

Writing team scores with challenging book

By CORINNE ABATT

Marriage has been put under a high power microscope of late, dissected, fragmented and, in many instances, left to die.

In their new book, "The Total Couple," Albert and Carol Allman Lee of Southfield take a close look, do some dissecting and then go one step further. They put it back together. With the understanding, of course,

that there's something basically good to begin with.

"The Total Couple" is their formula for making marriage work, for people who really want it to work in the face of lib and love, change and growth.

If one partner wants to grow and change and the other prefers to remain static—that's death. But, if both, in the midst of crisis, diverse goals and frustrations, still want to make a go of it, then this book is a fine tool, to start with.

Over a period of several years, the Lees perfected a communications skill they call "teaming." In the chapter, "Teaming to Grow," they state, "Your goals are partially mine, my goals are partially yours."

This is followed by the remark which further explains the basic premise, "each of us is a junior partner, a shareholder, in this business of the other's success."

So, one of the keys to a marriage that will offer each person individuality, personal rewards and success in a given field, be it homemaking or some other profession, is communicating goals. And communicating requires skill, determination and desire.

"This book is one of the most fun things we've ever done," Lee said, adding that the idea began about five years ago and the two of them have been working on it on and off ever since. To test their theory, they spent many an hour each evening doing just what they recommend—coming together to talk over goals for the book and for their lives.

Lee said, "we started with the premise of respect for the other person and that the other person can be a worthwhile contributor."

The differences in goals became ob-



CAROL LEE



ALBERT LEE

vious. Lee pointed out that it is natural for a man to think in terms of goals. It's an area most feel comfortable in.

"Women tend to deal in sensitivities and feelings," he said. So, the language of communicating had to be structured.

Mrs. Lee said one of her goals had been to develop skills in talking with people, particularly to interviewers on TV and radio talk shows.

Now, recently returned from about six weeks of promoting the book in Minneapolis, Cincinnati, Boston, Chicago and other metropolitan areas, she is satisfied that her goal is almost completed.

She said of the promo trip with it's almost constant public appearances.

"I loved it, it was exhausting, but I really developed my skills in talking with people."

Up until this book, Lee had always been the writer and his wife editor, business person and organizer. This is the first time she has shared in the actual writing. Lee has authored 11 books and has been a successful freelance article writer for many years.

For those couples who right off can't communicate goals verbally, the Lees suggest making and exchanging lists.

"Then, it's all right there, you can't take it back," Lee said.

They know, from long experience, that acceptance of the other's goals won't be automatic—nor should it be.

"You also have to sell it," Lee said. "Anytime you change anything in a marriage, the other person has to change too."

He added as an aside, "Hey, you don't assume anything about your mate."

When goals clash, as they did several times with the Lees, compromise comes into play.

Lee described his wife, while she nodded her accord, as a person who has a sense of community, one who likes roots. He, on the other hand, doesn't like to stay put. She likes to own a house and he prefers an apartment or condo that frees him of responsibility and yard work.

To achieve what both wanted, they made several compromises. They have a house, but the yard work is hired out. Lee agreed to stay put if his wife would agree to give up a salary writing job to become a fulltime freelancer.

"I had to sell her on giving up security. My selling point was we wouldn't have to move. I would have more free time and I would be a more pleasant person."

The fulltime freelancing gives Lee the freedom he wanted and the opportunity for his wife to establish roots she wanted.

The Lees recognize in their book that there are certain ramifications to these goal setting conversations. A person who brings up a goal may be simply testing the waters to see if the other really respects his ideas.

Lee smiled as he related how he periodically brings up his dream goal of buying a sailboat and sailing around the world.

Everytime he does, his wife retorts succinctly, "but don't forget you get seasick the minute you leave the dock."

Lee said, "It really is common sense applied, if you think about it. You've got to realize you have to give up some things to get other things. We use the same method with our kids (ages four and seven). They have to sell us on an idea and they've really psyched us out."

The skills the Lees have learned as a result of their research, the satisfactions they have achieved, still seem to surprise them when they talk about the book.

Lee said, "You have to realize that nothing is ever 50-50. There are differences between men and women. You have to recognize and respect those differences and work things out together. You have to be able to say, 'you have gaps and I have gaps and together we fill them.'"

Mrs. Lee admitted she sometimes approaches the goal session with emotion. "I can get all upset. It's a skill you have to work on. In that case, you just say you're too upset and would like to put off what you want to say until a later time."

The teaming crosses all aspects of their life together and one particularly that the Lees know is often a source of trouble—finances.

