

arette



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# THE RB SHOPS

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# Oh, promise me

The marriage ceremony is based on promises. Bride and bridegroom pledge each to each their powers of loving, sharing, helping, giving.

But there is no guarantee that the promises will become reality. When the orange blossoms wilt and the bridal gown is packed away, the real work begins. The hard, satisfying task of building a wedding into a marriage.

And how long will that take? There is no written prescription. Maybe the achievement is in the trying. Howard and Mabel Reid have been together for 60 years, working, sharing, trying.

Their combined efforts to build a caring companionship through the ups and downs of daily living have resulted in a rare, mutual gift—a long and happy marriage.

This couple admits there's a little luck involved in a successful marriage, too. They've been blessed with good health and a comfortable life. "I say thank-you every day," said Mrs. Reid.

But luck is a relatively minor factor. First there must be "two people willing to give." Mrs. Reid was 19, and her husband, 20, when they married in 1914. They believe that young people today face many more pressures and obstacles in making mature decisions.

Both husband and wife agree that faith has been a major source of strength in their marriage. "We're a Christian family," said Mrs. Reid. "We've always gone to church together."

"It's not too important which church, as long as you go," added Mr. Reid.

The Reids have discovered through a lifetime of experience what clergymen know from their study and counseling—that religion offers strong support to the marriage relationship.

Rabbi Philip H. Berkowitz, whose Reform Temple Beth Jacob serves a wide local area, views religion as a primary source of guidance to individuals in responding to the problems and challenges of daily living.

Rabbi Berkowitz recalled an old teaching of Judaism concerning marriage, which reads, "No man without a woman; no woman without a man; and neither without God."

For two independent individuals who happen to be married, the problems and challenges are as prominent as the rewards. An unstable economy and the ease of divorce add to the pressure.

If a couple cannot talk to each other about mutual and individual difficulties, they may be endangering their marriage. Even the attempt to communicate is a positive step. "There is no guarantee of success," said Rabbi Berkowitz. "Marital happiness must be earned."

Marriage is not a static relationship. Rather, its demands and rewards grow and change as the partners grow and change. The sources of marital happiness can be as different as the individuals involved.

When Sue and Martin Engelbrecht met and married, both were widowed, and both had very young children. Mrs. Engelbrecht believes that the considerations in entering a second marriage are deeper than in the first. "We were two families that married," she said, "not two individuals."

Mrs. Engelbrecht said that in a young first marriage, the couple is more likely to think only of how desperately they love, rather than give diligent thought to the problems they may face in the future. Perhaps rightly so.

"In a second marriage, however, each partner is usually expected to be a loving parent as well as a loving spouse. The responsibilities to one another are immediately greater. It's a much bigger decision," she said.

Mrs. Engelbrecht finds that her independence before she remarried is a continuing positive influence. Having lived alone with three small children for five years, she knows she "can make it alone." So her very presence becomes an affirmation of love to her partner: "I'm here because I want to be."

Positive communications like these, whether by words or actions, contribute heavily to the success of a marriage. But, according to Dr. Sandra Lyness, assistant professor of clinical and educational psychology at Wayne State University, it is the lack of positive communications between husband and wife—particularly in dealing with sexual feelings—which creates much marital disharmony.

Dr. Lyness said that many couples cling to the fallacy that "if you love me, you'll read me intuitively." This shifts the burden of resolving the difficulties from one to the other without ever confronting the issues.

Dr. Walter Ambinder, Wayne State psychology professor and a colleague of Dr. Lyness' in their

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