

Getting it together

Love tested in times of personal change

What happens when spouses grow in different directions? She's into sharing personal feelings and open relationships while he has become more and more career-oriented. He's become a devotee of liberal religion, but she still believes in tradition and rituals.

In today's fast-moving, diverse life styles, such growing apart is more the rule than the exception for couples. The seeds for such growing incompatibility are planted when either partner is exposed to some strong influence like education, new friends, entering the work world, women's lib, or psycho-therapy.

The problem is not the differences themselves. It's how the differences are handled. Former lovers become adversaries. The spouse who has changed becomes a dedicated convert. Like most people who make significant personal changes, his enthusiasm for the new way is immense.

But his mate feels quite differently. Defending herself from being railroaded into changes she may not want, she becomes a foot-dragger and even antagonistic toward her mate's conversion. She may make token efforts to participate in the new way, but these are hardly enough for her newly-devoted husband.

SO THE PRESSURE is applied. Both try to change each other. She hopes his conversion is temporary and that he will return to his old self. He

By
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buries her in boos and speeches and arguments for his new approach. But only for a while. Then comes the discouragement phase. She gives up on her hope that he will love her as she is. He gives up on her ability to embrace the changes that have become increasingly important to him.

And, as if this isn't enough, the newness of his conversion leads him to be closed-minded toward her resistances. In fact, this is because he is rejecting his own doubts and fears. But it is expressed as rigidly discounting or attacking the doubts expressed by his wife.

Negative assumptions are fostered in this adversarial atmosphere. The foot-dragger thinks the changer has gone crazy. She sees few remnants of the person she once loved. And the converted mate sees his reluctant wife as

trapped by her insecurities and rigidities.

The negative assumptions have a self-fulfilling effect and they are hardened by the mounting failures to resolve differences.

A relationship founded on openness and mutual respect shifts to defensiveness and rejection. A cold war buries feelings of love.

TRYING TO COPE with this catastrophe, couples often become more independent of each other. They rationalize that they don't have to be totally compatible to be successfully married. They settle for a cooler love. But eventually this comes to feel like a starvation diet.

Affairs, separations, and divorces are logical consequences at this stage. All of which might lead you to conclude that love relationships can't survive when couples grow apart. But that's wrong. Even though such negative results are common ways that this pattern ends, it doesn't have to be that way.

For many couples, temporary incompatibilities are just a step toward greater closeness and compatibility. Rather than harming the relationship, such differences should challenge it and encourage it to grow stronger.

Next week's discussion will talk about the keys to such happy endings.

Bob Trenez is a psychologist and marriage counselor in Rochester. Questions for Dr. Trenez may be sent to P.O. Box 64, Rochester 48063.

The lively needle

Canvas applique valuable tool

By MARY KAY DAVIS

Suppose you accidentally cut a hole in your needlepoint canvas while snipping out some unfortunate stitches. What can you do?

What happens when you've designed the gingerbread house on your Christmas card for 14-gauge canvas and find that it will take number 18 to get all the children's names in?

Can you have a quick background with 10 gauge canvas and a petite point butterfly on the same piece of needlepoint?

The answer to all of these questions, and many more, is the same, yes. Virginia, you can applique one piece of canvas onto another. You can even change canvas gauges if you like.

Here's how, thanks to Muriel Baker of the Embroiderers' Guild of America. USE FLOATING, never interlock canvas, and stretch it on a frame or stretcher. Decide how large a patch you will need.

Measure two to three inches extra canvas on all four sides of the applique patch and cut it out. Stitch the butterfly and work one row of tent stitches all around it in the background color. Rectangular patches for names and mending do not have to be pre-stitched.

Trace the patch's outline of the background canvas so that you'll know where to place it. Work background stitches up to a few threads from the outline's edge.

Unravel threads from the applique

patch. It will look like a wispy cross with the patch in the center. Leave one extra thread behind the patch on all four sides.

Place the applique patch on the background canvas, basting carefully in place. You do not need to keep the meshes parallel. Turn the applique any way you like.

Remove the final canvas thread on all four sides.

Use a small crochet hook to draw each strand of applique canvas, separately, through the background canvas to the back. Pull ten threads through, top and bottom, then ten left and right. Next, secure the corners. Complete pulling remaining threads.

AT THIS POINT the back of your canvas will resemble a porcupine. Some holes may have more than one thread coming through them. Do not panic, this is normal.

Between the butterfly's wings, and in any other irregular areas, some applique canvas will show. Unravel all long, loose threads until they touch the needlepoint, and then pull them through to the back. This will leave only threads lying in one direction to cover up. Repeat until all visible applique canvas is uncovered.

Use the crochet hook to weave canvas threads, one by one, through the back of the background stitches. After attaching them for one and one half inches, snip off ends neatly.

WSU courses deal with aging

Pioneer Women install officers

Those who work with older persons professionally or care for them in the family will benefit from two courses being offered in August by Wayne State University through its College of Lifelong Learning. Both are part of the pre-professional program in gerontology.

The first course, "The Family and the Aged" is scheduled from Aug. 4 to Sept. 7 each Tuesday and Thursday from 9-12:30 p.m.

Carrying four credits, the course will cover how to deal with elderly in the family, alternatives to care, guilt, feelings of children, and role change from child to care giver.

For registration information, telephone 577-3312.

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Volunteers

The Oakland County Volunteer Bureau, a program of the Volunteer Action Center of United Community Services has weekly listings of agencies needing volunteer services. Further information about these and over 200 agencies may be obtained by calling the bureau, 642-7272. Any non-profit agencies needing volunteer assistance may also call the bureau.

DIRECTORY AIDE—United Community Services in Detroit is looking for a volunteer willing to give one to three days during the work week for two months. Duties will include compiling community resources and verifying agency services by telephone as well as assisting with related clerical duties. Hours would be 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. but could be adjusted for the volunteer.

PARTY DIRECTOR—The Oakland County Medical Care Facility in Pontiac needs volunteers to organize parties at the center. Duties include ordering supplies, helping with decorations, and participating in the party with the patients.

CLERICAL AIDE—Michigan Cancer Foundation in Berkley needs volunteers interested in working with its Christmas card program. Duties include keeping records and answering the telephone.

PARENT AIDE VOLUNTEER—Oakland County Cooperative extension services is looking for volunteers to visit families on a regular basis to offer support and assistance in times of difficulty. Twenty hours of training are provided in areas of home management, human development, nutrition, communication skills, and child development.

The Great Vacation Alternative:



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Enjoy the good old days this summer at Greenfield Village and Henry Ford Museum. Our Old Time Summer Festival is in full swing now. It's really something different—with stage, medicine, and Punch and Judy shows; antique steam train, Model-T, carriage and stromboli rides; historical buildings, demonstrations of early American crafts; many more pleasures of the past. And don't miss Henry Ford Museum right next door: 14 acres of American heritage under one roof—so rain or shine, you'll have a good old time.

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