Lee said, "One of the things we do is to split the excess money after the bills are paid. She has a checking account and I have a checking account. That way no one feels totally dependent. Economic dependency, we feel, is one of the worst things."

One thing about the book which gives the Lees some concern is whether men will read it. They feel reasonably sure women will, but it is important that both partners read it.

Mrs. Lee said she wouldn't object if a woman who wants her husband to read it would tell him, "If you really care about me and our marriage, you'll read it."

Aside from the fact that teaming, as the Lees describe it, has worked for them, the excitement of it to both of them is the personal growth it fosters. They like the challenges and the changes it has nurtured.

The book, published by Lorenz Press, is available at Hudsons and B. Dalton.

PWP plans conference

Single parents are invited to attend a quarterly regional conference of Parents Without Partners beginning at 9 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 12 at the Northfield Hilton Hotel in Troy.

A social dance which is open to the public will launch the event. Donation for the dance is \$1.

At 8 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 13 and continuing all day, business meetings and workshops geared to the problems of single parents are planned.

A second dance will begin at 9 p.m. on Saturday and will be open only to prospective members and members.

Chances of tax audit

What is the likelihood of your 1976 tax return being audited? If your income was over \$50,000, your chances are one in eight. If less than \$10,000, one in 23. Others range in between.

Mich. State Fair opens with Bay City Rollers

The Bay City Rollers, who say they picked their name by sipping a pin in a map of America, will start off the parade of free entertainment at this year's Michigan State Fair, which runs from Friday, Aug. 26, through Labor Day.

Also appearing, besides the Scottish group, will be Dolly Parton, "The Happiest Girl in the Whole U.S.A.," Country Music Entertainer of the Year for 1976 Mel Tillis, Della Reese and the Sylvers, who sing "Boogie Fever."

The Hudson Brothers, the Four Freshmen and several people from the Lawrence Welk Show will be on hand to entertain.

The full schedule will be: Aug. 26, Bay City Rollers; Aug. 27, Anacani and Tom Netherton of the Lawrence Welk Show; Aug. 28, Gail, Sandi and Mary Lou of the Lawrence Welk Show; Aug. 29, Myron Floren, Bobby Burgess and Cissy King of the Lawrence Welk Show; Aug. 30, The Sylvers; Aug. 31 and Sept. 1, The Four Freshmen; Sept. 2, Dolly Parton;

Sept. 3, Mel Tillis; Sept. 4, The Hudson Brothers, and the final show, Sept. 5, Della Reese.

Shows will begin at 4:30 and 8:30 at either the Music Shell or the Grandstand.

The Trinidad Tripoli Steel Band, the Cavalcade of Music, the Jim and Julie Murphy Show and the Royal Danish Circus will give daily free outdoor performances.

The Hurricane Hell Drivers will be at the State Fair Grandstand Aug. 31 and Sept. 1, and the Michigan State Fair World Championship Rodeo will be on Aug. 27-30. These are the only two shows which charge admission above the general fair admission.

Children under 12 who are accompanied by an adult will be admitted free throughout the fair, while regular admission is \$1.

The Michigan State Fair Grand Opening Parade will be at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, Aug. 25, in downtown Detroit.

Family Life is enrolling

Family Life Nursery, located in the North Congregational Church in Southfield is accepting applications for fall enrollment.

Four year olds will meet on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings, and three year olds on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

Family Life, a cooperative nursery, is non-sectarian and non-profit. The tuition is low and it employs a certified teacher, Mrs. Marylyn Nesbitt of Birmingham.

The nursery strives to help the preschooler to make a smooth adjustment from home to school and attempts to provide an atmosphere where the child can progress socially, emotionally and physically.

As a co-op, nursery rules require that parents assist approximately 16 times a year and attend monthly par-

ent meetings. Car-pooling is popular and a babysitter is available for younger siblings on assist days.

For applications or more information please call Mrs. Connie Tresselt at 559-8105 or Mrs. Pamela Crawford at 559-6264.

Women to get back-to-school session at SC

"How to Overcome the Fear of Trying," is the title of a session for prospective women students planned on the Schoolcraft College Livonia campus, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Wednesday, Aug. 17.

Counselor Shirley Emerson, who planned the program with the Women's Resource Center, said partic-

ipants in the free session will be given information on courses, programs, admissions, scheduling and registration.

Also planned are presentations by

the resource center, counseling services, child care facilities and physical education department.

Those attending will gather in the

liberal arts building, room 200, for coffee and opening discussion. There will be a tour of the campus, located at 18600 Haggerty, and lunch in the Waterman Campus Center.

Registration information is available from the Women's Resource Center, 391-6400, extension 369.

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