

Did you See It Before the Wedding?

Contributed by Len Stauffenger
Tuesday, 11 March 2008

Most of us grew up with parents. During our growing up years, we formed a lot of ideas of what a perfect relationship would be like by watching what our parents did, and in particular, what our parents did not do that we wish they had. We knew what perfect parents would be like.

We would be those perfect parents. We had an idea of a perfect marriage. We would have a perfect marriage. We spent upwards of 25 years working to create our perfect life. Some of us achieved that. Some of us enjoyed it for a while. And then some of us got slammed by divorce.

Things didn't turn out quite the way we had envisioned.

The little details that we didn't even know existed turned out to be so important in our perfect scheme of things. He could be totally handsome, once one of our main must-haves.

She could be a total fox, another imperative. But when we married him or her, there were just so many things we did not take into consideration: their annoying little habits, their mystifying flaws. Our perfect schemes glossed over these little details.

And after the divorce hits us, we have to ask ourselves:

"Did I see this in him/her before our wedding?" Let's look at a tough example. Maybe you really were a great wife and you did everything a wife should do, but your husband just never appreciated you. And you're thinking, how was I responsible for our divorce? My question to you would be, "Whatever flaws your ex had, was there any sign of them before you got married? Or before you had children? Was there anything you consciously or unconsciously ignored or blinded yourself to?" Your responsibility may be nothing more than the fact that you knew he was selfish but you married him anyway. Sometimes, very simple decisions or the failure to make a decision can cause very harsh consequences. But again, that's the way the world is. It can happen again, so aren't you better off understanding that your subtle decision to ignore his faults had a profound impact on your life? If you understand that, if you take responsibility for that piece of it, then you won't make that mistake again.

This is a lesson that applies to everything that makes you unhappy in your life, whether it's your boss, your lover or your children. Don't do what everyone else does which is to blame the other person or the situation. Instead, the first question should be "What's my role in this? How am I causing this or contributing to this. Just remember, it's not about fault; it's

really more about consequences.

When you get this, it's a wonderful tool for your life because it allows you to solve your problems. This isn't about fault; it's really more about self-discovery. The more you know about yourself and the reasons for your actions and your motivation, the more satisfying and fulfilling your life becomes because you're no longer operating on automatic pilot.

Take responsibility in determining what your role was.

Because if you figure that out you will grow and it will carry over into all areas of your life and, even more exciting, you will be able to teach your children about true responsibility. And don't they deserve your very best? Who knows? You might be helping them to create the perfect relationship leading to the perfect marriage and becoming the perfect parent you thought you would be.

Len Stauffenger's parents taught him life's simple wisdom.

As a divorced dad, he wanted to share that simple wisdom with his girls. "Getting Over It: Wisdom for Divorced Parents," his book, is the solution. Len is an author, a Success Coach and an Attorney.

<http://www.wisdomfordivorcedparents.com>