



THOUGHTS ON MARRIAGE

OPPOSITES ATTRACT

#1 Opposites attract? Yes, they do. God intended that two incomplete people work to become one complete couple. We need to cooperate with God's Plan to achieve true happiness and contentment.

It's differences that attract us to the one we marry. We are attracted to qualities our mate has that we don't, but wish we did.

Example: A person who is reserved is attracted to a mate that is more outgoing. Or, a person who is afraid to take chances is attracted to a person who takes risks and visa versa.

#2 Opposites attract? When couples fail to work at becoming a complete couple, then their differences can tear the marriage apart.

For example, a wife who was attracted to her mate's easy-going, relaxed attitude, now is annoyed that he doesn't move as quickly as she does. Or, a husband who was attracted to how sharp his wife dressed and looked before marriage, now is impatient at how long it takes her to get ready to go out. He fails to realize that her looks take time to achieve.

In each case, the couples need to appreciate their differences and strive for unity.

THE STAGES OF MARRIAGE

Over the years researchers studying marriages have identified various cycles that marriages go through. Each group seems to come up with different conclusions as to the number of cycles and their description of each. Upon closer examination we find they are all variations on the same theme.

One study identified 4 cycles: Romance, Disillusionment, Misery, Awakening.

Another 3: Romance, Disillusionment, Mature Love. *

Another 7: Passion, Realization, Rebellion, Cooperation, Reunion, Explosion, Completion.

The descriptions vary, but the essential point is that a marriage is a process. It evolves. It helps to know what to expect at the various stages; otherwise normal transitions may be misinterpreted as loss of love or reason to divorce.

All healthy marriages experience change and transition. That's what keeps them alive and growing. Some of the stages of growth are predictable, others are not.

Each stage of marriage gives us the opportunity to grow in love and understanding of each other. See each day as one of op-

portunity to grow closer and more united. Remember, anything of value takes time to build. That's the way life works, and the rewards are sure worth it.

* Not to be confused with the basic Law of Life — Illusion, Disillusionment, Joy — which indicate a recurring process involving our marriage through out its life span.

WARNING!

Thousands of years ago the Jewish Prophet Hosea stated "My people perish for want of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6)

True then! True today!

Marriages are being destroyed for lack of knowledge of what makes a marriage loving and lasting.

Marriage Encounter has the knowledge you need as a couple.

Take it. Practice it. Use it.