

Continuing To Stay Committed Together This Year

By Bob & Yvonne Turnbull

In this fast-paced, hectic world, do you and your mate wish you had more time for each other?

Have you ever felt like the pilot who was lost over the Pacific Ocean and radioed "I have good news and bad news. The bad news is I do not know where I am headed, but the good news is that I am making record time."

If that is your case, then your marriage may be suffering from "OD - The Overcommitted Disease." Not a good way to start the New Year. To discover if your marriage is suffering from OD, check to see if you have any of the following symptoms:

Do you have several important subjects to discuss with your mate but not enough time to discuss them?

Do you feel tension building between the two of you and your closeness slowly disappearing?

Have you been living by the when-and-then philosophy? When the Christmas holidays or tax season or summer season or the latest work project is over, then we will have more time for each other?

Are the two of you, with earlier plans that day made with a sensual smile, still wind up staggering to bed so exhausted that your romance is just a passionate nudge in the ribs and then immediately falling asleep

and then dragging out of bed in the morning?

If you have said yes to one or more of these symptoms, you may have the Overcommitted Disease.

Many years ago we discovered we were victims of that dreaded American disease with all of the above symptoms. Here we were, a couple who lived and worked together 24 hours a day, but we never made time for our relationship. Sound familiar?

Are you a victim of the Overcommitted Disease?

Our whole focus was on our work relationship. Our marriage was adrift on the OD Sea, and we truly wanted to change and get back on course, so this is what we did:

COMMITMENT TO CHANGE

First we made a commitment to each other to change. We agreed that we would do whatever it took to make time to be together. **WHATEVER** it took!

We knew love in marriage was spelled T-I-M-E, but we had allowed other distractions and people and too-many-activities to take priority over our relationship. We realized that following our relationship with our Lord, our marriage relationship should have top priority. But it did not. Now we

were both eager to learn how to make time for each other.

TIME LOGS

Before you can make a change to spend more time together, you have to discover where you have been spending your time. We decided to both keep a daily time log for two weeks. We recorded everything we did from the moment we got up to the moment we went to bed. We wrote down everything: meal times, work times, TV times, prayer times, you name it - by 30 minute increments.

At first it felt a little tedious and difficult because we usually do not think of our time so closely. You probably do not either. After two weeks we sat down to evaluate our time logs.

OVERCOMING BARRIERS

We noted some things that blocked our time together, and we decided to either eliminate them or reduce them.

1. Inability to say no – Comedian Flip Wilson once commented, "My mouth has written checks that my body cannot cash. "We say yes too often and forget the no word. Then we would find ourselves overextended with no energy left for our relationship. So we agreed together before either of us accepts anything, we always say we have to talk it over with the other one. We discuss it, pray over it, check our schedules, and oftentimes give each other

permission to decline the offer. This has sure been a big relief for both of us.

2. Television – It is amazing how much of our time is eaten up by this one-eyed monster. Now there is nothing wrong with TV but we found some of the time spent watching TV we could have been doing something more interactive with one another. We decided to go through the TV section of our newspaper every Sunday and choose the programs we wanted to share together. Then with the extra time we freed up, we picked a book we wanted to read together. Yes, a small change but also Yes a big impact in our time together.

3. Work worries – Sometimes work worries (or concerns) cannot be avoided; but if they occur too frequently, they will cause a problem in your marriage. To prevent this, before you leave work write down what you need to do the next day. As you commute home, spend the first half of that time in prayer focused on your work. Then spend the second half with prayer, thoughts, and love turned towards your family. You are then physically, emotionally and spiritually prepared for your

mate and family as soon as you walk through the door.

4. Household chores – Whether a woman works inside or outside the home, most women still assume the major responsibility for the household chores.

Sharing household chores lightens loads

This was true in our home, so we held a family meeting to decide how everyone can share the various responsibilities. Sharing like this sure lightens the load and frees all of us with more time available. During the discussion in the meeting you may actually find the cost of hiring someone to do your yard work or clean your house a small price to pay to have more time with each other. Of course that will depend on your budget.

5. The children – Obviously we want to focus time and attention on our children, but not to the exclusion of each other. Balance it out. Spending time together shows the kids you love each other. It also makes them feel more secure.

Do any of the above fit your situation? Or have the two of you spotted some unique ones of your own? Discuss them, pray over them, and then mutually decide which areas you can change to create time to be with each other. You will reap wonderful benefits when you overcome the Overcommitted Disease.

May you have God's loving blessings and guidance for a productive and fulfilling rest of 2018 together.

We have known Bob and Yvonne Turnbull for many years. They don't just talk the talk, they walk the walk. www.turnbullministries.org

Growing Toward Oneness Marriage Ministries provides books, CD's and other marriage resources and services to enrich your marriage.

Please visit their website at www.marriages.net

If you would like to order the above resources or receive more information contact:

GTO Marriage Ministries, 2436 Haskell Drive, Antioch, TN 37013

TOLL-FREE order line: **1-800-546-5486** or order online at www.marriages.net

Email: gtocentral@marriages.net

This is a publication of **GTO Marriages Ministries** and may be copied and distributed without permission.

GTO Marriage Ministries is a non-profit ministry supported by charitable donations from individuals and churches.

If you would like to contribute to this marriage ministry, got to www.marriages.net and click the "**Donate Now**" button.