while retaining its core significance. This comprehensive guide explores the multifaceted meaning of marriage, examining its legal, emotional, social, and economic dimensions across diverse cultures and historical periods. We will delve into the challenges inherent in marital relationships, the strategies for building and sustaining strong unions, and the broader societal implications of marriage in the modern world.

Introduction: Defining Marriage Across Cultures and Time

The concept of marriage isn't monolithic. Its definition shifts dramatically across cultures and throughout history. While the fundamental idea of a committed partnership often remains constant, the specifics – legal frameworks, religious ceremonies, social expectations, and economic implications – vary considerably. In some cultures, marriage is primarily an economic arrangement, solidifying alliances between families or consolidating property. In others, it's a deeply spiritual union, sanctioned by religious authorities. Still others emphasize romantic love and personal fulfillment as the primary reasons for marriage. Understanding this diverse tapestry of definitions is crucial to grasping the multifaceted meaning of marriage. This introduction sets the stage for exploring these various perspectives, providing a foundational understanding of marriage's historical and cultural contexts.

Chapter 1: The Legal and Societal Aspects of Marriage

This chapter examines the legal framework surrounding marriage, varying by jurisdiction. We discuss issues like marriage licenses, legal rights and responsibilities of spouses, property rights, inheritance, and the legal ramifications of divorce. The societal expectations placed on married couples are also explored, analyzing how these expectations influence marital dynamics and individual roles within the family unit. The chapter further explores the evolving legal landscape surrounding same-sex marriage and other non-traditional marital structures, highlighting the ongoing debates and legal challenges related to marriage equality.

Chapter 2: The Emotional and Psychological Dimensions of Marriage

Marriage is not just a legal contract; it's an intensely emotional and psychological bond. This chapter explores the emotional intimacy, trust, commitment, and mutual support that characterize healthy marital relationships. We examine the psychological benefits of marriage, such as increased happiness, improved mental health, and enhanced longevity. Conversely, we also address the emotional and psychological challenges, including conflict resolution, communication breakdowns, and the impact of stress on marital stability. Understanding the emotional landscape of marriage is crucial for fostering healthy and resilient relationships.

Chapter 3: The Social and Economic Impacts of Marriage

Marriage has profound social and economic implications for individuals and society as a whole. This chapter analyzes the social roles and expectations associated with marriage, exploring how they affect gender dynamics, family structures, and social networks. Economically, we examine the impact of marriage on financial stability, resource pooling, and the division of labor within the household. The chapter also explores the societal benefits of marriage, including its role in raising children, supporting aging parents, and contributing to community well-being. We further consider the economic disparities that may influence marital decisions and outcomes.

Chapter 4: Challenges and Conflicts in Marriage

No marriage is without its challenges. This chapter addresses common sources of marital conflict, including communication issues, financial disagreements, infidelity, parenting challenges, and differences in values or lifestyle. We explore strategies for conflict resolution, focusing on effective communication techniques, compromise, and seeking professional help when needed. The chapter also examines the impact of external stressors, such as job loss, illness, or family conflict, on marital stability and resilience.

Chapter 5: Maintaining a Healthy and Fulfilling Marriage

Building and maintaining a healthy marriage requires ongoing effort and commitment. This chapter focuses on practical strategies for strengthening marital bonds, including cultivating open and honest communication, fostering intimacy, prioritizing quality time together, and nurturing mutual respect and appreciation. We explore the importance of shared goals, individual growth, and adapting to changing life circumstances. The chapter emphasizes the value of seeking professional guidance from therapists or counselors when facing significant challenges.

Chapter 6: Marriage in the Modern Era: Evolving Definitions and Trends

Modern society has witnessed a significant shift in attitudes and trends related to marriage. This chapter examines these changes, including rising divorce rates, the increasing acceptance of cohabitation, the evolving roles of men and women in marriage, and the growing diversity of family structures. We discuss the impact of technology and social media on marital relationships, as well as the challenges posed by work-life balance and societal pressures. The chapter analyzes how these evolving trends are reshaping the meaning and significance of marriage in contemporary society.

Chapter 7: Alternatives to Traditional Marriage

This chapter explores alternative forms of committed relationships, such as cohabitation, civil unions, and domestic partnerships. We examine the legal, social, and economic implications of these alternatives, comparing and contrasting them with traditional marriage. The chapter also discusses the reasons why individuals might choose alternative arrangements and the various factors influencing their decisions. The goal is to provide a comprehensive overview of the different ways individuals can structure their committed relationships.

Conclusion: The Enduring Significance of Committed Relationships

Despite the evolving landscape of marriage, the fundamental human need for committed relationships remains strong. This conclusion summarizes the key findings of the book, reiterating the enduring significance of committed partnerships, regardless of their legal or societal definition. We emphasize the importance of mutual support, love, respect, and shared values in building strong and fulfilling relationships, underscoring the vital role of commitment in fostering personal well-being and societal stability.

FAQs

1. What are the legal implications of marriage? Marriage confers significant legal rights and responsibilities regarding property, finances, inheritance, and decision-making.
2. How does marriage affect mental and physical health? Studies show a correlation between marriage and improved mental and physical well-being.
3. What are common challenges faced by married couples? Communication issues, financial stress, infidelity, and differing expectations are common challenges.
4. How can couples improve communication and resolve conflicts? Open and honest communication, active listening, and compromise are crucial.
5. What is the role of intimacy in a successful marriage? Intimacy, both emotional and physical, is essential for a fulfilling marital relationship.
6. How does marriage impact financial stability? Marriage can improve financial stability through resource pooling and shared responsibilities.
7. What are the alternatives to traditional marriage? Cohabitation, civil unions, and domestic partnerships are alternatives.
8. How has marriage changed in modern society? Modern marriage is more diverse and less rigidly defined than in the past.
9. How can couples maintain a healthy and fulfilling marriage? Ongoing commitment, effective communication, and mutual respect are crucial.

Related Articles:

1. The Legal Rights and Responsibilities of Married Couples: Explores the legal aspects of marriage in detail.
2. Communication Skills for a Strong Marriage: Focuses on effective communication techniques for couples.
3. Financial Planning for Married Couples: Covers financial strategies and budgeting for married couples.
4. Overcoming Infidelity in Marriage: Provides guidance for navigating infidelity in a relationship.
5. The Impact of Stress on Marital Relationships: Examines how stress affects marriage and offers coping strategies.
6. Marriage Counseling and Therapy Techniques: Explores different types of therapy for couples.
7. Building Intimacy in a Long-Term Marriage: Offers practical tips for maintaining intimacy over time.
8. The Evolving Role of Gender in Marriage: Analyzes the changing roles of men and women in marriage.

9. Cohabitation vs. Marriage: A Comparative Analysis: Compares and contrasts cohabitation with marriage.

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changes—their causes and consequences—is very much in need of explication. The experts contributing to this volume bring a wide range of perspectives—sociological, anthropological, economic, historical, psychological, and legal—to the problem of marriage in modern society. Together these essays help illuminate a form of relationship that is both vulnerable and resilient, biological and social, a reflection of and an influence on other social institutions. Contemporary Marriage begins with an important assessment of the revolution in marital behavior since World War II, tracing trends in marriage age, cohabitation, divorce, and fertility. The focus here is primarily on the United States and on industrial societies in general. Later chapters provide intriguing case studies of particular countries. There is a recurrent interest in the impact on marriage of modernization itself, but a number of essays probe influences other than industrial development, such as strong cultural and historical patterns or legislation and state control. Beliefs and expectations about marriage are explored, and human sexuality and gender roles are also considered as factors in the nature of marriage. Contemporary Marriage offers a rich spectrum of approaches to a problem of central importance. The volume will reward an equally broad spectrum of readers interested in the meaning and future of marriage in our society.

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meaning of marriage pdf: *The Meaning of Marriage* Robert P. George, Jean Bethke Elshtain, 2017-04-01

meaning of marriage pdf: *The Story of Marriage* John Bevere, Lisa Bevere, 2014-08-19 ONCE UPON A TIME... Marriage was forever. It was a covenant that knit one man and one woman together. This weaving made both stronger, nobler, and more vibrant expressions of who they were created to be. They were better together than either had been on their own. The wedding ceremony was but a beginning. It was the gateway to build their happily ever after. Each choice and action was designed to construct the life their union represented. Husband and wife walked into the great unknown with hearts, hands, and voices intertwined to express the love of their Creator. How did we lose touch with this profound love story? In *The Story of Marriage*, John and Lisa Bevere invite you to rediscover God's original plan. Whether you're married, single, or engaged, your story is a part of His. Interactive book includes: - Daily devotionals - Questions for group discussion - Tools for mapping your dream marriage - Steps for writing your story well

meaning of marriage pdf: *Looking for Love in the Legal Discourse of Marriage* Renata

Grossi, 2014-09-01 This book examines the (in)visibility of romantic love in the legal discourse surrounding modern Australian marriage. It looks at how romantic love has become a core part of modernity, and a dominant part of the Western marriage discourse, and considers how the ideologies of romantic love are (or are not) replicated in the legal meaning of marriage. This examination raises two key issues. If love has become central to people's understanding of marriage, then it is important for the legitimacy of law that love is reflected in both the content and application of the law. More fundamentally, it requires us to reconsider how we understand law, and to ask whether it is engaged with emotions, or separate from them. Along the way this book also considers the meaning of love itself in contemporary society, and asks whether love is a radical force capable of breaking down conservative meanings embedded in institutions like marriage, or whether it simply mirrors them. This book will be of interest to everyone working on love, marriage and sexuality in the disciplines of law, sociology and philosophy.

meaning of marriage pdf: The All-or-Nothing Marriage Eli J. Finkel, 2019-01-08 "After years of debate and inquiry, the key to a great marriage remained shrouded in mystery. Until now..."—Carol Dweck, author of *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* Eli J. Finkel's insightful and ground-breaking investigation of marriage clearly shows that the best marriages today are better than the best marriages of earlier eras. Indeed, they are the best marriages the world has ever known. He presents his findings here for the first time in this lucid, inspiring guide to modern marital bliss. *The All-or-Nothing Marriage* reverse engineers fulfilling marriages—from the "traditional" to the utterly nontraditional—and shows how any marriage can be better. The primary function of marriage from 1620 to 1850 was food, shelter, and protection from violence; from 1850 to 1965, the purpose revolved around love and companionship. But today, a new kind of marriage has emerged, one oriented toward self-discover, self-esteem, and personal growth. Finkel combines cutting-edge scientific research with practical advice; he considers paths to better communication and responsiveness; he offers guidance on when to recalibrate our expectations; and he even introduces a set of must-try "lovehacks." This is a book for the newlywed to the empty nester, for those thinking about getting married or remarried, and for anyone looking for illuminating advice that will make a real difference to getting the most out of marriage today.

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counted up all the unpaid, invisible work she was doing for her family—and then sent that list to her husband, asking for things to change. His response was...underwhelming. Rodsky realized that simply identifying the issue of unequal labor on the home front wasn't enough: She needed a solution to this universal problem. Her sanity, identity, career, and marriage depended on it. The result is *Fair Play*: a time- and anxiety-saving system that offers couples a completely new way to divvy up domestic responsibilities. Rodsky interviewed more than five hundred men and women from all walks of life to figure out what the invisible work in a family actually entails and how to get it all done efficiently. With 4 easy-to-follow rules, 100 household tasks, and a series of conversation starters for you and your partner, *Fair Play* helps you prioritize what's important to your family and who should take the lead on every chore, from laundry to homework to dinner. "Winning" this game means rebalancing your home life, reigniting your relationship with your significant other, and reclaiming your Unicorn Space—the time to develop the skills and passions that keep you interested and interesting. Stop drowning in to-dos and lose some of that invisible workload that's pulling you down. Are you ready to try *Fair Play*? Let's deal you in.

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has helped me understand why and how she thinks differently than I do about so many things. A husband, as this book points out, is to live with and love his wife with understanding. This change in a husband and the consequent response by a wife result in life-changing home life, and together radiate to many others, for the glory of Christ. --Kenneth N. Taylor, translator of The Living Bible

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often and have more live-in partners than Europeans, and gay Americans have more interest in legalizing same-sex marriage. The difference comes from Americans' embrace of two contradictory cultural ideals: marriage, a formal commitment to share one's life with another; and individualism, which emphasizes personal choice and self-development. Religion and law in America reinforce both of these behavioral poles, fueling turmoil in our family life and heated debate in our public life. Cherlin's incisive diagnosis is an important contribution to the debate and points the way to slowing down the partnership merry-go-round.

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